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South Korean Minority Youth's Identity Construction in the Context of Globalization:
Their Imagination, Creativity, and Agency in Language and Culture Learning

By

Jaran Shin

A dissertation submitted in partial satisfaction of the

requirements for the degree of

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of the

University of California, Berkeley

Committee in charge:

Professor Claire Kramsch, Chair

Professor P. David Pearson

Professor Elliot Turiel

Professor John Lie

Spring 2016

South Korean Minority Youth's Identity Construction in the Context of Globalization:
Their Imagination, Creativity, and Agency in Language and Culture Learning

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Abstract

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Jaran Shin

Doctor of Philosophy in Education

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Professor Claire Kramsch, Chair

Research on minority youth in industrialized societies such as the United States and South Korea usually strives to uncover discriminatory practices on the part of teachers and institutions and/or cognitive, linguistic, and cultural deficits on the part of the students. Because their presence in the education system can problematize the pedagogic status quo, minority youth are often treated as a “problem” that need to be remedied through more equitable pedagogies and more vigorous integration into society. Although globalization has added further complexity to the situation, research on minority youth in both the U.S. and Korea has reproduced deficit perspectives taking aim at them. Indeed, few research studies account for the ways in which globalization wields its impact on education and either closes down or opens up ways for minority children to view themselves.

This dissertation investigates how marginalized Korean minority teenagers born from transnational marriages—socially and politically labeled as *multicultural children*—construct their identities as they cope with different languages and cultures in the context of globalization. Drawing on an ecological theoretical framework that captures the intersection of language, culture, and identity, I use multiple methods—namely, critical discourse analysis, hierarchical linear statistical modeling, and ethnographic analysis of embedded case studies—to explore (a) the manner in which Korean minority students of mixed parentage are portrayed by the media; (b) their performances and experiences of learning languages and cultures; and (c) their identities vis-à-vis language, culture, and the world.

The study begins with the analysis of newspaper articles to illuminate the kinds of macro discourses related to “multicultural” families and children. I collected more than 5,000 newsprints published by the *Hankyoreh*, the *Hankook Ilbo*, and the *Chosun Ilbo* from 2009 to 2013. Using statistical analysis of large-scale, longitudinal data, I then explore how the level of Korean and English proficiency of “multicultural” teenagers compares to that of teenagers born to Korean mothers. Lastly, to substantiate “multicultural” adolescents’ imagination, creativity, and agency in constructing their identities vis-à-vis language and culture, I employ ethnography of embedded case studies with a small number of adolescents born to immigrant mothers. This phase of the dissertation took place in Incheon, Korea. I followed six focal students, their families (particularly their Vietnamese, Chinese, and Filipina mothers), and schoolteachers across 2014. Largely four primary forms of data—fieldnotes produced from interactions and

observations in the focal teenagers' homes and schools, audio recordings, interview transcripts, and the students' artifacts—were generated.

These data were combined and analyzed in a multi-staged analysis. In the first stage, adopting critical discourse analysis, I grounded the analysis in words used by newspapers and assigned descriptive codes to a section of newspaper data. In the second stage, as a way to describe growth trajectories of “multicultural” students' and their peers' Korean and English proficiency over broad intervals of time, I used the linear growth curve model. In the third and final stage, through a combination of qualitative coding and discourse analysis, the data were used to understand how “multicultural” teenagers learned linguistic and cultural practices as they constructed personal, cultural, and academic identities.

Findings deconstructed deficit perspectives on minority youth in Korea. At a macro level, “multicultural” families and children attracted varying characterizations from a marginalized group, to a threat, and to global human resources. These conflicting but simplified newspaper discourses reflected a particular mode of discrimination for “multicultural” children who were somehow not “Korean enough.” Simultaneously, the statistical analysis results also revealed no language proficiency difference between “multicultural” youth and their peers. This finding refuted the fundamental assumption of the discourses about “multicultural” children, namely that their deficiency in Korean was responsible for numerous issues in society. At a micro level, the ethnographic component of this dissertation illustrated how the six focal teenagers, regardless of their situations and interests, found ways to use globalization to their own advantage in living with multiple languages and cultures and in constructing their identities. Specifically, building upon their outstanding academic performances in school and capitalizing their linguistic/cultural resources, Tayo and Sungho were establishing themselves as more competent and conscious members of society. Similarly, Jinsoo and Heedong visualized alternative places to live, study, and/or work around the world and were developing their identities as cosmopolitan citizens who would cross national boundaries freely and value solidarity as well as dialogues. Lastly, by navigating diverse channels to communicate with others (e.g., drawing, technology), Hayang and Artanis were growing up to be “multilingual” subjects who would strategically use various semiotic and artistic resources to make meaning.

Through this study, I would ultimately argue that “multicultural” children are neither “minority” nor “multicultural”; but they are—or can be—elites, cosmopolitan citizens, and artistic multilingual subjects who can become contributing citizens in Korea and in the world. In this sense, one of the major implications of this dissertation is that if we are willing to “dig a little deeper” into the lives of these remarkable youth, we can resignify the unwarranted stereotypes from which they suffer, redefine constructs like “multicultural,” and deconstruct ideologies of oppression that continue to haunt “minority” youth to this very day.

This dissertation is dedicated to Dongsool Shin and Youngmi Kim

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Transcription Conventions

..	Brief pause
(1.0)	Pause of 1 second
(3.0)	Pause of 3 seconds
...	An ellipsis
()	Items within describe nonverbal behavior
[]	Items within are clarifications added by the researcher
“ ”	Items within are quoted speech
<un> xx </un>	Items within are unintelligible speech
// //	Items within overlap with another speaker's speech
=	Turns before and after are latched together (no pause between)
@	Laughter
I'm KOREAN.	Capitalized words said loudly, with emphasis
<i>tojong</i>	Italics words are in a language other than English

All other punctuation marks (periods, commas, question marks, exclamation points) are used as in standard writing.

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Chapter 1. Introduction

Research on minority youth in industrialized societies such as the United States and South Korea usually strives to uncover discriminatory practices on the part of teachers and institutions and/or cognitive, linguistic, and cultural deficits on the part of the students (see Gonzales, 2004; Suárez-Orozco, Suárez-Orozco, & Todorova, 2008; Valdés, 1996). Because their presence in the education system can problematize the pedagogic status quo, minority youth are often treated as a “problem” that need to be remedied through more equitable pedagogies and more vigorous integration into society. Globalization, however, has added further complexity to the situation. Characterized as the intensified flows of people, images, capital, and merchandise, driven by innovative technology such as the Internet (Appadurai, 1990; Castells, 1996), globalization generates both benefits and challenges. It diversifies school demographics but produces demeaning labels for minority students (e.g., Kaplinsky, 2005; Munck, 2005). It celebrates multiple languages and cultures in contact but exacerbates linguistic and cultural dilemmas for educators. Finally, it introduces novel teaching resources but makes growing inequality in access to educational opportunities more visible.

Despite recent advances in understanding this social phenomenon, research on minority youth in both the U.S. and Korea¹ has reproduced deficit perspectives taking aim at them. Indeed, few research studies account for the ways in which globalization yields its impact on education and either closes down or opens up ways for minority children to view themselves. Because minority youth’s backgrounds can be easily used as a source of discrimination (Suárez-Orozco & Suárez-Orozco, 2001), a closer look at how youth counteract stereotypes is needed now more than ever. Specifically, we need to know how they make use of their linguistic and cultural resources and their social circumstances to re-imagine themselves in creative ways.

Therefore, this study investigates how Korean minority teenagers born from transnational marriages—as one of the outcomes of globalization—construct their identities as they cope with different languages and cultures in the context of globalization. In addition to highlighting the structuring and structured relationship between macro discourses and micro interactions in minority youth’s experiences, this study shows how they exercise agency in countervailing the stereotypes imposed upon them. Drawing on theoretical tools from educational research and applied linguistics, I use multiple methods—namely, critical discourse analysis, hierarchical linear statistical modeling, and ethnographic analysis of embedded case studies—to explore (a) the manner in which Korean minority students of mixed parentage are portrayed by the media; (b) their performances and experiences of learning languages and cultures; and (c) their identities vis-à-vis language, culture, and the world.

Background of the Dissertation

The imagined community (Anderson, 1991) of Korea is based on the myth that Koreans are a blood-unified people that share the same language and culture. Although numerous pieces of historical evidence refute this myth, political situations in modern Korea (e.g., dictatorship and nationalism) allow the myth to prevail. In fact, functioning as one of the most fundamental ideologies, the myth is regarded as natural, obvious, and irrefutable to Koreans (Lie, 2015).

But in recent years this nation-state has had to deal with an influx of more than 1.4 million foreign nationals (Korea Immigration Service, 2013). In particular, the interest in foreign brides and their children is increasing with the hopes of compensating for an aging society and

¹ I will henceforth use “Korea” as a shorthand for South Korea.

low birthrates. Internally referred to as *multicultural families* (*damunhwa gajok*; 다문화 가족), this marriage practice stems from the reluctance of Korean women to marry older, poorer, and less educated bachelors. Attracted by Korea's industrialization and economic growth, many women from mainland China, Vietnam, and the Philippines migrate to the nation-state to marry these culturally less desirable bachelors. As of 2014, 247,055 foreign brides were officially registered in Korea (Statistics Korea, 2014).²

Table 1.1 and Table 1.2 present more specific information about foreign brides in Korea. Although the total number of international marriages between Korean men and foreign brides has tended to decrease in the last four years, the proportion of "multicultural"³ family among marriage in Korea remains substantial.⁴ This implies that globalization indeed reveals growing economic inequality in Korean society and can further generate additional layers of inequality stemming from the linguistic and cultural practices of foreign brides and their offspring.

Table 1.1 The Number of International Marriages in Korea (Statistics Korea, 2014)

Countries of Origin	Year					
	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014
Mainland China	11,364	9,623	7,549	7,036	6,058	5,485
Vietnam	7,249	9,623	7,636	6,586	5,770	4,743
The Philippines	1,643	1,906	2,072	2,216	1,692	1,130
Japan	1,140	1,193	1,124	1,309	1,218	1,345
Cambodia	851	1,205	961	525	735	564
Thailand	496	438	354	323	291	439
Other countries	2,399	2,286	2,569	2,642	2,543	2,446
Total	25,142	26,274	22,265	20,637	18,307	16,152

Note: The table only includes the number of international marriages between Korean men and foreign women.

Table 1.2 shows that mainland China, Vietnam, and the Philippines are ranked as the top three sending regions/countries.

Table 1.2 Demographics of Foreign Brides in Korea (Statistics Korea, 2014)

Rank	Countries of Origin	Number	Percent (%)
1	Mainland China (Korean ethnics)	78,080	31.60
2	Mainland China	61,129	24.74
3	Vietnam	55,819	22.59
4	The Philippines	16,001	6.48
5	Japan	11,454	4.64
6	Cambodia	6,184	2.50

² Far more foreign women than men marry Koreans live in Korea. For example, while there are only 513 Vietnamese men who married Korean women and live in Korea, 55,819 Vietnamese women migrated to Korea to marry Korean men (Statistics Korea, 2014). More than 99% of the total Vietnamese people who live in Korea for their marriage are women.

³ The term "multicultural" is consistently put between quotes throughout this dissertation (except the study participants' utterances) because the label for the particular group does not reflect the denotational meaning of the word and therefore the use and meaning of the term needs to be re-examined.

⁴ According to Statistics Korea (2014), international marriages make up approximately eight percent of the total number of marriages in Korea.

7	Mongolia	3,102	1.26
8	United States	899	0.36
9	Thailand	2,995	1.21
10	Taiwan	1,869	0.76
11	Russia	1,740	0.70
	Other countries	7,783	3.15
Total		247,055	100 ⁵

The recent popularization of international marriage practices began in the 2000s. The majority of “multicultural” children from these marriages are below six years old, and an increasing number of children will enter elementary and secondary school in a few years (see Table 1.3).

Table 1.3 The Number of “Multicultural” Children in Korea (Statistics Korea, 2014)

Age	Below 6	7-12	13-15	16-18	Total
Number	121,310	49,929	19,499	13,466	204,204
Percent (%)	59.4	24.5	9.5	6.6	100

These “multicultural” children are said to be *at risk*. Specifically, institutions such as government agencies, NGOs, and schools have voiced their concerns over current “multicultural” school-aged children—concerns including limited proficiency in Korean, poor academic achievement, lack of school adjustment, and higher drop-out rates. With the stakes for children and all other participants in their education so high, this long-term, mixed methods study seeks to highlight how “multicultural” children live through the stereotypes associated with them.

Review of the Literature⁶

Six themes are relevant to the conceptualization of this dissertation: the definition of minority youth, deficit perspectives on them, their language learning, their learning of culture, their identity construction, and studies about “multicultural” children in Korea. Although these themes are interconnected and reflect minority youth’s daily experiences and learning experiences, I will discuss each respectively for the purpose of clarity.

The Definition of Minority

Following Wirth’s (1945) definition of minority, this study views minority youth as a group of children “who, because of their physical or cultural characteristics, are singled out from the others in the society in which they live for differential and unequal treatment, and who therefore regard themselves as objects of collective discrimination” (p. 347). This broad definition entails largely three features of minority (Feagin, 1984; Shepard, 2012). First, if children have distinctive “physical or cultural characteristics,” they are more likely to be recognized as minority. For instance, physical characteristics such as race and ethnicity, facial

⁵ The total percent of foreign brides is 100 because I rounded off to the second decimal.

⁶ The majority of research studies presented in this chapter were conducted in English-speaking countries such as the United States, Canada, Britain, and Australia. There are largely two reasons for this. First, because the aforementioned nation-states have hosted many immigrants, an extensive amount of research has been conducted regarding minority youth, and this research can inform Korea as it begins to serve immigrants. Second, as the current project responds to the prevalence of deficit perspectives on minority youth around the globe, reviewing research studies conducted in various parts of the world becomes necessary.

traits, and physical disabilities as well as cultural characteristics like language, accent, religion, and parentage could socially mark some children as different; therefore, they can be targets for discrimination and subordination. Second, the definition also points to a societal stratification structure where possessions, services, and privileges (e.g., schooling and professions) are unequally distributed. This indicates that minority children are the ones who tend to have limited access to the resources and opportunities. Third, differences and the power hierarchies lead the dominant group of society to believe that minority populations are inferior. This not only allows a majority to discriminate against a minority and justifies the unequal treatment, but also leads to members of the minority to consider themselves the somehow justified target of collective discrimination.

Others have also built on Wirth's (1945) conceptualization of minority. For instance, the Office of Management and Budget (1997) proposed basic racial and ethnic (cultural heritage) categories and defined American Indian or Alaska Native, Asian or Pacific Islander, Black, and Hispanic as minority categories. Technically, White having origins in Europe, North Africa, or the Middle East is classified as the majority group. This corresponds to the federal definition of a minority person. In addition, according to National Institutes of Health (n.d.), the term minority refers to "Individuals who come from a family with an annual income below established low-income thresholds"⁷ and/or "Individuals who come from a social, cultural, or educational environment" that may inhibit them from obtaining the knowledge, skills, and abilities necessary to participate in various sections in society. Overall, factors such as race/ethnicity, gender and sexuality, class, religion, body and mind, language, and culture all can function as sources that draw a distinction between mainstream and non-mainstream backgrounds.

However, the definition of minority is ambiguous. For example, would a Black child from an upper class family be a minority? How about a French-speaking, White, middle class child who migrated to the United States? What about a Korean-Canadian child with American-educated parents with doctorate degrees? Why do some researchers regard the Blacks in South Africa as the minority group although they outnumber the Whites? Indeed, not all Black children are minorities, not all White children are majorities, and not all immigrant children are minorities. In this sense, the term "minority" may not accurately represent a group of marginalized individuals (C. Lee, 2003). Yet, as Wirth (1945) noted, both objective and subjective criteria could be used to sociologically identify who belongs to a minority group or a majority group. This means that while objectively a person might be a majority, the person would argue that he/she is a minority, and vice versa.

Thus, although my reviews below would not always distinguish between research on minorities, research on immigrant children, and research on non-native speakers, I will continue to use the word "minority" in this literature review. This decision is made because (a) the term has been already used in many research studies; (b) it is explicitly or implicitly applied in the studies under consideration; (c) it encompasses varying criteria for minority that are applicable to "multicultural" children (e.g., class, immigration status, race/ethnicity, language, and culture); and (d) "multicultural" children are referred to as a group of "minority (or the socially weak; *sahoejeok yakja*; 사회적 약자)" in Korea. Ultimately, using the term "minority" would enable me to better contextualize "multicultural" children's lives in a more nuanced way.

Deficit Perspectives on Minority Youth

⁷ National Institutes of Health uses the thresholds published by the U.S. Bureau of the Census.

More serious is the way minority children are viewed: regardless of their countries of residence, they become the target of “labeling” (Rank, 2004). In the education system, *slow learners*, *learners with learning disabilities* or *reading disabilities*, *at risk* (with *high drop-out rates*), *linguistically disadvantaged* and *culturally disadvantaged* or *deprived*, and *remedial* are a few exemplary labels referring to minority children. In particular, these labels position minority youth as “they” who are different from “us,” and this “othering” process defines minority youth as unworthy (Apple, 2006). In other words, while children from mainstream backgrounds—“we”—are presented as hardworking, virtuous, and intelligent, minority children—“they”—are considered lazy, immoral, unstable, and impulsive. Indeed, as Oakes (1985) argued, the humiliating labels can be eventually used to justify minority youth’s (potential) failure in the mainstream society.

The power of labeling continues to produce more stereotypes about minority youth. For instance, if they learn English as a second language (L2), minority youth are assumed to have a language problem. This leads educators to either more easily put them into the special needs category (Artiles & Trent, 1994; Sullivan, 2011) or believe that they lag behind in school (Olsen, 2000; Morse, 2005; Suárez-Orozco, Suárez-Orozco, & Todorova, 2008; see Flores, Cousin, & Dias, 1991 for critiques). Moreover, minority youth’s home language(s) are devalued in school (Gutiérrez, Baquedano-López, & Asato, 2000), and their home culture (e.g., parents’ assumed inability to read and disinterest in their children’s education) are described as obstacles that prevent minority youth from adjusting to the mainstream society (Bhattacharya, 2000; Fuligni, 1997). This implies that despite the popular slogan that “all children can learn,” deficit perspectives on minority youth prevail around the globe (Sleeter, 2004).

Language Learning of Minority Youth

Language learning of minority youth has been an important theme of research because of the belief that language allows them to have access to more educational or professional opportunities. Thus, researchers have delved into minority youth’s learning of the language of schooling and their bilingualism/multilingualism. Yet, it is important to note that immigrant children, regardless of other criteria for minority, tend to be the target participants of various studies simply because they are more likely to use a home language(s) different from the dominant language of society (e.g., English in the United States). In addition, when the themes related to language rights, heritage language education, and bilingual/multilingual education emerge in the field of language studies along with minority education, immigrant families and their children are exhaustively studied (see Skutnabb-Kangas, 1995).

Minority youth’s learning of the high-status language repertoire.

Minority youth’s proficiency in the language of schooling has been extensively studied due to its close relationship with their academic success (Borrero & Bird, 2009; García, Jensen, & Scribner, 2009; Rumberger & Tran, 2008; Snow & Uccelli, 2009). In English-speaking countries, there are mainly two approaches to researching minority youth’s proficiency in the dominant language of society (i.e., English). One focuses on the domains of language that minority youth would need to learn, and the other centers on the factors that influence language learning of minority youth.

First, literacy scholars have strived to uncover how minority youth (in the case of the United States, mostly English learners), learn the domains of language.⁸ The major domains

⁸ A wide array of minority youth’s language background has been studied (e.g., African American Vernacular

include,

- a) Phonological and phonemic awareness (e.g., Lesaux & Siegel, 2003; Wang, Park, & Lee, 2006)
- b) Word recognition and identification (e.g., Geva, Yaghoub-Zadeh, & Schuster, 2000; Lesaux & Siegel, 2003)
- c) Vocabulary development (e.g., August, Carlo, Dressler, & Snow, 2005; Carlisle, Beeman, Davis, & Spharim, 1999)
- d) Oral language proficiency (e.g., Adams, 1990; Arab-Moghaddam & Sénéchal, 2001; Jiménez, García, & Pearson, 1996)
- e) Reading comprehension (e.g., Delain, Pearson, & Anderson, 1985; Manis, Lindsey, & Bailey, 2004; Verhoeven, 1990, 2000)
- f) Spelling and composition (e.g., Bermúdez & Prater, 1994; Lesaux & Siegel, 2003; McCarthey & García, 2005)

As these domains are interrelated, the relationship between one domain and others has also been probed (e.g., word recognition, vocabulary, and reading comprehension). Furthermore, by combining some of these domains, researchers such as Shin and colleagues (2015) examined the overall reading and writing proficiency in Chichewa (first language; L1) and English (L2), for example. Recently, researchers such as Hakuta, Butler, and Witt (2000), Pearson, Moje, and Greenleaf (2010), and Snow and Uccelli (2009) draw attention to academic language (e.g., academic vocabulary, knowledge of genre, and academic writing). For example, the issue of African American students' familiarity with academic language and its impact on their academic achievement has been explored (e.g., Charity, Scarborough, & Griffin, 2004).

Stemming from the Second Language Acquisition (SLA) tradition, the second approach explores factors that affect minority youth's learning of the dominant language in society. Representatively, responding to the popular belief that younger children are more capable L2 learners who can master an additional language easily and rapidly, Marinova-Todd, Marshall, and Snow (2000) contended that the impact of age was not on capacity to learn but on the situation of learning. In other words, age itself would not restrain learners from becoming proficient L2 users. Likewise, Wong Fillmore (1976, 1979) explored how Spanish-speaking immigrant children used various cognitive and social strategies in managing their interactions in English. For instance, she found that the children's strategies, which were affected by their personalities along with their desire to be proficient in English, facilitated or impeded their learning of English over a year. Key factors that have received scholarly attention include:

- a) Age (e.g., Ellis, Johnson, & Harley, 2000; Jia & Aaronson, 2003; MacSwan & Pray, 2005; Snow, 1983)
- b) Motivation⁹ and engagement (e.g., Bernaus, Masgoret, Gardner, & Reyes, 2004; Dörnyei, 1998; Noels, 2001)
- c) Language learning aptitude and intelligence (e.g., Carroll, 1991; Paradis, 2011)

English, Arabic, Urdu, Italian, and Korean); however, due to the presence of a robust Hispanic population, the majority of studies in the United States recruited Spanish-speaking immigrant children (e.g., Carlisle, Beeman, Davis, & Spharim, 1999; Manis, Lindsey, & Bailey, 2004).

⁹ Representatively, minority youth's instrumental motivation (i.e., learning language for practical purposes such as getting a better salary, entering a more prestigious college, and fulfilling a course requirement) and integrative motivation (i.e., learning language for other purposes such as understanding people who speak the language) have received scholarly attention.

- d) Learning styles¹⁰ (e.g., Bialystok, 1990; Reid, 1987; Wintergerst, DeCapua, & Verna, 2002)
- e) Personality¹¹ (e.g., Carrier, 2003; Steinberg & Horwitz, 1986; Wong Fillmore, 1979)
- f) L1¹² (Cummins, 1981, 1991; López & Greenfield, 2004; Odlin, 2003; Shin et al., 2015)
- g) Family backgrounds¹³ (e.g., Borrero & Yeh, 2010; Goldenberg, August, & Rueda, 2006; Páez, 2009; Reese, Garnier, Gallimore, & Goldenberg, 2000)
- h) Learning contexts¹⁴ (e.g., August & Hakuta, 1997; August & Shanahan, 2006)
- i) Identity (e.g., Gatbonton, Trofimovich, & Magid, 2005; McKay & Wong, 1996; Toohey, 1998, 2000)

Some of these research studies have different theoretical and methodological orientations; however, these factors suggest that language learning is a complex process that develops under diverse but interrelated conditions.

Although the two approaches could inform the field of language studies of how minority youth learn language(s), there seems to be limited intellectual interactions between the two. In order to bridge the two approaches to studying how language is learned, there is need for both a theory that embraces different aspects of minority youth's language learning and an empirical study that explores how multiple factors at the personal, familial, and school levels influence minority youth's overall proficiency in languages around them.

Minority youth's bilingualism/multilingualism.

The other major research strand on minority youth's language learning is their bilingual or multilingual competence. The theme becomes one of the core research areas because minority youth (mostly children of color who are from immigrant families) tend to have a home language(s) other than the dominant language in society. This leads researchers such as Cummins (1981), Skutnabb-Kangas (1995), Norton (1997), and Valdés (2005) to make connections between minority youth's heritage language learning and bilingualism.¹⁵ For instance, Guiberson, Barrett, Jancosek, and Itano (2006) explored how ten preschool-aged Spanish-speaking children in the United States used their L1 over three years. They found that children in the language loss group had different usage trajectories compared to children in the language maintenance group (e.g., grammatical errors, vocabulary, and language tasks). The researchers also revealed that the language mainly used with family members and/or peers would influence the Mexican immigrant children's Spanish maintenance or loss. Owing to the tight relationship between heritage language and ethnic/cultural identity, much heritage language

¹⁰ Learning styles include visual, aural, and kinesthetic learners, field independent learners (i.e., learners who tend to have more analytic, confident, and self-reliant cognitive styles), and field dependent learners (i.e., learners who tend to have holistic, uncertain, and dependent cognitive styles).

¹¹ Some examples of learners' personality can be talkativeness, empathy, self-esteem, responsiveness, anxiety, inhibition, and extroversion.

¹² Learners' L1 ability and L1 transfer/interference have received attention.

¹³ Factors such as learner's socioeconomic status, parents' levels of education and occupation, and their country of origin are considered crucial in minority youth's language learning.

¹⁴ Learning environments mostly concerned include educational setting, linguistic exposure, and opportunities to use language.

¹⁵ A wide array of minority youth's home language backgrounds have been examined, including Native American languages (e.g., McCarty, Zepeda, & Romero, 2006; Tse, 2001), Spanish (e.g., Guardado, 2002, 2009; Guiberson, Barrett, Jancosek, & Itano, 2006; Wong Fillmore, 1991), Chinese (e.g., He, 2006; Jia & Aaronson, 2003; Zhang & Slaughter-Defoe, 2009), Korean (e.g., Byon, 2003; G. Cho, 2000; S. M. Park & Sarkar, 2007; B. You, 2005), and Japanese (e.g., Chinen & Tucker, 2005).

research deals with minority youth's attitudes toward their heritage language(s) and/or motivation to learn it.

While the cognitive, social, cultural, and personal benefits of bilingualism or multilingualism have been acknowledged (e.g., Andreou & Karapetsas, 2004; Baker, 2006; Bialystock, 2009; Carlson & Meltzoff, 2008; de Abreu, Cruz-Santos, Tourinho, Martin, & Bialystok, 2012; Kharkhurin, 2012), minority youth's proficiency in multiple languages has been investigated. In particular, some researchers highlight minority youth's creativity in using multiple languages. In his groundbreaking work, Rampton (1995) showed how minority adolescents in Britain used Punjabi, Caribbean Creole, and Stylized Asian English (SAE) to negotiate their identities, build solidarity, and resist authority (i.e., *crossing*). Indeed, this work captured how they creatively and strategically used the languages of which they might not claim ownership. Similarly, in the context of the United States, Zentella (1997) explored Puerto Rican children's language practices and beliefs in private, public, and community spheres in New York City; she argued that through their use of code-switching or Spanglish, these minority youth signaled their cultural knowledge and established their sense of who they were as well as to where they belonged. Her work, along with other related studies such as Canagarajah (2011), García and Wei (2015), and Wei (2011, 2015),¹⁶ ultimately contributes to reframe minority youth's bilingual/multilingual practices from the manifestation of deficits in their capacities to the demonstration of their skillful, strategic, and inventive use of their language repertoires in various contexts.

More important is that these studies also raise the question of what multilingualism is. Arguing that the term itself assumes that language is a separate, bounded, and neutral entity (Makoni & Pennycook, 2007; Weber & Horner, 2012), researchers reason that multilingualism should be understood not as a collection of multiple languages spoken by an individual. Instead, as Blommaert (2010) suggested, multilingualism is

...a complex of *specific* semiotic resources, some of which belong to a conventionally defined 'language', while others belong to another 'language'. The resources are concrete accounts, language varieties, registers, genres, modalities such as writing—ways of using language in particular communicative settings and spheres of life, including the ideas people have about such ways of using, their language ideologies. (p. 102)

This broad way of conceptualizing multilingualism, therefore, calls attention to minority youth's practices of meaning making via multiple semiotic resources.

Cultural Learning of Minority Youth

Cultural learning of minority youth, particularly immigrant children, has been examined mostly from a social-psychological approach with the concept of *acculturation*¹⁷. In SLA,

¹⁶ Instead of using code-switching, these researchers introduce the term *translanguaging*. Canagarajah (2011) defined it as, "the ability of multilingual speakers to shuttle between languages, treating the diverse languages that form their repertoire as an integrated system" (p. 401). García and Wei (2013) argued that it was different from code-switching "in that it [translanguaging] refers not simply to a shift or a shuttle between two languages, but to the speakers' construction and use of original and complex interrelated discursive practices that cannot be easily assigned to one or another traditional definition of language, but that make up the speakers' complete language repertoire." (p. 22)

¹⁷ Theorized by a psychologist Berry (1974, 1997), the concept raises the question of whether minority youth are willing to maintain their cultural heritage and whether they value the intercultural contact with members of the dominant culture. Berry proposed four acculturation models depending on minority youth's attitudes to these issues:

Schumann (1978a, 1986) introduced the acculturation model, proposing that the more L2 learners acculturate to the dominant group in society (e.g., positive identification with members of the dominant culture and social and affective involvement in the dominant culture), the better they learn the language of the group. For instance, working with Hmong students in the United States, Boshier (1997) found that they became academically and socially more successful when they were able to adapt to the mainstream American culture in addition to maintaining their cultural heritage. Other studies have also added to the literature with findings showing that age of arrival, length of stay, and English proficiency of minority youth affect their acculturation to the dominant culture (e.g., Kuo & Roysircar, 2004; Olson, 1997; Schumann, 1978b; Yeh, 2003). Representatively, Yeh (2003) investigated Chinese, Japanese, and Korean immigrant youth's acculturation to the American culture and reached the conclusion that length of stay in the United States positively influenced the degree of their acculturation. Due to the assumption that older immigrants may experience more challenges upon their arrival to a new country, many studies recruited adult study participants and explored the relationship between their acculturation to the dominant society and their L2 learning (e.g., Kitch, 1982; Norton, 1998; Schmidt, 1983; Stauble, 1978).

Another scholarly approach, advocated by researchers such as Cummins (1986), Foley (1991), and Heath (1983), has tried to avoid deficit perspectives on minority youth's culture by focusing on the positive value of their linguistic resources. Promoting difference perspectives, the researchers argue that minority youth's home culture should not be seen as "disorganized" and "lacking"; instead, their culture (e.g., communication or learning styles, cultural characteristics, and linguistic registers) is simply different from that of their White, middle class peers. Although the approach seems to dismiss power inequalities associated with difference (i.e., difference inevitably entails the existence of a certain group's cultural norms), such difference perspectives enable more progressive practices to emerge in the education system (e.g., emphasis on culturally responsiveness, culturally relevant teaching, and multicultural education).

Nevertheless, these ways of researching minority youth's learning of culture reveal the limited understanding about culture. As Nasir and Hand (2006) critique, culture is regarded as "a system of meanings and practices, cohesive across time, which individual members carry with them from place to place" (p. 450). Furthermore, the value of minority youth's biculturalism or multiculturalism is understudied. Some of a few existing studies show that bicultural minority youth are known to have better psychological health (e.g., higher self-concept, self-esteem, and confidence), to become more resilient, and to be more likely to finish secondary education (Feliciano, 2001; Harrison, Wilson, Pine, Chan, & Buriel, 1990; LaFromboise, 1993). Yet, there is still little discussion on what it means for a minority child to be exposed to multiple cultural atmospheres, how these experiences raise him/her as a social being in various settings and ultimately, what multiculturalism indeed is.

Identity Construction of Minority Youth

Traditionally, the identities of minority youth have been studied because they show how minority youth relate themselves to the social world. This section thus reviews three themes of minority youth identity construction, namely, academic identities (related to racial/ethnic identities), bilingual/multilingual identities, and identities in youth culture.

Due to the significance of schooling in their everyday life, along with the issue of their

integration (i.e., both is important), *marginalization* (i.e., neither is important), *assimilation* (i.e., only contact is important), and *separation* (i.e., only cultural heritage is important).

language learning, minority youth's academic identities have been commonly examined together with their racial/ethnic identities (e.g., Davidson, 1996; Graham, Taylor, & Hudley, 1998; Oyserman, Harrison, & Bybee, 2001). Nasir, McLaughlin, and Jones (2009), for example, looked into how racial identity in school influenced African American high school students' academic engagement and achievement. The researchers revealed that minority youth who were critical thinkers of their social, racial, political, and historical positions and who were active and responsible supporters of their communities tended to be academically more successful. In a similar vein, exploring recent Vietnamese immigrant youth in the United States, Stritikus and Nguyen (2007) showed how students' cultural, ethnic, and academic identities were influenced by their applications of Vietnamese or American gender norms to varying contexts. For instance, the idea of gender equality in the United States empowered Vietnamese female children to tactically use it when they negotiated status and power with their Vietnamese male peers who tended to display male chauvinism in Vietnam.

The belief that minority youth would have a home language(s) other than the prestigious or dominant language in society makes their bilingual/multilingual identities one of the major objects of study in SLA. In relation to minority youth's heritage language learning, Tse (2000) explored how Asian Americans' ethnic identities were closely connected to their desire to maintain/develop their heritage language and become bilingual speakers. Similarly, by conducting interviews with 44 Armenian American children and adolescents, Imbens-Baily (1996) found that minority youth who were proficient in their heritage language expressed closer affinity with their ethnic community and more positive attitudes toward their bicultural experiences. In addition, by focusing on the linkage between audibility and identity negotiation, Miller (2004) argued that minority youth in Australia were pressured to sound alike in the Discourse of Australian peers in order not to be seen as different. She illustrated how Asian immigrant adolescents' strong foreign accents prevented them from being heard and understood despite their fluency in English.

Some researchers have also paid attention to minority youth's identity construction in the context of youth culture. For instance, Sarkar and Allen (2007) interviewed Haitian, Dominican, and African rappers in Quebec and analyzed how the discourses of progressive Quebec hip-hop allowed them to not only signal their multilingual and multiethnic identities, but also construct identities as critical and engaging social activists (see Samy Alim & Pennycook, 2007). Furthermore, minority youth's identities with regard to technology have been studied (e.g., Kramsch, 2009; Lam, 2000, 2004; Thorne, Black, & Sykes, 2009). For example, Lam (2000) demonstrated the way an ESL learner's experience on the Internet influenced his identity construction and English literacy development. Specifically, although Almon, a Chinese immigrant teenager in California, felt marginalized in the American education system due to his English proficiency, he found alternative social networks on the Internet and constructed his "imaginative I" (textual self) that was relatively different from the "reality I" through the use of English.

Overall, these diverse aspects of minority youth's identities confirm that they construct their identities in a variety of places (e.g., formal and informal, physical and virtual, and linguistic surrounding) and at various times for their appearance, use of semiotic resources, and signaling who they are. This suggests the need for examining minority youth's lives more holistically (e.g., where, how, and in what kinds of activity they put most of their time and efforts) in order to better capture their relation to the social world.

“Multicultural” Families and Children in Korea

To date, research on students from “multicultural” families in Korea is as emergent as the phenomenon itself. A growing body of work, however, delves into younger “multicultural” children’s acquisition of the Korean language and their adjustment to the Korean culture. The government spearheads the formulation of the current social atmosphere focusing on that particular issue. Using a cross-sectional design, the majority of government-funded projects and other studies claim that their Korean language deficiency lead the “multicultural” students to lag behind in schools (e.g., Ahn, 2007; Kim & Huh, 2008; Seol, H. Lee, & S. Cho, 2006). Some also have shown that students from “multicultural” families have a difficult time in mingling with their peers due to their lack of Korean proficiency (Jung & Woo, 2007; Seol, H. Lee, & S. Cho, 2006). Although a few studies challenge such findings (e.g., Korea Educational Development Institute, 2008), the dominant discourse in the field has been that “multicultural” students need special care.

Due to the exclusive emphasis on “multicultural” students’ acquisition of the Korean language and the culture, their mothers’ linguistic and cultural resources at home have been trivialized. Only a few studies point to the need for quality bilingual programs (e.g., Lee, 2011) for the effective upbringing of “multicultural” children. While they offer valid suggestions, these studies have not yet thoroughly discussed the different societal recognition attached to the respective languages and cultures of these mothers. Moreover, “multicultural” students’ English education has attracted little scholarly attention. No single study has investigated “multicultural” students’ socialization into global cultures and their English learning experiences. Such lack of literature precedents is surprising because English functions as the most powerful catalyst for upward social mobility in Korea (Krashen, 2003).

Gaps in the Literature

As shown in Review of the Literature, an extensive number of research studies aims to uncover how minority youth learn language and culture and construct their identities. However, their findings both illuminate and uncover the problem space that this dissertation raises.

- a) Deficit perspectives on minority youth: Researchers have a tendency to understand deficit perspectives in a narrow way by focusing on individuals’ attitudes and biases rather than addressing ideologies or conditions that permit the perspective to prevail (Gorski, 2011).
- b) Language learning of minority youth: The majority of existing studies have assumed that language learning is about possessing knowledge of grammatical and pragmatic rules and vocabulary. Furthermore, a considerable number of studies take a monolingual English speaker’s linguistic development as a norm, characterizing minority youth as a group of children who are not normal and who need to catch up to their monolingual English speaker peers. This suggests that deficit perspectives on minority youth are embedded in the investigation of their language and literacy learning (August, Shanahan, & Escamilla, 2009; Davies, 2000; Valdés, Poza, & Brooks, 2015).
- c) Cultural learning of minority youth: Remaining detached from language, culture is understood as a fixed and monolithic construction confined to geographical regions. In addition, minority youth are encouraged to assimilate to the dominant culture mostly by treating their home culture as subsidiary.
- d) Identity construction of minority youth: While diverse groups of minority youth have participated in the research about their identity construction, there are hardly any studies on multiethnic/multiracial minority youth’s identity construction vis-à-vis their

experiences with languages and cultures.¹⁸

The limited perspective on minority youth's language/cultural learning and identity construction leaves crucial questions about "multicultural" children in Korea unexamined: who benefits from emphasizing "multicultural" children's Korean deficiency?; how would they understand the stereotypes imposed upon them?; how would they more creatively use their linguistic and cultural resources around them?; and how would they identify themselves in varying contexts? Overall, research on flesh-and-blood individuals (Kramsch, 2009), who are categorized as "multicultural" and are surrounded by languages and cultures, has been extremely thin.

Research Questions

In order to unearth the external and internal influences that shape the fate of a group of minority youth in Korea, I formulated four overarching research questions in this study.

- 1) How are "multicultural" teenagers as a whole characterized and portrayed by the Korean media?
- 2) How does the level of Korean and English proficiency of "multicultural" teenagers compare to that of teenagers born to Korean mothers?
- 3) How do "multicultural" teenagers negotiate and construct the identities that are imposed on them at home and in school?
- 4) How do "multicultural" teenagers view their future in South Korea, in their mother's country of origin, and in a globalized world?

The study begins with the analysis of newspaper articles to illuminate the kinds of macro discourses related to "multicultural" teenagers. Using statistical analysis of large-scale, longitudinal data, I then indicate their Korean and English proficiency. To substantiate "multicultural" teenagers' imagination, creativity, and agency in constructing their identities vis-à-vis language and culture in the context of globalization, I employ ethnography of embedded case studies with a small number of adolescents born to immigrant mothers. By examining these four questions, I hope to demonstrate how Korean teenagers of mixed parentage resist the prevailing social stigma identified with them by using their linguistic and cultural resources and by (re)envisioning themselves in the context of globalization.

Organization of the Dissertation

This first chapter has offered a glimpse of this dissertation project, explained the importance of studying "multicultural" children in Korea, and provided the brief background of the study. To situate this study in a research tradition, the chapter has also reviewed the previous studies about minority youth and their language/cultural learning as well as their identity construction.

The second chapter discusses how an ecological theoretical framework informs this study. Specifically, this chapter seeks to explain why it is important to capture the holistic system of "multicultural" children's lives. It also examines the intersection of language, culture, and identity so that I can explore "multicultural" children's historical trajectories, challenges,

¹⁸ To my knowledge, only a few studies explored mixed-heritage individuals' identity construction vis-à-vis learning languages and cultures (De Souza, 2006; S. Shin, 2010; Wright, Taylor, & Macarthur, 2000). Representatively, S. Shin (2010) investigated the language experiences and attitudes of mixed-heritage adults in the United States (i.e., one of their parents was an English-speaking American while the other was minority language-speaking immigrant).

imagination, and agency in learning language/culture and in constructing their identities. This study benefits from the key concepts of context, meaning, language, interaction, culture/Discourse, identity, and timescales within ecological perspectives.

The third chapter introduces the research design of this study, research settings for three distinctive but interconnected stages, procedures for data collection, study participants, data sources, and analytical methods. This chapter also describes how opportunities as well as challenges that I faced in recruiting and interacting with my study participants in the ethnography phase.

Chapters Four to Eight present the findings of the dissertation. Chapter Four traces the manner in which Korean children of mixed parentage are portrayed by the media. To contextualize the study in “multicultural” teenagers’ macro ecological system, it investigates the kinds of discourses related to them. In addition, this chapter discusses what it means to have the identified discourses and what ideologies (e.g., democracy, nationalism, and neoliberalism) support them.

In Chapter Five, the results from statistical analysis about how the level of Korean and English proficiency of “multicultural” teenagers compares to that of teenagers born to Korean mothers are presented. This chapter examines the foundational assumption of prevailing derogatory discourses about “multicultural” youth—that their alleged deficiency in Korean causes numerous issues in Korean society.

In Chapters Six, Seven, and Eight, I introduce six “multicultural” children that I met in Incheon, Korea throughout 2014. In Chapter Six, I look closely at how two of the focal students position themselves as legitimate and successful members in Korean society. Tayo and Sungho show their desires to fit into the Korean education system by trying hard to become high achievers and model students in school. At the same time, they reveal the way they understand the term “multicultural” and capitalize their “multicultural” resources. Thus, I argue that they are becoming “Korean-Plus” citizens whom I define as individuals who are more than elites in a traditional sense due to their critical thinking skills, international networks, and/or multilingual/multicultural potentialities.

Chapter Seven illustrates two focal “multicultural” adolescents who envision their mother’s countries as alternative places to live, work, and/or study. For instance, because of his father who (temporarily) migrated to Vietnam to obtain a stable job, Heedong imagines Vietnam as a place that he can escape from Korea. The other boy with a Filipina mother called Jinsoo perceives the Philippines as a stepping-stone to further his educational career due to one of the official languages in the Philippines, i.e., English. In this chapter, I will argue that the stigmatized “multicultural” children are in the process of becoming cosmopolitan citizens.

The last result chapter of the ethnographic part of this dissertation study discusses two focal “multicultural” teenagers’ inventive ways of managing their multilingual and multicultural identities. Both Hayang and Artanis had experienced issues with family (e.g., father’s sudden death, parents’ divorce, step-father, and half-brother), school (e.g., fights and school violence), and emotional stability (e.g., thinking of committing suicide). However, they began to find creative ways of relieving their stress and communicating with others: they not only navigate multilingual and multicultural resources on the Internet, but also draw cartoons and share them on the websites. By using drawing—a safer means of communication for them—both Hayang and Artanis are becoming “multilingual” in a broader sense. In the end, I pay attention to the value of these two children’s repetitive, multisemiotic practices.

Last but not least, Chapter Nine summarizes the research findings, discusses implications,

identifies new questions raised by this dissertation, and proposes new directions for future research.

Chapter 2. Theoretical Framework: An Ecological Perspective

This study addresses Korean “multicultural” youth’s language/cultural learning and identity construction in the context of globalization. In order to capture how “multicultural” teenagers reconstruct their stigmatized identities and how they navigate varying contexts through their linguistic and cultural resources, an ecological theory provides an overarching framework for this project. This decision was carefully made for the framework allows me to explore the intersection of language, culture, and identity. In this chapter, therefore, I discuss what the term *ecology* means, how the theory views language, culture, and identity, and how language/cultural learning is related to constructing identity from ecological perspectives.

The Ecology Metaphor, Environment, and Context

The term *ecology* was coined by a German life scientist Haeckel in 1866. The etymology of the word is *oecology*: the *oeco* part is derived from Greek (*oikos*), meaning house, habitation, and dwelling place while *logy* signifies study of. So ecology can be defined as “the total science of the organism’s relation to the surrounding environment, to which we can count in a wider sense all ‘conditions of existence’” (Kramsch & Steffensen, 2008, p. 17). On account of its holistic approach to understand organisms and their environments in the system, the term has attracted attention in multiple disciplines, including biology, earth science, city planning, sociology, economics, and education.

The field of language studies was not an exception. It was Haugen (2001[1972]) who first used the word *ecology* to describe *language ecology* (or *ecolinguistics*), namely “the study of interactions between any given language and its environment” (p. 57). Then more widely, the term has been used as a way to respond to modernist perspectives that conceive the world as static, closed, and monolithic and that produce numerous dichotomies such as input versus output and acquisition versus use. Ultimately, ecology is used as a metaphor to depict the reciprocal and relational interactions between individuals and multiple levels of environmental systems (Kramsch, 2002).

As hinted in the etymology of ecology and in the way the word has been used in the field, one of the keywords related to ecology is *environment*. This is because environment is a space where language is used, is influenced, and exerts its power as well as where its users become social beings. Representatively, Haugen (2001[1972]) views environment in two ways: (a) the society in which a language is used (i.e., the sociological dimension) and (b) the mind of its user who makes language functional by relating him/herself to others and to nature (i.e., the psychological dimension). Furthermore, focusing on the relationship between environment and individuals, Sapir back in 1912 discussed the direct and indirect impact of environment on individuals. He particularly argued that the influence of the physical environment was derived from the social environment. That is, without any social interest in referring to a structure in the physical environment (e.g., mountain), there needs no linguistic symbol for it. Only through social forces exercised by individuals who are situated in and react to the physical environment, the physical environment gains its meaning and the social existence. To sum, environment includes physical, social, and psychological aspects of individuals’ surroundings.

The discussion of environment is inseparable from the notion of *context*; in fact, it becomes crucial in the analysis of language use. For instance, Hymes (1962) paid attention to communication contexts and emphasized the importance of applying knowledge of the rules of

language into different contexts appropriately (see Hymes, 1974 for the SPEAKING¹⁹ model and his notion of *communicative competence*). Similarly, by critiquing imbalance between cognitive/mentalistic and social/contextual orientations in the field of SLA, Firth and Wagner (1997) also called for “a significantly enhanced awareness of the contextual and interactional dimensions of language use” (p. 286).

Thus, scholarly attempts to understand what context means have continued (see Duranti & Goodwin, 1992 for the extensive discussion of context). Among others, Kramsch (1993) theorized the concept as follows:

contexts are alignments of reality along five different axes²⁰: linguistic, situational, interactional, cultural, and intertextual. Context is shaped by persons in dialogue with one another, saying things about the world and thus making statements about themselves and their relationship to one another. Through this dialogue, they exchange and negotiate meanings that belong to a community’s stock of common knowledge and that draw on the variety of past and present ‘texts’. Context is the matrix created as discourse and as a form of social practice. (p. 46)

Echoing Kramsch’s explanations, Blommaert (2005) referred context to “the way in which linguistic forms—‘text’—become part of, get integrated in, or become constitutive of larger activities in the social world” (p. 39). Due to this relational, social, changing, and thus recreatable nature of context, its users’ worldviews, histories and memories, and emotions become important in the analysis of their language use.

Overall, the ecology metaphor brings language, its users, their environments, and the interaction between these components together. This enables researchers to investigate the idiosyncratic system of one’s experience with language in various contexts and of his/her historical positionality (Blommaert, 2005; Kramsch, 2002). Thus, the following section will discuss how ecological perspectives view language, culture, and identity.

Language, Culture, and Identity from Ecological Perspectives

Language

Advocating holism, ecological perspectives perceive language as “a mediator between cultural and natural ecosystems” (Kramsch & Steffensen, 2008, p. 18). This implies that language is not an abstract, transparent, and conduit object that is separable from social reality (i.e., Saussure’s *langue*). Instead of simply describing a pre-existing world, language, as living utterances, is socially embedded (Bakhtin, 1981) and thus, meaning lies in interactions with others (Larsen-Freeman, 1997; Rampton, 2007). For example, what language to use in a situation as well as what words and grammar to use shape the context of interaction, and meaning emerges from the context.

Language also functions as “the place where actual and possible forms of social organization and their likely social and political consequences are defined and contested”

¹⁹ Hymes’ acronym SPEAKING stands for setting and scene, participants, ends, acts sequence, key, instrumentalities, norms, and genre.

²⁰ In explaining how contexts are shaped, Johnstone (2008) later specified the referential, structural, interpersonal, textual, medial, and silential dimensions of language. The referential dimension describes the nature of language that refers to a social reality and that in turn shapes language users’ perceptions of the reality and again influences their use of language. The structural dimension includes grammatical affordances and constraints (e.g., lexical resources). The interpersonal dimension embraces interpersonal relations among participants. The textual dimension means prior discourses that channel language users’ memories, interpretations, and expectations. The medial dimension deals with technologies necessary for interaction. The silential dimension is what is unsaid but implied.

(Weedon, 1997, p. 21). In other words, language controls social reality and is not neutral (Bakhtin, 1981; Weedon, 1987); in fact, it is ideologically saturated and is not monolithic (Bakhtin, 1981). As Foucault (1975) highlighted the power/knowledge nexus, it is through language that knowledge (e.g., ways of organizing meaning) is generated and knowledge is in the service of power. This suggests that power—a process and a principle of life that is accessible and manipulatable by everyone—is inherent in the system. Therefore, who uses what language where, when, and for what are closely related to larger issues of power.

Moreover, language is the historical baggage that constantly evolves (Blommaert, 2005; Canagarajah, 2007). For instance, the choice to use Korean instead of Japanese under Japanese Rule in the 1930s was a highly political one due to histories and emotions that the Korean language carried. In a similar vein, even smiling and saying “Hi” to a stranger on the street display one’s sense of values and beliefs because traditionally it is understood as an action to humanize others and appreciate their presence. This way, language reflects its users’ values, worldviews, and cultural presuppositions that shape the context they are living.

These roles of language make its system open, complex, dynamic, nonlinear, and adaptive (Canagarajah, 2007; Larsen-Freeman, 1997; Larsen-Freeman & Cameron, 2008). Specifically, each time one uses language, it changes; this change is unpredictable and nonlinear. And because language consists of interdependent subsystems such as lexicon and syntax, a change in one subsystem results in another change in other subsystems. Furthermore, through the passage of time and the contexts of language used, the historicity of language becomes enriched; and this leads language to be complex, evolving, and adaptive.

Culture

In addition to the aforementioned functions of language, it stands for beliefs and practices that members of a social group share in a particular space and time (Halliday, 1978). This is what has come to be called *culture*. Without the meaning that language gives to social reality, we only have observable reality rather than culture. This indicates that, created and enacted through language (Kramsch, 1993; Pennycook, 2001), culture is “a dynamic discursive process, constructed and reconstructed in various ways by individuals engaged in struggles for symbolic meaning and for the control of identities, subjectivities and interpretations of history” (Kramsch, 2013, pp. 68-69). Indeed, as Crawford and McLaren (2003) noted, culture is the constellation of multiple voices that reflect a wide range of competing discourses full of political interests. This way, culture is Discourse, i.e., “a structuring principle of society, in social institutions, modes of thought and individual subjectivity” (Weedon, 1987, p. 41). Such conceptualization of culture makes it detached from modernist approaches to culture, i.e., a monolithic and homogeneous construction bounded on geographical regions and transmitted from generation to generation (see Kramsch, 1993 for critique of these perspectives on culture).

Identity

Within the ecological theoretical framework, language expresses social reality by enabling its users to gain or lose access to power and ultimately to negotiate/construct their identities²¹ across time and space (Halliday, 1978; Heller, 1987; Kramsch, 2012; Weedon, 1997). Specifically, Cameron (1997) argued, “people are who they are because of (among other things)

²¹ Some researchers introduce terms that can substitute the word *identity*: *subjectivity*, *subject positioning*, and *social identity* are a few examples of the alternatives. Although there is value of using these terms, I use *identity* as an overarching concept throughout this dissertation.

the way they talk” (p. 49); similarly, by expanding Austin’s notion of *performative*²², Butler (1990) emphasized that identities would be “performatively constituted by the very ‘expressions’ that are said to be its results” (p. 25). These researchers commonly point out the discursive nature of identity construction. In other words, because language does not simply represent one’s idea but signals his/her life history, affiliation, stance, attitude, and nuance (Rampton, 2007), his/her positions and identities can be understood through the way he/she uses language.

It is, however, important to note that one’s sense of self is not always under his/her control (Davies & Harre, 1990). Because an individual is socially made up through language and interaction, his/her identities not only depend on his/her own intentions, desires, and choices, but also need to be recognizable and recognized in a context. In other words, it is not that one’s own understanding of him/herself enables him/her to form who he/she is; instead, one’s identity is formed through the sedimentation of the moment that he/she positions him/herself and is positioned as a certain kind of person. This would be why such moment becomes a site of power struggle because power allows and constrains individuals to negotiate their positions vis-à-vis others in the social world and to construct who they are (Foucault, 1994).

Ultimately, Weedon (1997) defined identities—in fact, through the term *subjectivities*—as “the conscious and unconscious thoughts and emotions of the individual, her sense of herself and her ways of understanding her relation to the world” (p. 32). And Kramsch (2009) contributed to the theorization of identity from ecological perspectives by supplementing the role of symbolic forms in constructing identities: individuals (re)present themselves through the use of symbolic systems, and the symbolic meaning they give to themselves in relation to others become their sense of self. In particular, Lemke (2000, 2002) added the scales of time to the conceptualization of how identities are formed; they are constituted here and now, in the memories of previous experiences, and in the fantasies and future. Identities, therefore, are inevitably fluid, multiple, precarious, and contradictory (Block, 2007).²³

To summarize, the three key concepts—language, culture, and identity—are inseparable from each other. In the ecological system, language user’s identities are constructed through language within culture. This is because any aspect of any element in the system needs to be understood in relation to other parts of the system. In this sense, the ecological theoretical framework highlights the totality of an individual’s life that includes him/herself, others, social and physical environments, and the interaction of these components across multiple timescales.

The Ecology of Learning and the Intersection of Language, Culture, and Identity Learning

How would the ecological theoretical framework understand *learning*? According to Kramsch (2002), “learning is a nonlinear, relational human activity, co-constructed between humans and their environment, contingent upon their position in space and history, and a site of struggle for the control of social power and culture memory” (p. 5). Learning is nonlinear, for it is an open, chaotic, and unpredictable process; learning is relational, for it is mediated by various semiotic means and activities (Ellis & Larsen-Freeman, 2006; Marchman & Thal, 2005). This

²² Butler (1993) defined *performativity* as the “reiterative power of discourse to produce the phenomena that it regulates and constrains (p. 2).”

²³ This way, the understanding of identity from ecological perspectives moves away from rather modernist perspectives on identity; namely, identity as a singular, unitary, stable self that holds one’s integrity and that is determined by his/her association with social groups such as Asian, women, Catholic, or gay (e.g., Billig, 1995; Tajfel, 1982; Turner, 1985) or with roles like mother, wife, student, or boss (Pierce, 1995).

means that learning emerges from the dynamic interaction between learners and their historical, social, and cultural environments as parts of an interconnected living organism (Larsen-Freeman, 1997; Larsen-Freeman & Cameron, 2008). From ecological perspectives, therefore, learning is more than a process of transferring a neat set of knowledge to learners.

Language Learning

In learning language, from ecological perspectives, learners not only learn prescriptive rules and uses of language²⁴; they also embody a historical and emotional baggage of language (Kramsch, 2008). They are immersed with environments full of potential meanings, which operate at multiple levels of detail, on multiple timescales, and in multiple forms (Kramsch, 2002; Lemke, 2002; van Lier, 2000).²⁵ In order to understand and negotiate these meanings, language learners navigate the totality of contexts, strategically utilize and adapt their resources (e.g., linguistic, cultural, and symbolic), and ultimately influence the context of interaction (Larsen-Freeman, 2006; van Lier, 2000). Such dialogic and relational interplay between learners and contexts, i.e., “an embodied and situated activity (van Lier, 2002, p. 146),” facilitates the process of language learning.

Ecological perspectives reveal largely three aspects of how learners learn language. First, due to relationality of learners and their environments, language learning is complex and nonlinear (Kramsch, 2002; Larsen-Freeman, 1997, 2006). Because learners bring their own life histories, memories, emotions, and motivations to learn language, each of them interacts with environments differently with the presence of diverse interlocutors²⁶. Furthermore, as a minute difference on initial conditions of learners can produce enormous effects later—a kind of “butterfly effect”—it is impossible to see a straightforward cause and effect relationship between teaching and learning.

Second, language learning involves mediation (Lantolf & Genung, 2002; van Lier, 2000). As discussed, meaning is contextualized in the interaction of interlocutors, artifacts, events, and environments. So when learners actively participate in semiotic activity by detecting, picking up, and acting upon affordances²⁷—“what is available to the person to do something with” (van Lier, 2004, p. 91)—around their environments, language emerges (Kramsch, 2002; van Lier, 2004). Such mediated action leads learners to build more than the representation/structure of language, making language learning a more open process.

Third, from ecological perspectives, language learning occurs across multiple timescales (Lemke, 2000, 2002). Learners embody memories of the past, live the present, and imagine the future; because they operate on different timescales, their bodies—as *memory pads* (Bourdieu, 1991)—engage with others in varying ways depending on interlocutors, topics, situations, and so forth. This makes impossible to predict a learner’s developmental path, but the addition of

²⁴ This view of learning considers language as a tool to communicate.

²⁵ Observing that environments are full of meanings, Blommaert (2005) coined the term *layered simultaneity*. He argued, “We have to conceive of discourse as subject to layered simultaneity. It occurs in a real-time, synchronic event, but it is simultaneously encapsulated in several layers of historicity, some of which are within the grasp of the participants while others remain invisible but are nevertheless present” (p. 130).

²⁶ An interlocutor is understood as a person who participates in a conversation.

²⁷ According to Shotter and Newson (1982), affordances include “demands and requirements, opportunities and limitations, rejections and invitations, enablements and constraints” (p. 34). These affordances can be visible and detectable through interlocutors’ projections, predictions, expectations, and consequences of utterances (Forrester, 1999).

timescales to the ecological model of learning enables learners to imagine/address more competent selves.

To summarize, by illustrating the complex and dynamic interaction of multiple levels of systems and multiple timescales, the ecological theoretical framework allows researchers to focus on each learner's idiosyncratic experience with language and creative ways of language learning. In other words, ecological perspectives transform traditional dichotomies in SLA such as input versus output and native speaker versus non-native speaker into continua.

Learning of Culture

As the entangled relation between language and culture, language learning and cultural learning are inseparable: learning language means to become a competent member in a social world (i.e., learning culture), and developing a sense of what is and is not appropriate in the course of one's everyday life entails learning of language(s) of a speech community (Bourdieu, 1977, 1991²⁸; Kramsch, 2013; Ochs, 2002; Ochs & Schiffelin, 1984).

Specifically, learning of culture is more than learning a speech community's material articles (e.g., dress and housing), festivals (e.g., holiday, dance, and music), practices and values (e.g., patriarchy, hierarchy, and individualism), and foods. It is to understand categories and rules of interaction and to know expectations as well as strategies for positioning oneself in interaction (Ochs, 2002). For instance, being aware of how to take turns, how to interpret what just happened, how to seize affordances, how to perform what is expected to occur, and how to position other interlocutors in a particular context are a few dimensions of cultural knowledge that learners cultivate in learning language. This implies that culture cannot be explicitly taught; instead, as part and parcel of language education, learners learn culture through their participation in language use in a context.

Indeed, learning of culture means to be socialized into a speech community's Discourse, namely, "ways of talking, listening, writing, reading, acting, interacting, believing, valuing, and feeling (and using various objects, symbols, images, tools, and technologies) in the service of enacting meaningful socially situated identities and activities" (Gee, 2001, p. 719). In other words, cultural learning is to build similar ways of remembering, viewing, and imagining reality (Kramsch, 2013; Ochs, 2002).

Language/Cultural Learning and Constructing Identity

Indeed, the process of becoming capable members in a social world through the use of language inevitably involves the construction of identities because "to speak is to take up a position in a social field in which all positions are moving and defined relative to one another" (Hanks, 1996, p. 201).²⁹ This suggests that by using language, learners construct/alter social reality in a way that is relevant to them (Larsen-Freeman, 2006) and signal their stances, behaviors, attitudes, nuances, roles, statuses, and relationships (Rampton, 2007). Thus, when learners engage in language/cultural learning activity mediated by interlocutors, artifacts, environments, and their bodies, they observe who they are from the inside as well as through the eyes of others (Kramsch, 2002; Lemke, 2002). And this learning process opens up new possible identities for learners.

²⁸ This is what Bourdieu (1991) called *practical sense*.

²⁹ Similarly, Lemke (2002) also argued, "Speaking is not possible without the constitution and construal of what we believe, what we value, and where we find ourselves in the systems of social classification" (p. 72).

Conclusion

Overall, ecological perspectives provide the useful framework to capture the holistic system in which learners learn language/culture and construct their identities. In particular, the ecological theoretical framework enables researchers to explore learners' historical trajectories, interactions with environments, and imagination (Larsen-Freeman, 1997) and to identify as well as describe affordances, paradoxes, and contradictions in learners' experiences of language/cultural learning (Kramsch, 2002). Therefore, in examining how Korean minority teenagers (i.e., "multicultural" children) construct their identities vis-à-vis linguistic and cultural practices around them, I will draw on concepts such as context, meaning, language, negotiation, interaction, culture/Discourse, identity, relationality, and timescales within the ecological theoretical framework discussed in this chapter. I will show how the youth in this project (a) navigate the social context that stigmatizes them and (b) use their resources to carve out their own futures in the context of globalization. In the following chapter, I will discuss research design that lays the groundwork for this dissertation.

Chapter 3. Description of Project Design

Research Design

Using a mixed methods design (Johnson & Onwuegbuzie, 2004; Tashakkori & Creswell, 2007), this study examines how Korean teenagers of mixed parentage resist the prevailing social stigma identified with them. In particular, the study focuses on their use of linguistic and cultural resources and their capacity to imagine themselves in the context of globalization. The need for mixed methods for this research arises because neither quantitative nor qualitative methods can, by themselves, tell the entire story. To uncover perceptions and assumptions about “multicultural” families and to capture “multicultural” adolescents’ intricate interactions with languages, cultures, and identities in the larger interconnected system, a mixed methods design is essential.

Table 3.1 below presents the research questions and the methods. The “stages” referred to in the table are distinctive data collection periods/components of this dissertation (see Figure 3.1 for the relationships of stages).

Table 3.1 Research Questions and Related Methods

Research Questions	Related Artifacts & Analytical Methods
1. How are “multicultural” teenagers as a whole characterized and portrayed by the Korean media?	Stage 1. News article articles, critical discourse analysis
2. How does the level of Korean and English proficiency of “multicultural” teenagers compare to that of teenagers born to Korean mothers?	Stage 2. Large-scale longitudinal data, statistical analysis (the linear growth curve model)
3. How do “multicultural” teenagers negotiate and construct the identities that are imposed on them at home and in school?	Stage 3. Fieldnotes, interview transcripts, study participants’ artifacts, online postings, surveys, ethnography of embedded case studies, thematic analysis, discourse analysis
4. How do “multicultural” teenagers view their future in South Korea, in their mother’s country of origin, and in a globalized world?	

Stage 1: Critical Discourse Analysis of “Multicultural” Discourses

As a sequential mixed method study (Johnson & Onwuegbuzie, 2004), the study begins with the analysis of newspaper articles to thematize the kinds of macro discourses related to “multicultural” teenagers. Locating this study within a larger sociocultural context is important in exploring the ideologies about “multicultural” teenagers and avoiding the reproduction of social prejudice attached to them. Stage 1 will contextualize the study in “multicultural” teenagers’ macro ecological system. In addition, this qualitative phase will inform the quantitative phase.

Stage 2: Statistical Analysis of “Multicultural” Teenagers’ Language Proficiency

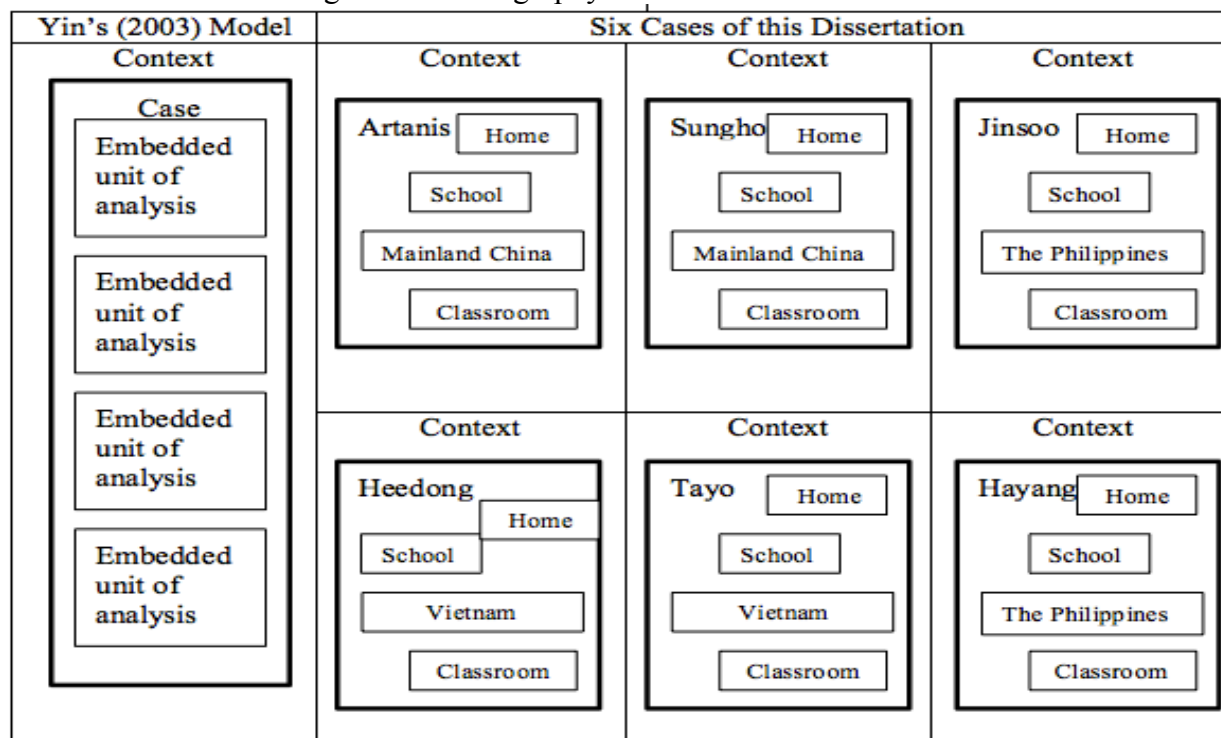
Stage 2 delineates “multicultural” teenagers’ proficiency in Korean and in English. Specifically, by using statistical analysis of large-scale longitudinal data collected by Korean Educational Development Institute (KEDI, a government-funded research institute), this quantitative phase will probe the extent to which the dominant belief about “multicultural” teenagers’ limited Korean deficiency is legitimate. In addition, Stage 2 draws more attention to their English learning. Based on what I find from this stage, I will explicate how quantitative

results explain, support, and/or contradict qualitative results emerged in Stage 1. The discussion of these two stages would pave the way for a more micro-level investigation of “multicultural” teenagers’ life in Stage 3.

Stage 3: Ethnography of Embedded Case Studies

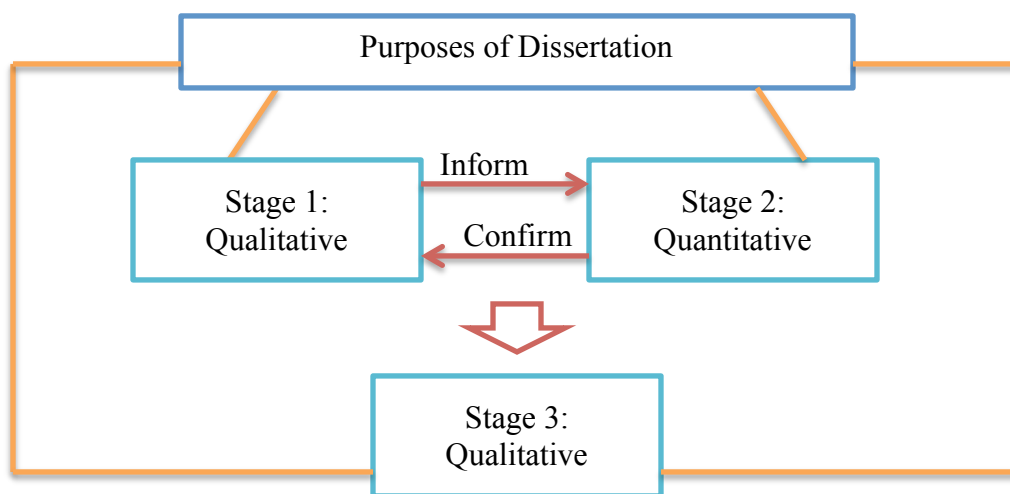
To substantiate “multicultural” teenagers’ imagination, creativity, and agency in constructing their identities vis-à-vis linguistic and cultural practices, Stage 3 employs ethnography of embedded case studies (Duff, 2008; Scholz & Tietje, 2002; Yin, 2003). With a small number of cases that are bounded in contextual conditions, it utilizes what ethnographers would do in conducting research, including participant observation, ethnographic description, interviews, triangulation, and discourse analysis. The design has the label “embedded” because it involves multiple units of analysis within each case of “multicultural” children born to immigrant mothers (Yin, 2003). In other words, because “multicultural” youth are bounded in multiple contexts, their experiences will be analyzed through multiple units of analysis, ranging from Korea (country as an analytical unit) to six families/homes (family/home as an analytical unit), to five schools they went to (school as an analytical unit), to classrooms that they belonged to (classroom as another analytical unit), and to several focal teachers who taught them (teacher as another analytical unit). This way, similar and different features of focal students’ lived experiences as “multicultural” would be unearthed. Ultimately, ethnography of embedded case studies would provide insights into the study participants’ relationships and interactional patterns with larger contexts and allow us “to understand the complexity and dynamic nature of the particular entity, and to discover systematic connections among experiences, behaviors, and relevant features of the context” (Johnson, 1992, p. 84). This last qualitative phase will integrate the findings of both Stage 1 and Stage 2.

Figure 3.1 Ethnography of Embedded Case Studies



Overall, although qualitative methods would be a more primary mode of inquiry in this study, the combination of qualitative and quantitative methods benefits from the strengths of both and complements the weaknesses of each other (Johnson & Onwuegbuzie, 2004). On the one hand, Stage 1 and Stage 3 aim to secure the emic, i.e., insider’s perspective. By constructing macro/micro realities that each student faces, this study dynamically describes “multicultural” teenagers’ experiences in depth. On the other hand, this study benefits from Stage 2 that provides more time- and context-free generalizations about the target population. As such, this dissertation bridges quantitative and qualitative methods and offers a more comprehensive and complex picture of social phenomena related to “multicultural” families and teenagers (see Figure 3.2).

Figure 3.2 Sequential Mixed Methods Research Design of this Study



Research Setting

Stage 1: Critical Discourse Analysis of “Multicultural” Discourses

Responding to changing Korea in the context of globalization, newspapers have published a number of articles about the phenomenon, particularly about “multicultural” families and children. I chose three daily newspapers to understand macro discourses about the population of interest: the *Hankyoreh* (한겨레), the *Hankook Ilbo* (한국일보), and the *Chosun Ilbo* (조선일보). I chose these newspapers because, as a group, they represent the full range of political views in Korea, including progressive (the *Hankyoreh*), moderate (the *Hankook Ilbo*), and conservative (the *Chosun Ilbo*) voices, respectively.

The *Hankyoreh* is one of the most progressive daily newspapers with more than 281,000 daily circulation. It was founded in 1988 when dissident journalists were forced out from the *Chosun Ilbo* and the *Donga Ilbo* and when they attempted to create an alternative newspaper that is not influenced by political power and large capital (Shim, n.d.). More than 60,000 citizen shareholders have run the *Hankyoreh* (a person has no more than one percent share). Although it is the fourth largest newspaper in Korea, the *Hankyoreh*’s subscriber base is still small compared to the three other major daily newspapers (i.e., the *Chosun Ilbo*, the *Joongang Ilbo*, and *Donga Ilbo*).

The *Hankook Ilbo* was established in 1954. Among reporters and news writers, the *Hankook Ilbo* is known as the comparably most neutral daily newspapers (J. H. Shin, personal communication, June 17, 2013). The newspaper was considered one of the major newspapers in

Korea until the 1970s; in the 1960s, it began to lose its influential power due to founder's advance into politics and brain drain to the Joongang Ilbo (Ahn, 1999).

The Chosun Ilbo, which was founded in 1920, is the major daily newspaper in Korea. According to the newspaper, its daily circulation is over 1,840,000 (the largest print circulation in the nation-state). The Chosun Ilbo was initially known as the critical press during Japanese colonial rule (1910-1945). Yet, it has taken a particular political stance that favors conservative parties as well as business and has been criticized by some progressives and related presses.

Stage 2: Statistical Analysis of “Multicultural” Teenagers’ Language Proficiency

A nationwide annual longitudinal survey that has followed first graders of middle school (Year 1 was in 2005; seventh graders in the United States) for more than 15 years (End Year will be in 2023), the Korean Education Longitudinal Study (KELS) has been conducted by KEDI which has made publicly available its dataset. KELS has similar structures to the United States’ National Educational Longitudinal Study of 1988 and Educational Longitudinal Study of 2002.

According to KEDI, it adopted a stratified cluster random sampling method in choosing the sample of the students across Korea. Specifically, through a proportional stratified random sampling, KEDI first identified the ideal number of schools that needs to take part in the survey. Based on the size of cities in Korea, it created four strata (i.e., Seoul, metropolitan cities, micropolitan cities, and rural areas) and surveyed how many students each stratum serves. Then KEDI calculated the number of schools and students it needs to recruit from each stratum. The next step involved in selecting schools (i.e., clusters of each stratum) randomly. The last step was to sample students from the drawn schools at random. The research team aimed to secure 50 sample students; however, when a school had students fewer than 50, all students were drawn in the survey. The total number of students that KELS included in Year 1 was 6,907 out of 703,914 students who entered 2,929 middle schools in 2005.

The sampled students have been given a series of questionnaires ranging from demographic information to personal, familial, and school-related information (e.g., habits, self-concept, tutoring experience, family type, future career, socioeconomic background, peer relations, and student-teacher relations). In particular, their Korean, English, and math abilities were annually measured (each test took 40 minutes). For Korean and English, the students’ listening, reading, and writing (grammar) competence were tested.

Stage 3: Ethnography of Embedded Case Studies

The city.

Stage 3 of the current study took place in Incheon Metropolitan City. It is located in northwestern Korea and is the third most populous city after Seoul (the capital city) and Busan (the largest port city). In 2014, there were more than 2.8 million registered residents (Incheon Metropolitan City, n.d.). With the largest international airport in Korea and a seaport and with geographical proximity to Seoul, Incheon has led the economic development of Korea. Due to its domestic and international transportation facilities, Incheon has multiple industrial complexes, attracting more Korean and foreign workers. Recently, as part of national development project, Free Economic Zone is established in Songdo that makes Incheon more international. Due to the large number of foreign inhabitants in Incheon, it has the only official “Chinatown” district in the nation-state.

The city is also known for one of the most representative “multicultural” families’ settlement along with Ansan. This is because living in Incheon is less expensive than living in

Seoul or other areas proximal to Seoul and because the city is home for various types of education such as Haemill School (the first alternative school in Korea), Incheon Hannuri Multicultural School (the first and only public school for “multicultural” children in Korea), and international college campuses (e.g., State University of New York and George Mason University).

Table 3.2 presents more specific demographic information about Incheon in comparison with Seoul and Busan (Incheon Metropolitan City, n.d.).

Table 3.2 Demographic Information about Three Big Korean Cities in 2014

	Total Population	Foreign Population	Migrant Workers	Foreign Brides	Ethnic Koreans	Children w/ Foreign Parent
Seoul	10,143,645	415,059	104,309	240,203	96,440	204,204
Busan	3,527,635	54,394	16,142	14,564	4,724	9,022
Incheon	2,879,782	82,523	27,388	13,779	10,749	11,964

Note: “Foreign brides” in this table include women who migrated to Korea via international marriage and who became naturalized Korean citizens.

Compared to 2013, more than 7,000 foreigners moved to Incheon in 2014. The number of foreign brides increased by 785 in addition to 882 children with a foreign parent. This implies that (a) the international marriage practice has expanded to underprivileged Korean men in urban areas and (b) teachers in Incheon have been more likely to have “multicultural” children in their classrooms. Although the international nature of Incheon might influence the way people perceive “multicultural” families and/or “multicultural” families’ experiences in other settings, I limited the scope of region in the study to Incheon due to practical reasons such as my access to study participants and geographical proximity from my residential area.

The homes.

Coming from families with varied socioeconomic status, the six focal students lived in different places. Depending upon the neighborhood, high-rise apartment buildings generally cost more than houses including detached houses and multifamily houses. This leads families with low-mid or mid socioeconomic status in this study (i.e., Artanis’, Sungho’s and Tayo’s families) to live in the apartment buildings. While Jinsoo’s and Hayang’s families lived in small tenement houses, Heedong’s family lived in a rooftop. The following provides snapshots of each family’s dwelling conditions.

Artanis’ home was structured in a way that stressed harmonious relationships among family members and educational environments. The living room had wide bookshelves filled with various types and genres of books. Desks and chairs of Artanis and his elder brother (i.e., Jinyong) were located on the other side of the living room although they had their own rooms. Artanis’ parents hung their sons’ prizes and drawings on the walls near their desks. Multiple family pictures were used to decorate the living room. It was possible to see the flow of time, from the time when Artanis’ parents got married, to the time when Jinyong and Artanis were young, and to the moment that Chanyoung (i.e., the youngest son) was born in 2012. Due to the sudden death of Artanis’ father in early 2014, the whole house, however, was thrown into utter confusion. Artanis’ and Jinyong’s desks had stacks of books and papers. Chanyoung’s toys were lying all over the place. The floor was strewn with papers, mails, books, clothes, bags, and trash.

Sungho’s family owned the largest apartment house among my study participants. It was not only spacious (e.g., three bedrooms, two bathrooms, one living room, and an eat-in kitchen

for three people), but also always clean. During the time of the research, I never once noticed even a dish to be washed near the family's sink. At first, I thought that the family did not cook any food at home because Sungho's parents were working. However, I learned that the family rarely went out for dinner and that Sungho's mother could not stand any dirt at home. Whenever I visited Sungho, it was easy to encounter his mother cleaning the house. Although Sungho's house did not have much furniture, the family had newer furniture and electric home appliances (e.g., flat screen TV, big sofa, and side-by-side refrigerator).

Jinsoo's family was living in a shabby tenement house, leading four of Jinsoo's family members to sleep together within a room. His home was overloaded by boxes, luggage, old furniture, second-handed electric home appliances, and religious objects (e.g., bibles published by the Unified Church). For example, in the middle of the year, Jinsoo reported that his father got a used kimchi refrigerator and put that in Jinsoo's small room that already had an old refrigerator (the room was small that he could not lie on his back on the floor). Jinsoo's family did not have a washing machine and had to wash their clothes by hand.³⁰ During the summer, the fan installed on the wall of Jinsoo's room did not work so we had a session without a fan. Moreover, the house was poorly ventilated and lighted and subsequently, the house smelled in interesting ways and several parts of the house held mold. However, in July-August 2014, Jinsoo's room was fully renovated by one of the biggest banks in Korea as part of their social contribution project for children in the lower income bracket. He received a new desk, a new chair, a new bookshelf, and a new computer with the wireless Internet³¹. Jinsoo's room was also repapered although the other part of the house (i.e., a kitchen, a bathroom, and a bedroom) remained the same.

Similar to Artanis' house, Hayang's house usually appeared messy and unorganized. Interestingly, the family rearranged the whole house frequently (once every two or three months). In general, however, the house continued to be filthy. Like Jinsoo's house, Hayang's place was poorly ventilated and I could smell food that they previously cooked. It was also not unusual to see a stack of dirty dishes. Take-out boxes and bottles of beer were frequently found near the family's dining table. The living room/kitchen floor was covered with toys, hair, food crumbs and stains, and dust. Despite limited space they occupied, Hayang's family had many newer electric home appliances. There were two large flat TVs, two desktop computers, two iPads, and a DVD player. Because the family had only two rooms, Hayang had to share her room with her Filipino uncle who was in his 20s. They used a bunk bed and shared furniture. The room was packed with furniture, clothes, and books including Korean language textbooks for her uncle, Hayang's drawing-related books, and their Jehovah's Witness related books.

While Tayo's apartment house was not too larger than that of Artanis', fewer pieces of furniture in the living room made the impression of the home more spacious. In addition, because Tayo's father frequently tidied up the living room, it was relatively clean and neat. Tayo and Jaesoo (i.e., Tayo's elder brother) all had their own rooms equipped with their own desktop, desk, chair, closet, bookshelves, and bed. The living room was decorated with a bookshelf with books that Jaesoo and Tayo read when they were young, pictures of Tayo's grandparents on her father's side, an old TV, a medium-sized sofa, and some imitation flowers. Interestingly, when I entered Tayo's room, pictures of Tayo's Vietnamese grandparents hung on the wall. Furthermore, there were a crucifix, a sculpture of the Virgin Mary, and a rosary. I later learned that because Tayo's mother, too, spent her time in Tayo's room (e.g., reading and sleeping), she embellished

³⁰ Public laundry facilities in Korea are rare, so the majority of households have washers in their homes.

³¹ The family used to have an Internet cable that was connected to the old desktop computer.

Tayo's room in a somewhat religious way. Jaesoo's room and the other bedroom that Tayo's parents used did not have many Catholic-related objects.

Heedong's family lived in a rooftop that had two bedrooms, a bathroom, and a living room/kitchen. Heedong's mother shared that the family moved to the place in 2013. Possibly because of that, a number of boxes and luggage were piled up in the living room. From time to time, I saw blankets here and there that Heedong and his elder brother did not clean up after getting up in the morning. Interestingly, there was an altar where Heedong's family prayed for his family members' health and happiness. On it sat some incense, Buddha sculptures with Chinese characters, and random articles that Heedong's mother added (e.g., papers, snack, and calendar). He explained that it was part of Vietnamese culture. Heedong shared his room with his elder brother, Dongjoo. While they had a desk, they did not have a chair for it. They seemed to use the desk as a place to pile things rather than reading or studying. The room that Heedong and his elder brother shared was also filled with the family's clothes, stacks of boxes and comforters, and so on.

The schools.

The six adolescents, who were identified as "multicultural" by the Korean government, attended five different public middle schools. All schools were located in Incheon. While four schools were in the same school district, one school belonged to a different one. All were single-sex schools, meaning that if a study participant was a girl, she went to a girl's middle school. Table 3.3 summarizes features of the schools that the students attended.

Table 3.3 Five Schools in this Study

Middle School	Sex	District	Founding Year	Total # of Teachers	Total # of Students	Participant Pseudonym
Dongsoo	Boy	Dongbu	1981	56	1,345	Artanis Sungho
Bugae	Boy	Dongbu	1960	46	792	Jinsoo
Ohryu	Girl	Bukbu	1990	52	1,116	Hayang
Sosa	Girl	Dongbu	1961	35	566	Tayo
Songnae	Boy	Dongbu	1951	43	757	Heedong

Due to a recent gentrification process, multiple apartment complexes and new high-rise buildings surrounded Dongsoo Middle School. Since it was near Incheon Metropolitan City Hall and multiple public offices, it was one of the cleanest neighborhoods in the city with wide sidewalks. The school's presence was felt in the neighborhood not only through the atmosphere filled with boys' sound and energy, but also through the placards that advertised regional and national prizes the school's students won. When entering the school gate, the façade of a new, annex building displayed the name of the school and the main building had school precepts and the national flag of Korea as well as the flag of the school. A gymnasium was located next to the school gate, facing the annexed building. Although the school playground was not spacious, it still had two soccer goal posts and some nets and posts for students who played baseball. The main school building was a four-story building, painted with a blue background and accented with yellow and orange.

Bugae Middle School was located on an alley and near traditional, timeworn houses and tenement houses. Around the school, there were a few small stores such as supermarkets,

stationary shops, and food carts. Like Dongsoo Middle School, Bugae Middle School decorated its entrance and school fence with placards that advertised its students' achievements. The school guard in a small temporary building next to the entrance always checked in who entered the school, when, and for how long. After receiving permission from him, I took the road besides a well-kept garden with benches and pine trees and some parking spots. The school playground was always filled with boys playing soccer, basketball, or baseball. Because the sidewalk to the main school building was beside the school playground, a huge net was set along the sidewalk as a way to prevent any ball-related accidents. One very large, rectangular building was where all the teachers and students worked and studied in the school. While it had a gymnasium and a cafeteria, they were not readily identifiable because the two were behind the main school building. The school was painted an ivory-white color with some blue accents. Although the school itself was established in the 1980s, the structure of the school looked older than other schools.

Ohryu Middle School was located in the remote, residential area that had timeworn houses and tenement houses. On the right side of the entrance, a small temporary building for the school guard was built. On the left, there was the road to the main school building made of red bricks and covered with ivy. The center of the building had a post of school precepts. A drill platform was located in front of the main building, and it functioned as a borderline between the sidewalk and the playground. A newly built annex faced the school entrance and connected to the main school building.

Sosa Middle School and Songnae Middle School were close to each other. In fact, they shared the main road and it took four to five minutes to go to one school from the other. The school structures were almost exactly the same except that Songnae Middle School had a cafeteria behind the main building while Sosa Middle School with a red brick building had a more spacious garden area and a newly-built cafeteria in front of the main building. Both schools had entrances to the main road, steep inclines/declines to get to the main building, gate guard posts right next to the entrance, and the school playground in front of the main building.

The classrooms.

Since Korean middle school education system does not allow students to choose classes that they want to take, students are assigned in a classroom and given a yearlong class schedule that they are asked to follow. This means that students in the same class share the same classroom and spend the year together. Although the six focal students' classrooms looked similar, this section briefly describes some features of each.

Artanis and Sungho were in the same class, and their classroom was located in the second floor of the main building, near teachers' office. Artanis and Sungho's classroom was known for its active but boisterous and chaotic class atmosphere. The front part of the classroom had teacher's desk, a computer connected to the Internet, a projector, and a TV monitor. Four fans hung on the ceiling. Students sat in rows and faced the teacher and the blackboard in the front. Although students had their own desks, two students sat together, meaning that each student had his own partner. Possibly because of this structure, the classroom felt packed with students and their possessions (e.g., backpacks, school materials, and sportswear), and it was hard to pass by students and their desks. In the back of the classroom, students' lockers and trashcans were located. Both sidewalls had windows that allow ones to observe the playground or the classroom.

While Jinsoo mostly stayed in his main classroom, he moved to the Wisdom room and the Gauss room when taking English and math classes, respectively. Jinsoo's regular classroom

was in between two other classrooms and was not too different from Artanis and Sungho's classroom. All students faced toward the front where the blackboard was located. The yearlong class schedule and other announcements were posted beside the blackboard. When Jinsoo's class moved to the Gauss room, the classroom structure was a little different. It allowed students to interact with others more closely by gathering three to four students and creating groups. The math teacher also could use either side of the classroom because one side had a whiteboard and the other side had a blackboard. Because all other students in the school shared the classroom, it was hard to find any specific class identity. The Wisdom room offered more technology-driven instructions to teachers and students. For example, it not only included a computer connected to the Internet, but also had a touchscreen projector that teachers and students could touch and click. Some English proverbs were written on the walls, showing what subject was taught in the room.

Hayang's classroom had the same structure as the classroom of Artanis and Sungho. Students sat with their partners in rows and faced the blackboard. The classroom was more colorfully decorated (possibly because it was girls' school).

Tayo's English classroom where my observation took place throughout the year was located in the fifth floor of the main school building. This classroom was different from the one that Tayo and her peers spent most of their days in school. The English classroom was called, "English only Zone Classroom." The classroom had a gigantic entrance with multiple English sayings; in fact, on the way to go up to the classroom, students were exposed to English proverbs on the stairs. Teacher's desk with a computer stood on the left corner of the classroom while the other space in the front part of the classroom was devoted to the projector screen. Next to the screen were two blackboards. Interestingly, there was much room left on the right side of the classroom that was not used at all during the academic year. Six students sat on the first row and eight students on the second, third, and fourth rows. The fifth row was always empty.

Heedong's classroom was not different from other traditional Korean classrooms; however, it seemed to have more space on the back of the classroom. It was possible to see the playground from Heedong's classroom because one side of the classroom had windows. Greenish-blue curtains were put up on the four edges of the wall. Student lockers with student ID numbers stood at the back of the classroom. Next to these rectangular lockers were a trashcan and a recycle bin. A large board on the back contained a yearlong schedule, announcements, and some studying-related posters. Students had their own desks but they all had partners so that four large seating blocks/columns could be formed.

Participants

There were largely three groups of study participants in this dissertation: "multicultural" students (see Table 3.4), their family members (see Table 3.5), and their schoolteachers.

The Students

The six "multicultural" students who took part in this project all lived in Incheon. Although they were not in the same school, they were contacted and included for three reasons. The foremost reason was their (and their parents') willingness to participate in the project. The second was a set of shared attributes: (a) all were in the similar age/grade range and (b) all went to middle school and five students out of six were just beginning middle school. The third reason was their mothers' diverse linguistic and cultural backgrounds: Artanis' and Sungho's mothers were from mainland China, Jinsoo's and Hayang's from the Philippines, and Tayo's and Heedong's from Vietnam.

The following presents each student's background (e.g., family members and academic achievement) and personal information that were noticeable from my yearlong observation.

Artanis.

Artanis was a small and skinny boy who lived with his Chinese mother and with two brothers. The family suffered from the sudden death of Artanis' father in the beginning of 2014. His elder brother was one year older than Artanis, and his younger brother was three years old in 2014. Artanis was enrolled in a few private institutes to learn English and math (and taekwondo for exercise). Artanis did not put much effort and time into schoolwork, but he argued that he listened to teachers and concentrated on what they taught in class. He was usually ranked in the top 30-40% percent in his class.

Even though Artanis' mother spoke Mandarin Chinese as her first language, the language was never a medium of communication among family members. Artanis felt that there was no need for him to learn Chinese because his mother was a very proficient speaker of Korean. In addition, he did not know enough Chinese to communicate with others. Although Artanis made a couple of visits to mainland China in order to see his mother's families and to learn Chinese at a private language institute, he did not identify the Chinese language as one of his linguistic repertoires.

Normally a quiet person, Artanis became a chatterbox when he talked about something that interested him, including computer games, animations, and drawing. Artanis, in fact, drew a lot of cartoons and game characters and created his own games. It was easy to locate his drawings in his room and in the living room because his parents had kept almost all of his drawings since his early childhood. Possibly due to Artanis' love of games and drawing, he tended to strongly and sometimes abruptly express his emotions and dissatisfaction when his free time (e.g., time to play games or draw) was invaded. This included the mentoring sessions with me. And whenever we finished our sessions, Artanis immediately either turned his computer on and played games or grabbed his cell phone to surf the Internet.

Sungho.

Sungho had been friends with Artanis since they were young, as their mothers had been friends for a long time. Sungho and Artanis went to the same elementary and middle schools and were classmates in middle school. Unlike Artanis who had two brothers, Sungho was the only child of his parents. He was tall with a robust build. He was passionate, polite, hard working, and always identified as a model student by his schoolteachers. Sungho was usually ranked at the top 5-10% of his class. Thanks to his mother's help, he built a studying habit of previewing and reviewing what he would learn/learned in school.

Similar to Artanis, the Korean language was the only home language that Sungho used with his family members. But unlike Artanis, that was because Sungho's mother was ethnic Korean who grew up in mainland China. Specifically, the Korean language had been her home language while she learned the Chinese language in school. Her balanced Korean and Chinese proficiency, her lack of awareness of bilingual education, and the high value given to the Korean language in Korea led her to use Korean predominantly at home. While Sungho was familiar with a few conversational phrases in Chinese, he could not maintain any conversation in Chinese. In fact, he did not feel the need to learn Chinese in the beginning of 2014. As we shall see in Chapter 6, in the middle of 2014, however, he began to understand the benefits to learning Chinese particularly when he had difficulties communicating with his cousins from mainland

China and when he was exposed to the nation-state's power on the global stage.

Jinsoo.

Jinsoo was living with parents and one younger sister. Like Sungho, Jinsoo was frequently praised and adored by his teachers. Jinsoo loved math and science and, in fact, he had been selected as a “gifted” student in science in his elementary and middle schools. Likely due to his hardworking personality and his academic achievements (e.g., prizes that he received, praise that his teachers gave him, and being selected for a “gifted” program), my observation revealed that he was a confident, active student. For example, it was easy to hear him answer his schoolteachers' questions with a loud voice. Furthermore, when we had mentoring sessions, Jinsoo asked many work/study-related questions and talked a lot about his school life and dreams. He also prepared specific tasks that he wanted to work on with me. Jinsoo especially asked for my help when he had any performance evaluations and exams.

As Jinsoo's mother came from the Philippines, she was a multilingual who knew two Filipino languages (Tagalog and Bisaya, a regional language in Cebu) and English. Interestingly, even though Jinsoo's mother said that she spoke both Korean and English when communicating with her children at home, Jinsoo reported that Korean was the only language they used. Jinsoo did not know much Tagalog although he had visited the Philippines a couple of times with his mother and his younger sister. Throughout 2014, he consistently expressed his lack of interest in learning about his mother's languages, Filipino culture, and/or the Philippines.

Hayang.

Hayang was a small and skinny girl.³² Although she was active and talkative, Hayang was bullied in both her elementary and middle schools. Hayang reported that her peers did not enjoy her personality or her ways of interacting with others. Because she was frustrated with her peer relations, she said that she had contemplated committing suicide when she was an elementary school student. According to Hayang, it was drawing that made her find reasons to live.

In spite of living in Korea, Hayang was not surrounded by Koreans or by the Korean language at home. Her Korean father and her Filipina mother got divorced when Hayang was two years old. Since her parents' divorce, her Filipina mother had been her primary caregiver. Hayang said that she met her biological father once or twice a year. Due to her family members who were all ethnically Filipino, Filipino languages (i.e., Tagalog and Kapampangan) and English were the languages that she heard most frequently at home. According to her uncle, Hayang could understand approximately 50-60% of Tagalog and Kapampangan and 20-30% of English. Hayang regularly complained about her stressful living condition that prevented her from comfortably using Korean with the other family members. Likely due to her linguistic environments, she did not have enough Korean academic vocabulary to sustain her in school. Her academic achievement suffered, and Hayang did not find studying exciting or necessary.

Tayo.

Tayo had been a model student in her class since her elementary school days. She was neat, organized, active, and eager to learn. As a perfectionist, Tayo was the most successful student among the six “multicultural” student participants in this project and was usually ranked either first or second in her class from the beginning of her school year. Indeed, Tayo

³² In fact, she was suffering from malnutrition in the middle of 2014.

concentrated on her schoolwork a lot and her daily life was dedicated to studying. Tayo went to a private institute that taught all core subjects including Korean, math, English, science, and social studies.

Tayo had lived in Vietnam for approximately two years when she was young, and some traces of her life in Vietnam surfaced in our conversations. One example was that Tayo—who was a devout Catholic—memorized the Lord’s Prayer in Vietnamese even though she did not know the prayer in Korean. So every night before she went to bed, she recited the Lord’s Prayer in Vietnamese.³³ Because she went to a Vietnamese Saturday School in Korea for a few years, she recovered some of her oral Vietnamese and was able to understand the language when her mother used it at home. After entering middle school, however, she could not attend the Saturday school anymore because it enrolled only elementary students.

Heedong.

Heedong, who was 15 years old in 2014, was a tall and skinny boy whose mother was Vietnamese. Heedong and Tayo knew each other when they were babies because their mothers got to know each other in a Vietnamese association in Korea. He was a shy and quiet boy; when he did interact, he did so only with certain peers with whom he felt comfortable. His eight best friends went to the same elementary school, spent more than four years together, and went to the same math institute. Although Heedong was usually ranked in the top 45-50% in his class, he was talented in math (e.g., receiving a few school-wide math competition awards and getting perfect scores from four math exams in 2014).

Heedong also visited Vietnam relatively frequently thanks to his mother, who sought out opportunities through which she could send her sons to Vietnam for free. Similar to Tayo, Heedong learned Vietnamese at home and at a Vietnamese Saturday School. In fact, his parents communicated in Vietnamese with each other, and his mother mostly talked to Heedong in Vietnamese. Heedong was the most proficient speaker of his mother’s language among the six student participants as he could have conversations with other Vietnamese speakers and read books in Vietnamese.

Table 3.4 Demographics of “Multicultural” Student Participants

Pseudonym	Sex	Age (Grade)	# of Siblings	Languages
Artanis	Male	13 (7 th)	2 (elder/younger brothers)	Basic Chinese; Native Korean
Sungho	Male	13 (7 th)	0	Little Chinese; Native Korean
Jinsoo	Male	13 (7 th)	1 (younger sister)	Basic English; Native Korean
Hayang	Female	13 (7 th)	1 (younger brother)	Tagalog and a Filipino dialect (receptive); Basic English; Native Korean
Tayo	Female	13 (7 th)	1 (elder brother)	Intermediate Vietnamese (orality); Native Korean
Heedong	Male	15 (9 th)	1 (elder brother)	Intermediate Vietnamese (orality and literacy); Native Korean

³³ Tayo, however, reported that she did not know how to write the Prayer down in the Vietnamese language.

The Families

Six “multicultural” students’ family members—parents and siblings—took part in this project as well. This section explains similar and/or different features of the six families (e.g., socioeconomic status, mothers’ countries of origin, and personal histories).

Artanis’ family.

Artanis’ family was composed of Artanis, his parents, and his two brothers. Artanis’ mother migrated from mainland China to Korea through marriage brokers and got married to Artanis’ father. She was socially very active and was a proficient speaker of Korean. She was working for Incheon Metropolitan City Hall and had experiences of working in various government bodies. Artanis’ mother received her bachelor’s degree in Korea after getting married and constantly expressed to me her gratitude toward her husband who encouraged and supported her study and work.

Artanis’ father, who worked for a small enterprise, was described by both Artanis and his mother as a caring and considerate person. He was close to his sons; in fact, Artanis frequently told me stories of his father playing computer games with him. However, in February 2014, Artanis’ father suddenly passed away while he was trying to fill his car with gas. Thus, 2014 was the harshest year for the whole family. Artanis’ mother was in the process of overcoming the situation, and she struggled as a single mother. She expressed her hardship when we met near her work or at her home. She sometimes could not help but cry aloud. Living on the average monthly salary for a temporary government officer seemed to be challenging with three children.

Artanis’ elder brother, Jinyong, was 16 years old and his younger brother, Chanyoung, was three years old in 2014. Jinyong became sensitive after reaching puberty and after his father’s death. Artanis’ mother had a number of concerns about Jinyong and shared them with me (e.g., academic achievement, college entrance, and future career). Observing the situation and thinking about his mother’s concerns, I decided to mentor him along with Artanis. Chanyoung was a young, sweet boy who always wanted to play with me.

Sungho’s family.

Sungho, an only child, lived with his parents, who possessed considerable financial resources that were the direct fruits of their labor. Sungho’s father, who used to be an athlete, was working for a transportation company. He was polite and always emphasized home discipline to Sungho. Sungho’s mother was working for a manufacturing factory, and in April 2014 she received a promotion and became a manager. She was a confident, tenacious, and careful person.

It is important to note that Sungho’s mother was ethnically Korean although she had held a Chinese passport and grew up in mainland China. Her Korean parents moved to mainland China before Sungho’s mother was born and still lived in the nation-state. Sungho’s mother used the Korean language at home and learned the Chinese language in other settings including school. After living in Korea for about two decades, she considered Korean a more comfortable language to use (compared to the Chinese language). Alongside the detectability of her *josenjok* accent in Korean, she easily sensed any sort of discrimination and demanded explanations whenever she encountered it. For example, during a casual meeting with mothers, Artanis’ mother—who had near-native proficiency in Korean—could not pick up on other Korean mothers’ derogatory comments about “multicultural” children and children with special needs; however, Sungho’s mother not only noticed uncomfortable comments from others, but also

expressed her disappointment and resentment at those mothers. Overall, although Sungho's mother was officially recognized as a foreign bride and Sungho was publicly classified as "multicultural," they were not too different from other "non-multicultural"³⁴ Korean families in domestic practices.

Jinsoo's family.

Married through the Unification Church, Jinsoo's parents were quiet; in fact, they did not seem to talk a lot with their children. Jinsoo characterized his father, a carpenter, as a patriarchal, strict person. Because he usually stayed in construction sites when he had work to do, Jinsoo and his younger sister seemed to feel distant from him. Due to the frequent absence of his father, Jinsoo usually spent his family time with his mother and sister. Born and raised in the Philippines, Jinsoo's mother worked for a local English private institute and taught elementary and middle school students English. Although she had some Korean proficiency, she was not at all comfortable using Korean. There was little casual talk between her and Jinsoo. Jinsoo's best friend was his own sister who was in sixth grade. They shared similarities (e.g., having interests in math and science and enjoying computer games) and talked a lot.

Because Jinsoo's father was mostly not available and because his mother was not proficient in Korean, Jinsoo served as the default liaison with the school, translating and reading school letters to parents and submitting whatever was necessary. This means that his parents did not know what kinds of announcements were made in Jinsoo's school. Hence, Jinsoo was in charge of his own school life. When Jinsoo needed to buy some school-related materials or pay bills, he notified his mother so that she could either buy them on the way home or give Jinsoo money.

Hayang's family.

Hayang's family was distinctive among the six families because of the composition of it. Hayang's family consisted of Hayang, three Filipino adults, and one ethnically Filipino baby born in Korea. Hayang's biological Korean father, who was a farmer, was not living with them because he and Hayang's mother got divorced. They were initially connected via marriage brokers in the 1990s and began their married life in a rural area in Korea. After three years of marriage, Hayang's mother decided to leave her husband due to his "strong" personality and his parents' ill treatment of her (e.g., the use of profanity and lack of respect for her religion). After getting officially divorced in 2009, Hayang's mother married her current husband who was a Filipino man working in Korea. The two had a boy in 2013. Thus, Hayang was living with her mother, her step-father, and her half-brother who were all ethnically Filipino. In addition, her Filipino uncle, who wanted to work and live in Korea, also lived with Hayang and her family. In 2014, Hayang's mother was working for a local English institute in Incheon and teaching English conversation to elementary and middle school students.

Hayang's mother was the least proficient Korean speaker among my study participants. Hayang's mother could not understand Hayang's words and her school announcements in Korean. In fact, when I interacted with Hayang's mother or her younger brother, English was the only language we used (between Hayang's stepfather and me, we only greeted in Korean and did not have any conversation across 2014). They preferred English because they felt more comfortable using it compared to Korean.

³⁴ To refer to native Koreans, this dissertation coins the term *non-multicultural*.

Tayo's family.

I had more frequent and extensive opportunities to interact with Tayo's parents. This was because I met Tayo and her brother Jaesoo³⁵ every Sunday when the whole family stayed at home. Tayo's mother was a generous and caring parent. She always prepared meals for her children and her husband. She served some food and/or a snack for me as well whenever I visited her children, and she checked in with me to see how I was doing. She, in fact, gave me some small gifts from time to time (e.g., facial masks, seasoned laver, baked sweet potato, and Vietnamese snacks). Both Tayo's mother and her father enjoyed having conversations, so whenever Tayo, Jaesoo, and I had mentoring sessions in the living room, they approached us and talked about daily, political, and social issues.

Tayo's mother migrated to Korea from Vietnam not as a foreign bride but as a migrant worker in the clothing industry in the 1990s. With the dexterity of her hands, she had worked at the sewing machine. She said that her whole family in Vietnam was engaged in some sort of artistic work (e.g., hair designer, painter, and running a design company). While working at a clothing factory, her close friend (Tayo's aunt—her father's younger sister) introduced Tayo's father to her, and they got married.

Tayo's mother had had a challenging married life because of the drinking problems that Tayo's father had. To address his abuses, Tayo's mother left him for a couple of years. In this process, she sent Tayo to her family in Vietnam. Because Jaesoo attended a kindergarten, he stayed with his mother in Korea. Although Tayo's mother forgave her husband and moved back in with him, he continued his drinking-related concerns (e.g., throwing objects and talking a lot with a loud voice while drinking). Both Tayo and Tayo's mother reported that Tayo hated it when her father drank alcohol.

When I met Tayo's parents in 2014, both were working. Tayo's mother was working for the Ministry of Employment and Labor as a temporary worker. She translated Vietnamese official documents into Korean and interacted with Korean people who wanted to go to Vietnam and/or open new businesses in Vietnam. Tayo's father was working for a medium-sized enterprise. While he was a strong and patriarchal father figure, Tayo tended not to feel afraid of him.

Heedong's family.

Heedong's parents met in Vietnam in a casual occasion. When Heedong's father made a visit to Vietnam, their mutual friend introduced the couple. Heedong's mother then decided to move to Korea to marry him. Heedong's family was unique among the participants because his own father could be classified as "multicultural" in Korea as well. Although Heedong's father was legally Korean, his mother was Vietnamese and his father was Korean. In fact, Heedong's father lived in Vietnam for decades and was mostly educated in Vietnam. This led Heedong's parents to communicate in Vietnamese at home with each other, but Heedong's mother used both Vietnamese and Korean to Heedong and his father communicated with Heedong in Korean.

Although Heedong's father had worked as an architect and builder, he had been unemployed for years. He thus decided to move to Vietnam to work in 2014 while his family stayed in Korea. Heedong's mother was an active, busy woman who worked for a Multicultural Family Support Center as a translator/interpreter and who was a founder of an organization for Vietnamese women in Korea. Heedong's mother was strategic and keen on how to navigate

³⁵ While Tayo's brother was not a study participant, like Jinyong, I helped him studying since May 2014 because Tayo's parents wanted to provide mentoring sessions for him as well.

resources and opportunities offered to “multicultural” families and children. She attended multiple seminars and participated in programs offered for foreign brides or foreigners so that she could secure more certificates (e.g., counseling service certificate). For her sons, she also looked for advertisements, selected “good” programs, and encouraged her sons to apply for them. Thanks to her resourcefulness, Heedong and his elder brother were able to visit Vietnam and learn its language and culture multiple times at no cost.

Table 3.5 Features of the Six “Multicultural” Families

Pseudonym	Mothers’ Countries of Origin (Citizenship)	Mother’s Korean Proficiency	Parents’ Education Level	Home Owner (Type, Room, Bathroom)	Household Monthly Income (SES)	Seeking Social Benefits
Artanis	China (Naturalized)	Near-native	F: High school M: College	Y (Apt, 3, 1)	\$1-2,000 (Low-Mid)	Active
Sungho	China (Ethnic Korean; Naturalized)	Native	F & M: High school	Y (Apt, 3, 2)	\$5-6,000 (Mid)	Less active
Jinsoo	The Philippines (Naturalized)	Basic-Intermediate	F: Middle school M: College	Y (Tenement, 2, 1)	\$2-3,000 (Low)	Active
Hayang	The Philippines (Naturalized)	Basic	F: High school M: College	N (Tenement, 2, 1)	\$2-3,000 (Low)	Less active
Tayo	Vietnam (Naturalized)	Proficient	F: High school M: Middle school	Y (Apt, 3, 1)	\$3-4,000 (Mid)	Less active
Heedong	Vietnam (Naturalized)	Proficient	F: High school M: Middle school	N (Rooftop, 2, 1)	\$1-2,000 (Low)	Very active

Note: While study participants revealed their household income per month, I translated the information into “Low,” “Low-Mid,” and “Mid” socioeconomic status (SES) categories by incorporating my impressions with features of houses, their neighborhoods, and conversations with my study participants.

The Teachers

The total number of eight teachers took part in this project. Specifically, the six “multicultural” students’ homeroom teachers and other content area teachers who allowed me to observe their classrooms joined this study.

Artanis and Sungho’s teacher at Dongsoo Middle School: Ms Kim.

In her 50s, Ms Kim, the homeroom teacher of Artanis and Sungho, was a charismatic teacher who taught English. As an experienced teacher, Ms Kim set class rules and disciplined her students in a way that they could adjust to their new environment in middle school. Artanis and Sungho were the first two “multicultural” students in Ms Kim’s teaching career. While she was busy in the academic year because she was the head of department for seventh graders, she

helped me by opening her classroom several times (e.g., to guest lectures and class meetings).

Jinsoo’s teachers at Bugae Middle School: Ms Jin, Ms Lee, and Ms Choi.

Ms Jin, Jinsoo’s homeroom teacher, was in her 30s and taught Korean. While she was a tall and skinny person, her students conceptualized her as a strict and clear teacher. Ms Jin had not had any “multicultural” student in her own homeroom although she had taught one last year as a content area teacher. Because Ms Jin was a younger and more passionate teacher who recently received a Master’s degree, she was interested in issues related to “multicultural” families and students. When we had conversations, she frequently asked me what I would think about certain topics (e.g., policies about “multicultural” families) and was willing to discuss how Korea and/or Koreans could accept this changing social reality.

Because I extensively interacted with teachers at Bugae Middle school, two more teachers other than Ms Jin helped me throughout the year. One teacher was Jinsoo’s math teacher, Ms Lee, who was in her 50s. She was fun and generous but also strict and firm. She was Jinsoo’s favorite teacher in his school. As Ms Lee had two children about my age, she shared a lot of stories related to them. In addition, Ms Lee was also a Ph.D. candidate in the field of educational philosophy and was in the process of writing her dissertation.

The other teacher who helped me in Jinsoo’s school was his English teacher, Ms Choi. Bugae Middle School was her first school as a teacher. Due to our school ties and mostly due to her open-mindedness, Ms Choi opened her classroom to me although she might feel more pressure to do so as an English teacher. Ms Choi gave her instructions passionately with louder voice. She was popular among her students.

Hayang’s teacher at Ohryu Middle School: Ms Park.

Ms Park, Hayang’s homeroom teacher, was in her 50s and taught physical education. In the past, she had a couple of “multicultural” students in her homeroom. While small, Ms Park appeared strong and firm. She had a husky voice, probably because she had to shout a lot of times on the playground. Ms Park was prepared to resolve any student-related issues (e.g., depression and family-related concerns). She explained that schools at which she had worked across her teaching career tended to be located in marginalized neighborhoods, which enabled her to experience diverse incidents and find ways to help them. But Ms Park experienced some difficulty in interacting with Hayang’s mother because they could not communicate without an interpreter.

Tayo’s teachers at Sosa Middle School: Ms Yoo and Mr Lewis.

Tayo’s homeroom teacher, Ms Yoo, was an English teacher who was in her 50s. She was small and had a husky voice. Ms Yoo was always frowning and made deep lines between her eyebrows. She was characterized as a cool-hearted, somewhat distant, and demanding person by her students and Mr Lewis. Indeed, it was hard to get ahold of her. While Ms Yoo did not allow me to observe her class from the very moment when I introduced my project and myself, she agreed to have a brief interview with me after asking me to do some of her work.

In his 30s, Mr Lewis was Tayo’s English teacher and came from the United States. He was an introvert but open-minded person. His primary purpose of migrating to Korea was to teach English, and he reported that he did not have a plan to go back to his country of origin and expressed his willingness to stay in Korea. While learning the Korean language at a prestigious university in Seoul, he also had a plan to apply for a graduate school in Korea. But with his

students, Mr Lewis hid his Korean proficiency because he was afraid of his students only talking to him in Korean rather than practicing English. While Mr Lewis permitted me to observe his class twice a month without any hesitation, he did ask me once which student I observed.

Heedong's teacher at Songnae Middle School: Ms Jung.

Heedong's homeroom teacher, Ms Jung, was in her 30s and taught Korean. She had not previously taught any "multicultural" students, and Heedong was her first "multicultural" student in both her homeroom and her class. Ms Jung was understood to be a firm and determined teacher who did not have any issues with teaching wild and sometimes extreme teenaged boys. Although she did not grant my access to her class, she consented to have an interview with me after receiving several requests from me. Ms Yoo described herself as an "open-minded" person due to her international experiences (e.g., travelling and making foreign friends).

Procedures for Data Collection

Data collection for this dissertation took place across 18 months from July 2013 to January 2015. Below I describe more specific data collection procedures at each of the three stages.

Stage 1: Critical Discourse Analysis of "Multicultural" Discourses³⁶

In 2013 and 2014, I collected news articles published by the *Hankyoreh*, the *Hankook Ilbo*, and the *Chosun Ilbo* from 2009 to 2013. The keyword *multicultural* (*damunhwa*; 다문화) was used. There were two major reasons for using the keyword. One was that two ministries of the Korean government used two different terms to refer to the same population: while the Ministry of Education, Science and Technology adopted "multicultural home/household (*damunhwa gajeong*; 다문화가정)," the Ministry of Gender Equality and Family used the term "multicultural family (*damunhwa gajok*; 다문화가족)." Since it was troublesome to do multiple searches, I decided to use a partial term "multicultural" that is included in both. The other reason is that I feared I would lose some articles if I chose either of the more specific terms. For example, if I chose "multicultural family," I would lose articles that deal with "multicultural school," "multicultural children," or "multicultural adolescents." Thus, although the keyword inevitably included some irrelevant articles (e.g., multiculturalism in a more general/literal sense), I decided to use the term "multicultural."

The *Hankyoreh* and the *Chosun Ilbo* had well-established online archives of published articles, leading me to use their own websites to collect data. However, as the *Hankook Ilbo* was in the process of creating a web-based news archive, it did not show me the full range of the articles that the newspaper published. After having multiple conversations with the personnel from the *Hankook Ilbo*, I received a piece of advice that it would be more accurate to use one of the largest portal sites in Korea. So for the *Hankook Ilbo*, I used another news archives to collect data. When I collected newspaper articles, I saved every article as a PDF file (named as "name of press_date_title") in order to transfer it to Atlas.ti software that I used for data analysis.

Stage 2: Statistical Analysis of "Multicultural" Teenagers' Language Proficiency

Since KELS is a nation-wide survey funded by the government, the data were supposed to be available to the public. When I contacted KEDI to obtain datasets that I would like to

³⁶ Readers' comments about the news articles have not been collected and examined.

analyze, KEDI notified that they decided not to disclose the data to me. The reason was that they did not have any variable called “multicultural.” As I knew that KELS collected students’ family type variable (e.g., “multicultural” family and single-parent family), I carried appeal to KEDI and further explicated how I would use the KELS data. Within a week, I was able to receive the datasets.

I worked with a subset of the KELS data collected from 2005 to 2007. This time span was chosen as it corresponded to Korea’s three years of middle school (grades 7-9) that includes all grades of my student participants in Stage 3. The total number of teenagers included in the final sample was 4,807 “non-multicultural” students and 57 “multicultural” students.

Stage 3: Ethnography of Embedded Case Studies

This section will be divided into two different subsections that address the periods of pre- and post- study participant recruitment.

Pre-recruitment of my study participants.

Multiple struggles emerged as I began my data collection in Korea in 2014. The first struggle was that “multicultural” families and other related personnel did not highly regard researchers. The most typical reactions to my request to interact with “multicultural” families for my dissertation were cynical rejections or even criticisms. A few government officers described my project as “unethical” because they assumed that my scholarly work would stigmatize “multicultural” families again and further.

The second struggle that I experienced in the process of recruiting my study participants in Stage 3 centered on my limited understanding of the process of building relationships with Korean institutions and the seemingly endless red tape involved in situating the study within all of the bureaucracies involved. I did not know how to gain access to administrative and institutional channels because I had never conducted research in my native land even though I was Korean. I was aware that I had to have a contact in the governments or schools, but I did not know to whom to ask this or how.

After repeated trials and errors in January and February 2014, I began to find some key point people with high rank in the government. Through their help, the Bupyeong-gu Multicultural Family Support Center greatly contributed to the recruitment of study participants. The Center distributed flyers and the letter of study introduction. They particularly advertised benefits that the study participants could receive: one-to-one weekly mentoring sessions for “multicultural” teenagers across the academic year of 2014. Initially 12 “multicultural” families contacted the Center to participate in the project; however, after having separate meetings with each family, approximately half of the families did not know mentoring sessions were provided as part of conducting a research study, and they decided not to participate. One “multicultural” family could not participate in the study because their daughter was born in mainland China and recently moved to Korea.

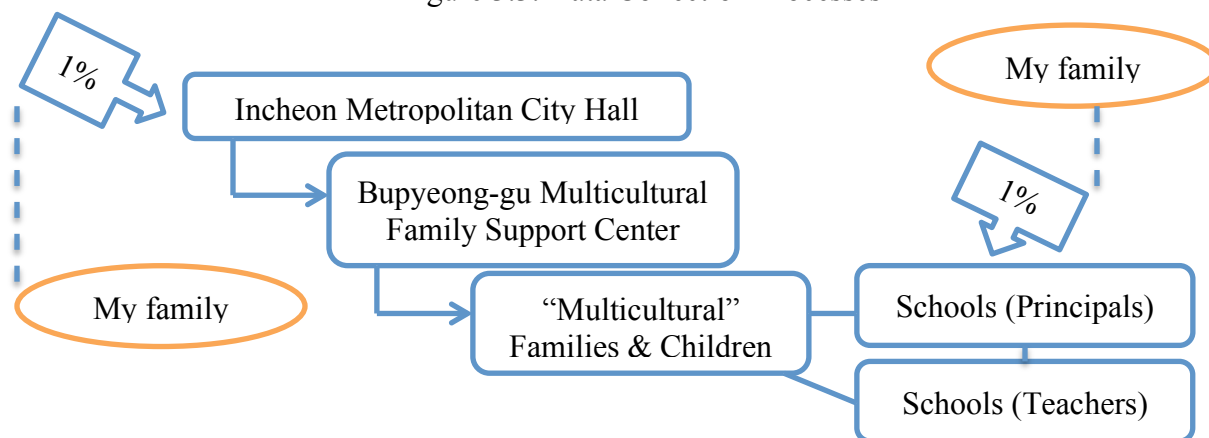
After meeting my study participants and securing permission from them, I contacted their schools. To persuade principals to permit my school/classroom observation, I prepared a folder that included my study proposal, my curriculum vitae, an official letter of support from Bupyeong-gu Multicultural Family Support Center, UC Berkeley’s institutional review board (IRB) approval, and consent forms I received from my student and parent participants. Furthermore, I also tried to utilize personal and family networks to contact school principals and teachers. In that process, I found that one of my parents’ friends was in fact the principal of the

school that I had to contact. I made my first visit to his school in February 2014 and received a great deal of advice from him, particularly about (a) when to contact principals (e.g., March is the busiest time of the year for principals and teachers and it is better to contact them after mid-March or in April) and (b) how to interact with the principals. In addition, he contacted the principals that I had to visit so that they could have some advance notice.

Thanks to the principal's help, I was able to obtain school level consents from five schools.³⁷ The principals helped me have meetings with my study participants' homeroom teachers and some of their content area teachers (e.g., English). Teachers' reactions to my plan for classroom observation varied. Some were open and positive; others expressed uncomfortable and/or hostile attitudes by sharing that classroom observation would be too intrusive and distracting. At the end, I was able to secure some opportunities to observe some classes.

As Figure 3.3 summarizes, important "1%" people who had built a relationship with my family—specifically, my parents—made the data collection possible. Although Korean society is purportedly based on merit and on equality of opportunity as a nation-state that values democratic and liberal ideologies, without connections and networking, having access to "multicultural" families and children seemed not to be possible. Overall, while I started my interactions with "multicultural" families and children from mid-February, my whole-scale data collection that included school/classroom observation began in mid-April.

Figure 3.3. Data Collection Processes



Post-recruitment of my study participants.

As the primary study participants, the six focal "multicultural" students spent a considerable amount of time with me throughout the year of 2014. On average, I visited their homes once a week and stayed two to three hours with them every time we met under the name of *mentoring* (*mentoring*; 멘토링). I stayed longer or scheduled extra mentoring sessions when my study participants' exams approached.

Largely three reasons encouraged us to frame our interactions as mentoring. First, the term was popular in Korea in the 2010s. Many sectors in society used it as a social networking strategy, especially when professionally more established people attempted to help others who are less established. Because I was an adult who went through the Korean education system and studied in other countries, I was considered a *mentor* (*mento*; 멘토) who would be able to give

³⁷ Hayang's school only allowed me to observe her classroom when the school offered open lessons for parents.

advice to younger students. Second, the term mentoring did not denote any financial transaction between mentor and mentee. During our sessions, I taught whatever content area subjects that the students needed extra help with (in this sense, I was *tutoring* them); however, I was not paid for these sessions by any of the parties (e.g., my study participants and Bupyeong-gu Multicultural Family Support Center). Because these mentoring sessions were a way of showing my gratitude to the focal students for being part of my dissertation project, I hoped to use the term. Third, because the students and I discussed various personal, familial, educational, and social issues during our sessions, the term most aptly described the nature of the relationship that we developed.

Our mentoring sessions usually began with brief catch-ups. I asked the students if there were any interesting, exciting, stressful, and/or frustrating events that had taken place at home or in school. Through these debriefs, I began to be more aware of my study participants' daily routines and commitments as well as their relationships with others, including family members, peers, and teachers. Then we studied together. They asked me any questions that they had in school or I helped them do their homework and prepare for their exams. As my study participants sometimes had performance evaluations that required them to write essays and draw/paint at home, I helped them complete the tasks. When they wanted, we read novels together. For example, Tayo and I read the book called "Rapunzel" starting in August 2014. During these mentoring sessions, I strategically asked my study participants questions—sometimes somewhat sensitive questions about their families, religion, and their experiences as "multicultural" youth. In this way, mentoring sessions functioned as interviews in a relatively more natural and comfortable environment. From time to time, especially when the students finished their exams or when they had something to celebrate (e.g., a birthday), we ordered some food and ate together at the end of the session.

Because I visited the students' homes almost every week, it was easy to meet and interact with their parents and siblings. This opened up some opportunities to have dinner with my study participants. In many instances, the mothers initiated conversations by asking me some questions about the Korean education system, their children's academic achievement, peer relations, and characteristics. They also wanted to learn strategies to interact with their children's schoolteachers and to help their children. But sometimes they simply needed a companion to chat with.

Whereas my data collection schedule at the focal students' homes was stable, the frequency of my school/classroom observation varied depending on the type of school permission. More specifically, I went to Artanis and Sungho's school when their homeroom teacher sent me a text message that there would be a guest lecture (e.g., school violence and sex education). The school and its teachers allowed me to observe this class because the stakes of teachers were low. Artanis and Sungho's homeroom teacher tended to feel less uncomfortable to open her classroom when there is a guest speaker, compared to showing her own teaching. Similarly, I visited Hayang's and Heedong's classrooms when the whole school was open to caregivers. I observed two of Hayang's classes and three of Heedong's classes. In comparison, Jinsoo's school allowed me to make biweekly visits, and, therefore, I spent most of my time in his school. When I visited the school, I observed two to three classes per day. Another classroom observation that I did regularly was Tayo's English class that Mr Lewis—the native speaker of English teacher—led. I observed his class every other week on average.

Whenever I observed my student participants' school/classroom, I remained silent, passive, and invisible. Because I did not want to be seen as a teacher who played a major role

during the class and because I did not want to infringe on teachers' professional territories, I did not say, direct, or coordinate anything and/or interact with students. I always sat quietly in the back or corner of classrooms.

Regarding my school/classroom observations, it is necessary to note that my study participants and I set a rule before I first visited their school/classroom: we would pretend that we did not know each other. This was because I wanted to avoid bringing undue attention to "multicultural" students. I initiated/shared this idea to all study participants (i.e., students, parents, and teachers) so that students and parents could feel safer³⁸ and teachers could be more careful with explaining my presence to their students. So whenever I made a visit to school, we did not talk to or even greet each other.

Overall, my ethnographic data collection stage generated largely four primary forms of data: fieldnotes produced from interactions and observations in the six focal "multicultural" teenagers' homes and schools; interview transcripts generated by in-depth interviews with my study participants; the students' artifacts (e.g., drawing, writing, pictures, and online postings); and some surveys completed across the year. I will describe in detail each source of data (see Table 3.6).

I recorded fieldnotes whenever I interacted with my study participants, regardless of occasions and the duration of interaction. At the end of the data collection, I produced approximately 90-100 pages of fieldnotes for each student. I concentrated on and wrote down observations about (a) the physical environments, (b) students' interactions with others (e.g., parents, siblings, peers, and teachers), (c) their memorable, interesting words and behaviors, and (d) my impressions/interpretations after interacting with them. As I audio-recorded every mentoring session and class observation, I went back to the recordings to review anything I missed and to transcribe some conversations.

Furthermore, in-depth semi-structured interviews (Patton, 1990) were conducted. I adopted some topics used/suggested in Lao (2004) and Kramsch (2009) in order to learn about my study participants' feelings, beliefs, and attitudes about/toward their living, learning, and teaching experiences in Korea. All interviews were audio-recorded and transcribed. The first round of interviews was in April 2014 for the parents and May for the students. Each interview lasted approximately one hour, except the interview with Heedong's mother who talked for almost three hours. When conducting interviews with the focal students' mothers, I focused on their experiences in their countries of origin and in Korea, some memorable events in rearing their children, and languages that they used at home. Moreover, I asked about their attitudes toward their languages, Korean, and English in addition to Korean policies regarding their families and children. I used the interviews with the students to learn more about what they liked to do, how they managed their daily lives, and what their experiences of living as "multicultural" looked like.

The second round of interview was for the focal students' teachers. Because of their schedules and varying degrees of willingness to participate in interviews, this round started in August 2014 and ended in December 2014. I asked the teachers about their experiences with my study participants (both students and their parents) and their perceptions of "multicultural" families and students in general. The interviews with the teachers lasted approximately thirty minutes on average.

³⁸ Some of my student participants did not reveal their familial background to their peers—implying that their physical appearances were not distinguishable from their "non-multicultural" peers—primarily because they feared being stigmatized.

The third round of interview was for my six “multicultural” teenager participants. The interviews were conducted in December 2014, and I specifically scheduled this interview in our last mentoring session. We spent about 90-120 minutes talking about the year we spent together; their insights on languages and cultures; their relationships with their family members; their schooling experiences; their interpersonal relationships; and/or discrimination events that they went through. I also used this opportunity to confirm my impressions and understandings about them, ask further questions about interesting comments and attitudes that they uttered/showed across the year, observe their responses to my questions, and express my gratitude to them for participating in the project and for helping me learn about them.

Table 3.6 The Number of Interactions with My Study Participants in Stage 3

Pseudonym	(More Formal) Interview			Observation		Major Artifacts
	Mother	Child	Teacher	Mentoring	Classroom	
Artanis	1	2	1	31	5	52 drawings; other online postings
Sungho	1	2		34	5	12 writings; 10 drawings; other online postings
Jinsoo	1	2	3	29	21	34 writings; other online postings
Hayang	1	2	1	31	3	38 drawings; 3 video clips; other online postings
Tayo	2	2	1	36	9	12 writings; 2 drawings; other online postings
Heedong	1	2	1	31	3	13 writings; other online postings

Note 1: Tayo’s mother was busy when we first had an interview because her son needed her attention (e.g., meal time) and because Tayo came back home earlier than expected. So Tayo’s mother and I met again in June to complement the interview we had had to wrap up in haste earlier.

Note 2: All interviews were conducted in Korean; however, as Hayang’s mother and I spoke English, we used the language when having an interview.

Note 3: “Casual occasions” under observation included family meals, gatherings unrelated to mentoring (e.g., visiting public libraries), and so on.

The six “multicultural” students’ artifacts also constituted a primary form of data. I was able to collect various kinds of documents such as the students’ academic records, writings, drawings, photos, and other online postings (e.g., Kakao Story and Afreeca). Through these data, I learned whom they interacted with, what they spent most of their time on, what they were interested in, what they valued, and how they utilized resources around them.

Lastly, I regard surveys that the students and their parents completed as an important part of the data collection. Across 2014, two of my acquaintances in Korea, who were also in the process of collecting data about “multicultural” families and children, asked me for a favor. Because they knew that I was interacting with “multicultural” families and children, they approached me to find ways to gather survey data. Because these surveys had interesting and sensitive questions that I could not ask my study participants directly (e.g., parents’ educational background, and household income), I wanted to see my study participants’ answers. This led me to ask them if they were willing to respond to the surveys. Because all said “Yes” and completed

the surveys, I was able to take a close look at how they responded to the surveys. This helped me clarify what I observed in 2014.

Role of the Researcher

Stage 1: Critical Discourse Analysis of “Multicultural” Discourses

I grew up seeing my parents reading the Hankyoreh and critiquing other conservative newspapers although they have lived in so-called Gangnam (a more affluent, politically conservative area). In fact, when the Hankyoreh was established in 1988, they were citizen shareholders and subscribed to the newspaper since then. From time to time, my parents shared some articles via text messages or email. Being exposed to the Hankyoreh from an early age, I have been influenced by the newspaper in terms of the way I understand the world. I have been proud of being the reader of the Hankyoreh and of choosing it as one of the three newspapers in my dissertation. However, I might be biased when analyzing the three chosen newspapers (e.g., taking articles from the Hankyoreh more seriously and being more critical of articles published by the Chosun Ilbo).

Stage 2: Statistical Analysis of “Multicultural” Teenagers’ Language Proficiency

My statistical training began in earnest when I entered my doctoral program at UC Berkeley. As a person who loved learning foreign languages and who was a language and literature major, I had not envisioned myself running any statistical analyses as a researcher. Although I have worked as a statistician on a couple of occasions with international research teams (e.g., Read Malawi and Save the Children), I took this opportunity to collaborate with my colleague, Jinho Kim at UC Berkeley. His insight into my analyses proved very useful in helping me unpack my findings.

Stage 3: Ethnography of Embedded Case Studies

Pre-recruitment of my study participant.

I encountered unexpected challenges when I began to recruit my study participants in Korea. First, all of the public sector employers I approached refused to help me to recruit “multicultural” families, using excuses related to (a) their concerns about my uncertain background; (b) their desire to protect the privacy of the families; (c) their suspicions about the purity of my motives (i.e., conducting research); and (d) their need to follow bureaucratic requirements. In fact, no one ever explained to me what requirements I had to meet in order to gain access to “multicultural” families. Second, I was often positioned as an insidious researcher who would exploit “multicultural” families to advance my own career. They had experience with other researchers who abused “multicultural” families; they identified themselves as “experts” and enjoyed political, economic, and scholarly benefits bestowed upon them by universities and the Korean government. My study participants and other related personnel did not trust me nor did they take my dissertation project seriously. Many of them made comments about the way that Korean researchers (myself included) objectified the population as no more than “animals in a zoo.”

Soon, I realized that the only effective way to meet my study participants was through personal contacts. Indeed, once I found the key people in authoritative positions, almost all of the administrative and institutional obstacles disappeared. Although I stayed the same young researcher, people started to identify me with my familial, educational, and professional background and connect me to their networks—thereby effectively cutting through the red tape.

The same people who refused to help me then changed their attitudes and supported my dissertation study without giving a list of excuses. Their misgivings seemed to be assuaged by my contacts and/or they might decide to help me in order to maintain good relations with these authority figures. This signals the extent to which research is influenced by local power structures.

When I met my study participants, I had to clarify my positionalities in order to counteract any assumptions they made about me as a researcher. One way was to show my solidarity with “multicultural” families by using my previous research project on foreign brides’ human rights in 2013. I also publicly critiqued the existing studies that have a tendency to strengthen the prejudices of “multicultural” families. I then highlighted that since my dissertation leaned more toward a qualitative, longitudinal, and ethnographic approach, I would present more accurate pictures of their lives. In this process, I stressed the fact that I was interested in making these “multicultural” children into assets rather than liabilities in Korean society. And I strategically emphasized that I would offer mentoring sessions for “multicultural” adolescents throughout the year. Through these conversations with my study participants and the related personnel, I was able to position myself differently from what they had initially imagined.

As Maranhao (1993) noted, however, self-advertisement gave me some guilty feelings. I felt that I was (a) taking advantage of my background and experiences to build human networks and potentially influence my study participants and (b) using my study participants to get a degree in the United States. In addition, the subject positions that I took up in finding the key point persons may limit the extent to which I reveal the results of my dissertation and discuss the implications of them in public because my project has benefitted from local power structures.

Post-recruitment of my study participants.

The way I recruited my study participants and positioned myself both opened up and closed down possible positioning that I could take up. It allowed me to secure my study participants and learn more about their experiences with languages and cultures at homes and in schools. They allowed me to visit their homes, and most of them welcomed me. However, the way I recruited my study participants also restricted my positioning because I was understood as a “nice and smart friend” from the United States who might be able to rescue the “multicultural” adolescents from a vicious cycle. This positioning ultimately prevented me from saying “No” to in some situations. For instance, as a show of solidarity, I accepted requests to teach two of my student participants’ siblings in addition to my student participants. When my parent participants were out of town, I was given a role to check in on the students to see if they were safe and okay. In addition, I had to split my time and gave multiple public lectures for students who went to the schools I visited.

Overall, I was a moderate participant observer who was both insider and outsider (Spradley, 1980). I was an insider in a sense that I established a rapport with my study participants. The six focal students opened their hearts and told me their personal and familial stories. They also shared their concerns (e.g., peer relations, high school application, and health), and we sought some possible solutions/directions together. Because I was a Korean speaker, some students told me their daily lives that they did not easily share with their parents who were not available at homes or who tended not to understand the Korean language fully.

Like their children, my parent participants showed similar attitudes toward me and positioned me as an insider. The parents I interacted with often shared their experiences as well as their difficulties and asked me for advice. Certainly, my close relationship with them did not

develop immediately after data collection began. It was in April 2014 that our trust was deepened, when I conducted the first round of interviews with them. In fact, Heedong's mother demonstrated a dramatic attitudinal change before and after we had our first interview. She initially resisted taking part in the project because she was the one who regarded researchers as exploiters. What changed her unwillingness to participate was her desire to give her son mentoring opportunities for a year. However, interacting with Heedong's mother was initially very emotionally draining. She avoided talking to me and canceled multiple interview sessions we scheduled. But in April when we finally sat down together and talked, we spent approximately three hours and in between, she cried after reflecting on her experiences in Korea. After that, she was the most active and open contributor among the parent participants.

While I ended up becoming a sister, mentor, and/or friend to my study participants, I was also clearly an outsider. This is primarily because I was first introduced to them as a researcher from the United States who wanted to study them. In particular, my bi-weekly school observations reinforced my position as outsider. The fact that my student participants and I interacted as if we did not know each other in the official school setting made them feel more distanced from me. They sometimes asked me what I was doing exactly, what I noticed about them, when I would leave for the United States, how many mentoring sessions we had left, and so on. Furthermore, my parent participants frequently asked me how other students in my project were doing—as they had a “multicultural” family network, many families knew each other—and how my data collection was going. Similarly, greetings from my teacher participants almost always began with their questions of how my work was going. Although I tried hard to be polite and stay invisible, some teachers felt uncomfortable with my temporary presence in their classrooms. This way, I was also positioned as an outsider who would not be staying with my study participants for a longer period of time.

From May 2014, all my study participants seemed to accept my presence in their homes and/or schools as routine. Thanks to the relationships that we built (e.g., myself as a listening ear), after my official data collection period ended, we chatted via social network services and met in person when I visited Korea. My study participants also often contacted me when they had some assignments that needed my help and when they wanted to share some good news (e.g., their achievements and prizes they won).

Procedures for Analysis

Constructing the Database

In Stage 1, I first used a program called Evernote in order to store all newspaper articles in one place by folders (year, press). Later, however, I went back to the online archives of each press and saved each newspaper article as a PDF file so that I could analyze the data in a more rigorous way. By saving PDF files as “name of press_date_title,” I transferred them into Atlas.ti and created folders that denote year and press. This way, I was able to easily see the patterns of news articles published by the three chosen newspapers.

In Stage 2, because KEDI already created cleaned datasets for the years I wanted to analyze, it was easy to construct the database. In addition, my statistician colleague helped me organize the datasets and merged three years of data by matching the student, parent, and teacher variables.

Once I started interacting with my study participants in Stage 3, I constructed the database by creating each student's folder. Under each folder were sub-folders labeled as “Mentoring,” “School,” “Interview,” and “Artifacts.” The Mentoring and School folders

included my fieldnotes and audio recordings in homes and schools. The Interview folder had interview recordings, transcripts of student, mother, and teacher interviews, and my written reactions recorded after having each interview. In terms of transcribing the interviews, I finished the task in January 2015. As I was more interested in what they said and had a plan to use thematic coding rather than engaging in the analysis geared toward a more conversation analysis (that requires detailed transcriptions such as noting pause length, exhales, pronunciation), I simply wrote what the speakers uttered. I also used standard orthography. However, when necessary, I noted the speakers' intonations, changes in volume, pauses, and/or facial expressions and motions. The Artifacts folder had multiple subfolders because I differentiated the sources of data: official school documents (including homework), drawings, writings, photos, chat logs, online postings (e.g., Social Network Service), and surveys.

Alignment between Data and Research Questions

The table below summarizes how the collected data answered the research questions that I posed.

Table 3.7 Research Questions and Data Used in Analysis

Research Questions	Stages & Data Used in Analysis
1. How are “multicultural” teenagers as a whole characterized and portrayed by the Korean media?	Stage 1. Newspaper articles published from 2009 to 2013
2. How does the level of Korean and English proficiency of “multicultural” teenagers compare to that of teenagers born to Korean mothers?	Stage 2. A subset of KELS data (collected from 2005 to 2007) that included students' language proficiency and variables at the personal, familial, and school levels
3. How do “multicultural” teenagers negotiate and construct the identities that are imposed on them at home and in school?	Stage 3. Fieldnotes; transcribed audio recorded observations; transcribed student, parent, and teacher interviews; student artifacts
4. How do “multicultural” teenagers view their future in South Korea, in their mother's country of origin, and in a globalized world?	

Analyzing Data in the Database

Adopting multiple research methodologies, this dissertation study collected a variety of kinds of data from multiple settings. This was somewhat paradoxically to make what I noticed, felt, learned, and found more complicated. As one's life could not be understood in a year or delineated by paragraphs, it is inappropriate to generate grand generalizations out of a four-page survey or an hour-long interview. To complement findings, I relied on multiple sources of data such as interviews, artifacts, and surveys. While focusing on broader, longer-term ethnographic data that might produce some sorts of patterned meanings of my study participants (Atkinson, Okada, & Talmy, 2011), I also triangulated the collected data to make sense of them in a more fruitful way.

Stage 1: Critical discourse analysis of “multicultural” discourses.

I chose critical discourse analysis (CDA) to analyze the newspaper data. Influenced by social theories of power (e.g., Foucault and Bourdieu) and ideology (e.g., Althusser, Gramsci,

Silverstein, and Woolard), this analytical framework has been employed by a number of researchers such as Fairclough (1989, 1992, 1995), van Dijk (1993, 1996), and Wodak (1995). Language is conceived as social practices determined by social structures (i.e., sites of power struggle) and as ideological properties (Fairclough, 1989); Discourse is viewed as manifestation that reflects existing social relationships (e.g., Fairclough, 1992; Kress & Hodge, 1979; Lemke, 1995). This understanding of language and discourse leads van Dijk (1993) to define CDA as “a study of the relations between discourse, power, dominance, social inequality and the position of the discourse analyst in such social relationships” (p. 283).

The political nature of CDA enables researchers to move beyond the simple description of discourse and to investigate how and why particular discourses are produced in relation to prevailing ideologies in society. Indeed, CDA uncovers sociopolitical and sociocultural ideologies embedded in discourse (Fairclough, 1985; Stubbs, 1983) for “empowering the powerless, giving voices to the voiceless, exposing power abuse, and mobilizing people to remedy social wrongs” (Blommaert, 2005, p. 25).

In analyzing the collected newspaper articles, I started my data analysis with a combination of provisional coding and in vivo coding (Miles & Huberman, 1994). Grounding the analysis in words used by newspapers, I assigned descriptive codes to a section of newspaper data by examining the semantic content and form of the utterance (Boyatzis, 1998; Miles & Huberman, 1994). As the data-encoding process is dynamic as well as fluid and new codes emerge in the process of analyzing the data (Lincoln & Guba, 1985; Strauss & Corbin, 1998), I continuously added, modified, combined, and/or dropped the existing codes if necessary (see Table 3.8 for codes). By going through these continuous processes, I was able to pin down repeating codes and make connections between patterned themes and larger political ideologies that sustained such discourses about “multicultural” families and children. The software package Atlas.ti was used throughout the data analysis process.

Table 3.8 Codes Used in CDA of Newspaper Articles

Codes	Explanation
MARGINALIZED	Inclusion-Exclusion
	Bullying
	Low SES
	Limited resources
	Democracy
THREAT	Nationalism
	Limited educational achievement
	Limited linguistic proficiency
GLOBAL HUMAN RESOURCES	Global citizen
	Neoliberalism
	Global capital
	Bi-/Multi-lingualism
	Bi-/Multi-culturalism
ADVERTISEMENT	of people
	of event
	of program

	of policy
ETC.	Not about “multicultural” families and children but used the term more broadly

Stage 2: Statistical analysis of “multicultural” teenagers’ language proficiency.

I employed the two-level hierarchical linear model (HLM) for longitudinal data (Rabe-Hesketh & Skrondal, 2012). The modeling was to describe growth trajectories of “multicultural” and “non-multicultural” students’ language proficiency over broad intervals of time. Level 1 was a within-person model and Level 2 was a between-person model. Level 1 modeled the time-variant variables to examine variability within individuals—how language proficiency changed over time and whether other time varying covariates explained these changes. Level 2 modeled the time-invariant variables to investigate variability between individuals—whether intercepts and slopes were different across individual growth trajectories and whether other time-invariant covariates explained these differences. Simply put, repeated measures of Korean and English proficiency were nested in adolescents when they were middle school students. The 5% level of significance was used in all significance tests. The software package Stata was used to run the analysis.

The growth curve models included various types of information about the population from demographics to psychological concepts of self, to familial background, to experiences in school, and to school-related variables. Table 3.9 describes the variables used in the analysis.

Table 3.9 Variables Included in the HLM Analysis

Level	Name	Type	Description
Student	Korean proficiency*	Continuous	Korean test scores
	English proficiency*	Continuous	English test scores
	Time*	Categorical	Years 1-3 (middle school years)
	Gender	Categorical	Being male or female
	Self-Concept*	Continuous (Likert scale)	Mean of 20 self-concept items
Family	Multicultural family	Categorical	“Multicultural” family or not
	Socioeconomic status*	Continuous	A composite variable composed of family income, parent education level, and parent occupation
School	Urbanicity	Categorical	The size of cities: metropolitan, micropolitan city, rural
	Student-Teacher relation*	Continuous (Likert scale)	Mean of 6 student-teacher relation items
	Peer relation*	Continuous (Likert scale)	Mean of 4 peer relation items

Note 1: An asterisk attached to variables refers to the time varying nature of variables that had repeated measures. The other variables were invariant and specific to each individual.

Students’ Korean and English test scores functioned as outcome variables. To compare students’ language development progress in an absolute way, their raw scores were transformed into vertical scaled test scores (e.g., Choi, Goldschmidt, & Yamashiro, 2006; H. J. Park, Sang, &

Kang, 2008). The scores had means of 300 for the first, 400 for the second, and 500 for the third grade in middle school. The standard deviation of each year is 50 (H. J. Park, Sang, & Kang, 2008).

The self-concept variable assessed students' perception of themselves. Students were asked to choose Likert scales ranging from strongly disagree (1) to strongly agree (5), after reading statements such as "I am living in a happy family" and "I enjoy studying in the school." The Cronbach's alpha coefficient for the composite scale was consistently greater than 0.88 across the three years.

I generated the socioeconomic status (SES) variable in the way the National Educational Longitudinal Study created the variable (Curtin, Ingels, Wu, Huer, & Owings, 2002; Hafner, Ingels, Schneider, & Stevenson, 1990). Specifically, the SES variable was composed of education levels of both parents,³⁹ occupations of both parents,⁴⁰ and overall family income⁴¹. The combined values of these three items were standardized with a mean of 0 and a standard deviation of 1. Then the Principal Component Analysis (PCA) was employed to create the SES scores.

Stage 3: Ethnography of embedded case studies.

Because ethnographic data collected in 2014 required more micro level attention due to their situatedness and richness, I adopted inductive thematic analysis and discourse analysis. Thematic analysis was carried out in order to identify repeating themes in the collected data. In addition, I employed discourse analysis to understand how my study participants reinforced and/or challenged more macro discourses about "multicultural" families and children in Korea and how they positioned themselves vis-à-vis languages, cultures, and others in their daily lives.

Grounding the analysis in words used and motions/behaviors expressed by my study participants, I used multiple coding strategies: (a) provisional coding to reflect the four research questions and my data collection experiences, (b) in vivo coding to let my analysis rooted in the data, (c) descriptive coding to topicalize, document, and categorize what my participants expressed, and (d) values coding to capture connections between data (my participants' values, attitudes, beliefs) and ideologies/larger power structures (Miles & Huberman, 1994; Saldaña, 2012). It might be true that these coding collections would not much overlap due to researcher's ontological and epistemological orientations and/or theoretical frameworks; however, as Spie and Ghiso (2004) noted, "all coding is a judgment call" (p. 482) that is inseparable from our subjectivities and personalities. Thus, in the process of going through multiple rounds of coding, I adopted a series of coding strategies to better understand the collected data, give meaning to them, and to ultimately develop an overarching, coherent theme (Saldaña, 2012).

Through these coding procedures, I aimed to capture interactions that I had with my study participants and in which they were engaged with others in varying settings. In addition, I was eager to find their understanding of "multicultural" in relation to themselves, their families, Korean society, and the world. To supplement what I found about my student participants, I also drew mother and teacher interview transcripts, surveys, and student artifacts.

After analyzing each student case and finding some thematic patterns, I also compared repeating themes across students. Then I produced analytical categories to make connections between identified themes and my research questions. In particular, by doing so, I tried to come

³⁹ I rescaled parents' education level into years of education. For instance, bachelor's degree was coded as 16.

⁴⁰ I used the International Socioeconomic Index of Occupational Status.

⁴¹ I transformed income into natural logarithms to adjust highly skewed distribution of the data.

up with more general arguments about how “multicultural” teenagers constructed, negotiated, and reconstructed their identities at homes and in schools and how they envisioned their futures in Korea, in their mothers’ countries of origin, and in the world. Analytic categories I used included *stereotypes, bilingualism, challenges, creativity, mother’s country, mother’s language, English, cosmopolitanism, peer relations, “multicultural,” technology, emotion, language barrier, money, teacher, schooling*, and so forth.

Chapter 4. Critical Discourse Analysis of Discourses about “Multicultural” Families in the Korean Media⁴²

To locate this dissertation study within a larger sociocultural context, the current chapter investigates how “multicultural” families as a whole are presented and portrayed by the Korean media. This chapter first analyzes patterns of discourses about the *multicultural* theme in the newspapers. By adopting critical discourse analysis (Fairclough, 1995), it also reveals that “multicultural” families and children have attracted variable characterizations from (a) a marginalized group, to (b) a threat to the future Korean society, and to (c) global human resources. Given that these macro discourses are a manifestation of underlying ideologies, this chapter ends with a discussion on how the three discourses are mapped onto three competing ideologies.

Patterns of Discourses about the “Multicultural” Theme

The term *multicultural* was not introduced only to refer to “multicultural” families in Korea. Prior to 2000, it was occasionally used to explain diversity of North American or European demographics and cultures and/or ideologies. For example, the Hankyoreh newspapers published a series of articles about Germany and the word appeared from time to time to describe the history and culture of the nation-state. On February 7, 1997, devoting a paragraph, a columnist expounded multiculturalism by discussing when the word was employed and how Germany appropriated it. Printing an article about the siege of Sarajevo, the Chosun Ilbo on December 20, 1995 also used the word to account for the Bosnian government’s policy vis-à-vis Republika Srpska. This implies that the collected newspaper articles include the ones that are not directly related to “multicultural” families in Korea but use the term in a broader sense (e.g., multiculturalism in philosophy, multicultural policies in Germany, multicultural festivals in Australia, and multicultural nature of New York City). Nevertheless, I decided to use multicultural as the keyword to avoid missing any articles dealing with the topic of “multicultural” families and children.

Concerning the target population of this dissertation project, the term first appeared in the Korean media in 2003 when intellectual alliances held a press conference to emphasize the importance of abolishing any social and cultural discrimination against people of mixed blood.⁴³ As an initial step to achieve the goal, they suggested finding an alternative word for people of mixed blood, for the word *honhyeolin* (혼혈인) had a derogatory connotation. Thus, the word “multicultural” made an appearance.

Yet, the movement captured little attention. It was not until 2005 that the term began to gain mass support. And the Korean government was standing in the center of this process and expedited the production of discourses about “multicultural” families in Korea. In July 2005, the Ministry of Health and Welfare made public the project called “A research on the actual condition of the migrant women through international marriage, and the plan for supporting policy of health and welfare.” The rationale for launching this large-scale project was that international marriages reached a point in 2014 when they accounted for more than 10% of the total number of marriages in Korea. Then the media began to pay more attention to the issue by reiterating the changing demographics in the Korean territory, giving explanations of the influx

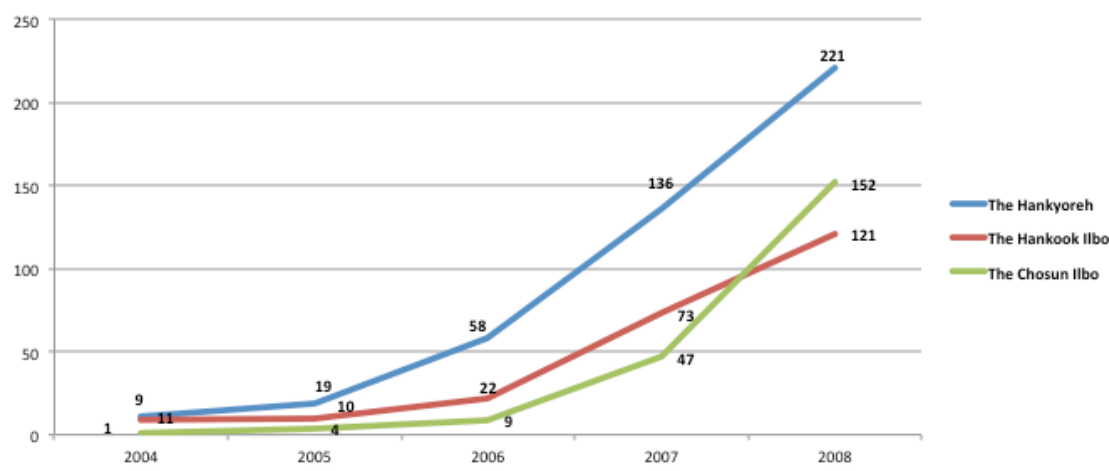
⁴² All newspaper articles were originally written in Korean so I translated them into English when I quoted them in this chapter.

⁴³ Among the three selected newspapers, the Hankyoreh alone reported the event on December 3, 2003.

of foreign brides, and illustrating “multicultural” families’ miserable living conditions. Reporters often cited the brides’ dreary financial situation in their homelands as the primary motive for moving to Korea. In addition, all selected newspapers depicted “multicultural” families’ living condition as indigent; nothing shows this better than this headline “Starving international marriage migrant women” from the Hankook Ilbo on July 14, 2005.

In March and May 2006, two government-led projects, “The present conditions on children's education in multicultural families and policy project” and “Educational support plan for children from multicultural backgrounds,” continued to focus on “multicultural” families. Although these projects were not explicitly mentioned in the selected newspapers, there was a flood of news articles about “multicultural” children’s educational opportunities and the urgent need to support them soon after these projects began. As Figure 4.1 demonstrates, it was the Korean government that played the trigger role in drawing attention to the issue.

Figure 4.1 The Number of Newspaper Articles with the Keyword between 2004 and 2008



The Korean government’s circulation of the discourses about “multicultural” families overlapped with Hines Ward’s visit to Korea in 2006. As he was an American football player and as the son of an African American father and a Korean mother, all economic, social and political sectors competed in iconizing him and promoting the “multicultural” slogan. The Hankyoreh printed 52 articles either dealing with him or referencing him, 14 articles from the Hankook Ilbo, and 20 articles from the Chosun Ilbo. Although they were not inclined to use the word “multicultural” in their articles, many argued the need for reconsideration of Korea’s monoethnic and monocultural ideologies (e.g., the Hankyoreh on February 17, April 6, April 19; the Hankook Ilbo on February 26, June 22; the Chosun Ilbo on February 14 and December 27).

Since 2007, the “multicultural” theme became the new catch phrase of the administration under President Moohyun Roh. The Korean government published more public announcements and policy briefs about “multicultural” families and children, constructing a “multicultural” Korea in the context of globalization. Accordingly, the newspapers not only printed articles about the target population, but also constantly recycled the demographics of foreign workers, foreign brides, and “multicultural” children. One of the most frequently observable news articles was that the number of foreigners and naturalized Korean citizens drastically increased. This unquestionably gave an impression to the general public that the inflow of foreigners was inexorable and “multicultural” Korea was already an established fact. By explicating the social

problems rooted in Korea such as aging society, low birthrate, and labor shortage, the newspapers began to characterize “multicultural” children as potential and essential labor sources. A column printed in the Hankook Ilbo on February 15, 2010 stated the issue as follows:

But they [multicultural children] are definitely Koreans like us. Whether willing or unwilling, they are Korea’s important human resources in the future. At the end of the last year, the number of marriage migrant women exceeded 100,000, and children like Jungmin reached close to 200,000. The number of these people will be increasing and the children will grow and become adolescents and adults. They are respectable citizens of the Republic of Korea who will secure our waning rural communities, work in the factories, pay taxes, and serve the military when they become twenty years old.

Like other news articles (e.g., the Hankyoreh on December 20, 2010; the Chosun Ilbo on April 30, 2010), this column justified why Koreans need to accept “multicultural” families with magnanimity (i.e., Koreans have need of them).

The following figure presents the total number of articles that included the multicultural keyword from the Hankyoreh, the Hankook Ilbo, and the Chosun Ilbo between 2009 and 2013.

Figure 4.2 Number of Newspaper Articles with the Keyword between 2009 and 2013

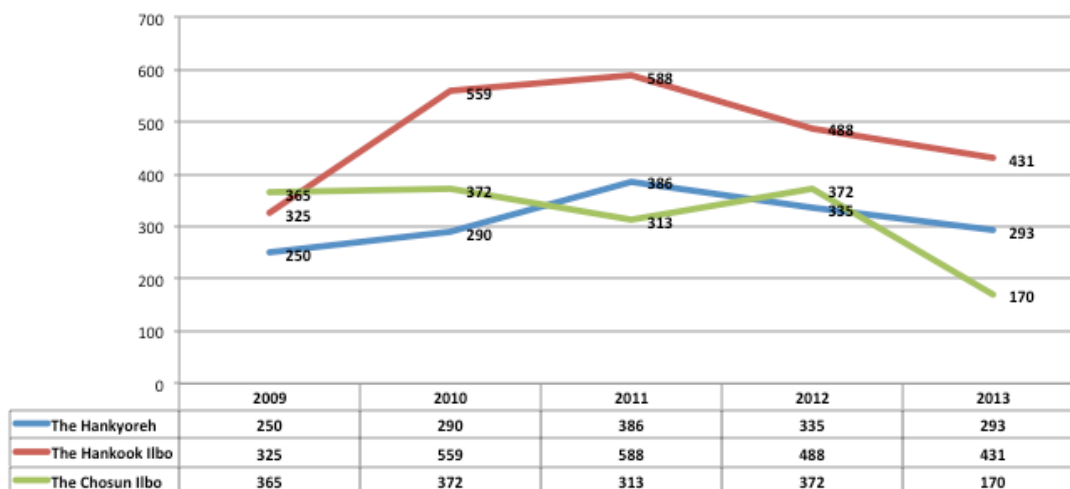


Figure 4.2 reflects the excitement of the multicultural theme in Korea. Even if all these news articles would not directly refer to “multicultural” families and children due to the more general use of the keyword, the fact that the total number of articles’ jump-off illustrates the trend of the times (i.e., “multicultural” Korea). For instance, in 2011 hundreds of news articles that contained the keyword were published while only a handful of newspapers were published in 2004; in 2012, the three newspapers published at least one or two articles that had the keyword every day. In sum, this pattern verifies that the theme has indeed become the catch phrase of the day in Korea.

One observable pattern, however, is that the number of newspaper articles with the multicultural keyword dropped from the three newspapers in 2013. Assuming the number of printed news articles about the theme did not go into reverse in 2014,⁴⁴ it appears that the slogan of multicultural Korea is starting to lose its social and political interests. This might be connected to the way the “multicultural” boom was initiated. Since the government has played a leading

⁴⁴ In 2014, the Hankyoreh, the Hankook Ilbo, and the Chosun Ilbo published 198, 319, and 114 news articles with the “multicultural” keyword, respectively.

role in producing/circulating discourses about “multicultural” families, the transfer of political power from President Myungbak Lee to President Keunhye Park in 2013 would influence the direction that the administration takes, which again influences the newspapers’ decision of what to print. The other possible explanation, of course, is that multiculturalism and immigration became so commonplace that it was no longer “news.”

Three Discourses about “Multicultural” Families and Children

After coding the collected news articles from the *Hankyoreh*, the *Hankook Ilbo*, and the *Chosun Ilbo*, I focused on articles about “multicultural” families and children. Three discourses emerged from articles printed between 2009 and 2013:

- “Multicultural” families as a marginalized group;
- “Multicultural” families as a threat; and
- “Multicultural” children as global human resources.

The analysis of the three newspapers reveals that Korean society has various competing discourses about the population. While these discourses are interconnected, I will discuss each respectively for the sake of clarity.

Discourse 1: “Multicultural” Families as a Marginalized Group

There is a canonical metanarrative. There is an old man who is less educated and has limited financial power. He lives in a rural area and has a history of marriage or medical treatment. His wife is also less educated and is not Korean. She is originally from a poorer Asian country, such as mainland China, Vietnam, and the Philippines. As a foreigner, she has difficulty adjusting to the Korean language and culture. Her neighbors usually regard her as a purchased object who migrated to Korea for financial reasons. A child born from this family has a distinguishable, non-Korean appearance, falters in using the Korean language, and is bullied at school and in the community.

This description is the typical representation of “multicultural” families in Korean newspapers (e.g., the *Hankyoreh* on September 2, 2009, August 29, 2012; the *Hankook Ilbo* on September 14, November 11, 2010, August 15, 2011; the *Chosun Ilbo* on January 17, 2009, February 7, 2012). Their marginalized status is revealed again and again in the newspaper discourse. First, Korean husbands and their foreign wives are characterized as people without any social networks or symbolic capital (e.g., education, a residential district, and occupation). Korean husbands are viewed as less educated blue-collar workers, and their wives are represented as less educated and poorer foreigners. This leads to another simplified representation of “multicultural” families: Their financial inability prevents them from fully participating in social and cultural events and consequently, they are isolated. In terms of “multicultural” children, they are marked as not Korean enough because of their “foreign” appearance and their limited Korean proficiency. Overall, the three newspapers place “multicultural” families in a bottom tier in many different hierarchies, imposing a marginalized identity on them.

Four interrelated sub-themes are represented in this discourse: (a) “multicultural” families’ restricted access to resources, (b) “multicultural” children’s limited proficiency in Korean and in mother’s language, (c) their limited educational achievement, and (d) their maladjustment to school.

The discourse characterizing “multicultural” families as the marginalized group has its roots in the very reason why Korean men look for their wives in other developing countries: they

lack economic and cultural resources and therefore, Korean women are reluctant to marry them (Shim, 1993). This historical background of the appearance of “multicultural” families allows newspaper articles to describe them as having restricted resources and to label them as the underprivileged. With a strongly worded headline, “60% of multicultural families, monthly income less than \$2,000,” an article from the Hankyoreh on March 17, 2010 stressed “multicultural” families’ lower social stratum in Korea. In fact, “multicultural” families are often listed next to other minorities in society such as the handicapped, North Korean refugees, people from the lower income bracket, broken families, single parent families, children living in the care of grandparents, and/or foreign workers. The repetitive occurrences of the word “multicultural” families along with other minorities are inclined to consolidate their marginalized social and political position in Korea.

Table 4.1. The Marginalized “Multicultural” Families: Limited Access to Resources

Printed Date	English Translation
Sept. 2, 2009 (The Hankyoreh)	Children from multicultural families being ‘abandoned’ due to family meltdown and poverty
Mar. 8, 2010 (The Chosun Ilbo)	The poor level of Korean spoken by a foreign father or mother and their lack of diversity in vocabulary inevitably have a negative impact on their children’s language skill and mental development. ... About 53 percent of multicultural families make the minimum wage, so they cannot afford expensive private tutor or kindergarten education.
Mar. 3, 2011 (The Hankyoreh)	Poverty as the origin of Internet addiction. ... The addiction rate of multicultural families appears to be 37.6%, three times higher than non-multicultural families.
Dec. 28, 2012 (The Hankook Ilbo)	Due to this incident, people in the most vulnerable class such as recipients of basic living subsidies, people in the second-to-the-bottom income bracket, the disabled, senior citizens living alone, multicultural families, pregnant women, and infants would no longer receive benefits from visiting health care workers and therefore face a dire situation.
Feb. 26, 2013 (The Hankook Ilbo)	Multicultural families living on their nerves during the new semester season. Preparing for a school, some register a preliminary educational program because they worry about their children being ignored and discriminated by their distinguishable skin color/clumsy Korean. ... The reality of multicultural children including distinguishable skin color, constant school violence, and the entrance rate to schools of higher grade is what makes them anxious.

Thus, a considerable number of newspaper articles reported how various parties provided financial and educational resources to “multicultural” families. In fact, the “advertisement” code was the second most frequent code that I assigned across the collected newspaper articles followed by the “marginalized” code. It is evident that “multicultural” families became the major target of the Korean government’s social welfare and corporations’ ways to advertise their social responsibility.⁴⁵

⁴⁵ Due to such excessive concerns over “multicultural” families and children, a Japanese foreign bride wrote a column in the Hankook Ilbo on December 17 in 2009. By pointing out that “multicultural” children are asked to

Depiction of “multicultural” families having limited resources subsequently facilitates deficit-based representations of “multicultural” children in the newspapers. First of all, they are described as if they have speech impediment in Korean. This is exemplified in the following excerpt from the Chosun Ilbo on March 8, 2010:

Forty percent of children in multicultural families in Korea drop out of school or face difficulties adjusting to society due to their lack of fluency in Korean. The Ministry for Health, Welfare and Family Affairs conducted a study last year on the status of Korean language education among 2,400 children from multicultural families and found that six out of ten were at least six months behind compared to other Korean children of the same age. Eighty percent of two-year-old multicultural children demonstrated normal levels of Korean fluency, but the ratio dropped to 30 percent when they reached six.

This stereotypical generalization about “multicultural” children’s deficiency in Korean has not changed much since then (e.g., the Hankyoreh on August 11, 2011, April 9, 2012; the Hankook Ilbo on August 15, 2011, February 27, 2013; the Chosun Ilbo on June 18, 2012, November 22, 2012, September 16, 2013).

The accusation of “multicultural” children’s parents—their restricted access to resources and foreign mothers’ Korean proficiency—makes such partial description of “multicultural” children’s language development more persuasive. Specifically, Korean fathers are generally understood as indifferent fosterers who are busy making a living or who are ignorant of their children’s education (e.g., the Hankook Ilbo on September 14, 2010; the Chosun Ilbo on August 13, 2009). In fact, they are less visible in the discussion of “multicultural” children’s Korean development, for foreign brides are expected to play the primary caregiver role as mothers. Thus, many experts find the source of “multicultural” children’s speech impediment in their mother’s Korean proficiency. Their status as foreigners who are less likely to have advanced Korean ability at the time of migrating makes them more vulnerable to criticism. For instance, the Chosun Ilbo on January 28, 2009 and March 8, 2010 created a vivid image of incapable foreign mothers. The former article introduced a “multicultural” child who did not bring any written messages from school to his mother because she did not understand them. The latter asserted that foreign parent’s poor Korean had a negative impact on “multicultural” children’s language and mental development. There are a number of other articles that uniformly incriminate “multicultural” children’s foreign mothers (e.g., the Hankyoreh on August 11, 2011, April 9, 2012; the Hankook Ilbo on June 14, 2009, January 25, 2010, May 12, 2011; the Chosun Ilbo on May 8, 2012).

While foreign mothers are blamed for their children’s deficiency in Korean, the linguistic and cultural resources that they brought to Korea do not receive much attention. Although in recent years more newspaper articles explain the benefits of bilingualism and advertise various bilingual programs for “multicultural” children, the value of foreign mothers’ first languages (e.g., Chinese, Vietnamese, and Tagalog) are still evaluated according to the political and economic power of their homelands.

Within this media discourse, it is seductive to move to the logical conclusion that “multicultural” children’s limited Korean proficiency leads to another common attribution: lower academic achievement in school. The focus on “multicultural” children’s deficiency in Korean and in study predisposes the public to believe that they are unintelligent. A columnist from the

participate in too many programs (i.e., enormous of national budget is poured into the “multicultural” projects), the woman formulated, “Although being considerate and providing support to the needed are virtuous, it is worse than nothing if they become too excessive.”

Hankook Ilbo on May 12, 2011 argued that “multicultural” children had some language acquisition barrier due to the low level of foreign mothers’ Korean proficiency. He then overstated that the children’s limited Korean could lead them to suffer from learning disability and psychological diseases. In like manner, the Chosun Ilbo on January 17, 2009 ran an article about three “multicultural” children, and one of the cases was an eight-year-old girl with Korean father and Filipina mother. According to the news writer, the child could not read the Korean textbook fluently and communicate with others clearly. After providing the information that the girl was diagnosed as having five/six-year-old child’s Korean ability, the news writer noted that the girl was academically ranked near the bottom. The article also stated that her cranky personality and her exaggerated gestures made some people categorize the child as handicapped.

Lastly, the selected newspapers highlight “multicultural” children’s maladjustment to school with the issues of school violence and dropout rates⁴⁶. Again, “multicultural” families’ lower socioeconomic status and foreign mothers’ impoverished countries of origin function as the root of the issue. The Chosun Ilbo on January 17, 2009 printed a story of an eleven-year-old girl with a Japanese mother. The story focused on the Japanese mother’s disturbing experience of hearing mockery of her daughter’s peers, “Your mother is bought with money.” To emphasize the distinguishable appearance of “multicultural” children, the Hankyoreh on September 2, 2009 also introduced a twelve-year-old “multicultural” orphan and described him as a person with swarthy skin and big eyes. The article also explained that some “multicultural” children were given unpleasant nicknames like “the Philippines.” In a similar vein, the Hankook Ilbo on September 14, 2010 interviewed several “multicultural” children and they all expressed their difficulty mingling with their peers in school. Some even heard racist remarks from their peers, including “Go back to your country!” The three chosen newspapers frequently point out “multicultural” children’s different skin color⁴⁷, stammering ways of speaking, and foreign mothers as the reasons why they are ostracized in school (e.g., the Chosun Ilbo on January 17, 2009, January 28, 2009, January 18, 2010, February 19, 2011, January 9, 2012, May 8, 2012, April 23, 2013).

The key source of evidence characterizing these deficit-based representations of “multicultural” children in the newspapers is their dropout rates. Representatively, framing the issue of “multicultural” children’s maladjustment to school as “serious (*simgakhada*; 심각하다),” the Hankook Ilbo on September 9, 2009 adopted the annual parliamentary audit of dropout rates: Approximately 24% of school-aged “multicultural” children (i.e., 25,000 students) were not enrolled in school, and only 30% of “multicultural” children entered high school in 2008. Despite the danger of using statistics without caution,⁴⁸ a number of newspaper articles uncritically recycled similar statistical information and ultimately strengthened the idea that “multicultural” children lagged behind in school and easily dropped out of school (e.g., the Hankyoreh on August 15, 2012; the Hankook Ilbo on September 9, 2009, November 19, 2010,

⁴⁶ Children’s dropout rates are the only sources of information that the Korean media could cite because any statistical comparison between “multicultural” children’s and “non-multicultural” children’s academic achievement is not available. The Korean government and few educational institutions tracked school-aged children’s academic achievement with their family background variables.

⁴⁷ News articles reported that some “multicultural” children with Filipina mothers had nicknames like “blackie (*geomdungyi/sikeomdungyi*; 검둥이/시킴둥이).”

⁴⁸ In the statistics, for instance, immigrant youth who migrate to Korea in their teens and do not know much Korean are classified as “multicultural” children along with children who were born and grew up in Korea. Thus, the dropout rates should be interpreted with caution.

August 15, 2011; the Chosun Ilbo on January 17, 2009, March 8, 2010, October 28, 2010, October 17, 2011).

Overall, the sedimentation of the aforementioned discourses leads to the conclusion that people with the “multicultural” label are one of the most marginalized groups in Korea. Because of this characterization, they become the minority who always needs extra care and help from every part of Korean society.

Discourse 2: “Multicultural” Families as a Threat

As an extension of the discourse of marginalization, there exists a discourse that categorizes “multicultural” families as a future threat to Korea. More specifically, as “multicultural” families are marginalized, the threat discourse speculates that they could become an economic and political burden to Korean society due to a hike in social welfare costs and a rise in other side effects such as deepening social conflicts. In fact, this discourse has great resemblance to the injurious speech aiming at foreign workers in Korea (e.g., cheap foreign workers reduce the average income level, deprive Koreans of jobs, contaminate monoethnic and monocultural Korea, and create a breeding ground for crime and inappropriate activity).⁴⁹ Although the threat discourse about “multicultural” families appears not to go to the extreme yet, the seeds of potent xenophobia are sown as Table 4.2 shows.

Table 4.2. The Threat Discourse about “Multicultural” Families

Printed Date	English Translation
Dec. 23, 2009 (The Hankook Ilbo)	In this era of multiculturalism, the number of foreign criminals in Korea is also increasing. ⁵⁰
May 6, 2011 (The Hankyoreh)	If we do not give consideration to people who are already incorporated into the market, it is a foregone conclusion that there will be racial, religious, and class conflicts as seen from a recent riot in France.
Jan. 10, 2012 (The Chosun Ilbo)	Where would multicultural children throw the fireball of resentment burning in their heart? Right, at our society. If we do not resolve this problem, it is a foregone conclusion that like Europe, there will be immigrant riots in Korea as well.
Apr. 16, 2012 (The Hankook Ilbo)	The story is too odious to tell. There were some phrases like “XXX sold by a contract marriage,” “What can this Filipino XXX do...” This is the criticism that some netizens expressed against Jasmin Lee, who was elected from the 4·11 general election as Saenuri Party’s No. 15 proportional representation.
May 2, 2013 (The Chosun Ilbo)	But once, after the fact that his mother is Vietnamese was revealed, some netizens hurled insults at him by saying “inferior race, crossbreed.” Police reported that ten members of a certain Internet website accessed Hwang’s agency webpage and left mass replies to the

⁴⁹ See the Hankook Ilbo on July 28, 2011; the Chosun Ilbo on January 30, 2009, January 12, 2011, March 19, 2011, November 22, 2012 for more detailed representation of the discourse.

⁵⁰ Responding to the printed article, one of the journalists from the same newspaper company wrote an article on September 6, 2009, criticizing the closed nature of Korean society and arguing that foreigners should not be conceived as “potential criminals.” These two articles with different perspectives imply that there is an underlying tension of (a) how to frame foreigners in Korea where people believe in the monoethnic and monocultural ideologies and (b) what discourse is to be promoted and controlled (see Blommaert & Verschueren, 1998).

postings such as “It’s XXX crazy to know multicultural XXX live in Korea” and “Trash from the root,” and the website was paralyzed.

Similarly, another article from the Hankook Ilbo on February 15, 2010 asserted that if Koreans did not welcome “multicultural” families, the youth would become “juvenile delinquents, socially maladjusted people, and criminals.” By restating an act of arson committed by a “multicultural” adolescent, the Chosun Ilbo on November 22, 2012 also contributed to the reproduction of the threat discourse.

More frequently observable newspaper articles dealing with the threat discourse are about the possible social costs that “non-multicultural” Koreans need to pay in the future. In particular, cases of other nation-states such as the United States, Germany, France, and Norway are introduced to demonstrate what racial/ethnic and religious conflicts they have experienced and to discuss how Korea should not repeat the same mistake others had made (e.g., the Hankyoreh on December 20, 2010; the Hankook Ilbo on February 15, 2010, May 19, 2010, July 25, 2011; the Chosun Ilbo on August 5, 2010, January 12, 2011, January 10, 2012). So the words including “issue (*yishu*; 이슈),” “problem (*munje*; 문제),” and “burden (*budam*; 부담)” recur in news articles.⁵¹ Conducting the interview with the director of a university speech therapy center, the Chosun Ilbo printed an article on January 17, 2009 that had the following quote:

If we ignore limited and delayed linguistic development of the second generation of multicultural families, it can both lead to their school maladjustment and influence their job search and marriage. Ultimately, they might become a big social problem after ten years.

It is true that the director made the comment in the process of emphasizing the need for launching more language and speech therapy programs for “multicultural” children. However, her logic was that in order to avoid being responsible for a social burden originated from “multicultural” children’s deficiency in Korean, it is important to provide more scaffoldings for them. Similarly, an activist expressed the view that “If we leave these people behind, it is highly possible that they bring about the enormous social costs. Therefore, it is necessary to quickly integrate these people into our society through education” (the Hankook Ilbo on September 6, 2009). These examples commonly demonstrate the rationale for people in diverse sectors of society to support “multicultural” families: to prevent them from becoming social problems in the future and deepening divisions in Korean society.

Moreover, some government officials even accuse “multicultural” children of lowering the national or regional average test scores. On why Seoul had the highest number of underachieving students compared to other regions, a director of the Ministry of Education, Science and Technology explicated, “This phenomenon happened because multicultural families and North Korean refugees are densely populated in Seoul and other metropolitan areas and because we had a larger student size in comparison with other regions” (the Hankyoreh on February 16, 2009). This certainly creates a social atmosphere that is less favorable to “multicultural” children by typifying them as troublesome and/or unintelligent and largely responsible for a negative perception of the larger geographic population.

Such concerns over the potential social costs stemmed from “multicultural” children’s Korean capacity and academic achievement bring about another concern, namely, the dropout

⁵¹ In general, 이슈 (*yishu*; issue) means an important topic in the discussion or of controversy; 문제 (*munje*; problem) refers to a more serious matter/situation that is not likely to be resolved; 부담 (*budam*; burden) tends to be specifically about psychological or economic responsibility and obligation.

rate of “multicultural” children. On March 8, 2010 an editorial on the “multicultural” children was published in the Chosun Ilbo. After displaying some numbers related to “multicultural” children’s language development process and dropout rates, the editorial concluded with the statement, “People from those [multicultural] backgrounds who dropped out of school will be unable to find stable jobs and end up on the fringes of society, full of anger and resentment.”

Overall, some news articles revealed a tendency to mark “multicultural” families as a potential threat to Korean society. However, the three chosen newspapers also appeared not to exhaustively promote and circulate the threat discourse. This would be because the government exhibits favorable attitudes toward “multicultural” families (e.g., launching policies to integrate them) and because “multicultural” children are still very young to be classified as “criminals.”

Discourse 3: “Multicultural” Children as Global Human Resources

The last major discourse reverses the largely negative disposition toward “multicultural” families and children by positioning them as Korea’s most transparent link to the new concept of global human resources. In the context of globalization that emphasizes mobility and views language and culture as capital, “multicultural” children are depicted as Korea’s future global leaders due to their potential value to Korean society as bilingual and bicultural individuals. Interestingly, this global human resources discourse generally emerges from some prominent local citizens including high-ranking government officials, executive members of organizations and corporations, school commissioners, and educators.

Table 4.3. Descriptors for “Multicultural” Children’s Bilingual and Bicultural Potentialities

English Translation	Selected References
[Global] Human resources	The Hankyoreh on September 19, 2012; The Hankook Ilbo on October 4, 2009, May, 30, 2010, February 19, 2012, September 23, 2013
Global leaders	The Hankook Ilbo on October 5, 2009, June 18, 2012; The Chosun Ilbo on April 23, 2013
Pearls in the mud	The Chosun Ilbo on August 13, 2009
Leading figures in our future society	The Hankook Ilbo on October 24, 2010
Ambassador; diplomat; a non-governmental diplomat	The Chosun Ilbo on August 14, 2009, September 23, 2012, April 23, 2013; The Hankook Ilbo on February 19, 2012, November 25, 2012
Promising talents	The Hankyoreh on April 27, 2011
Gifted bilinguals	The Hankyoreh on December 11, 2011
Bridge [that connects Asia]	The Hankyoreh on December 11, 2011; The Hankook Ilbo on December 8, 2013
Stepping stone [to other countries]	The Chosun Ilbo on June 18, 2012
Korea’s Obama	The Chosun Ilbo on August 14, 2009

As a representative example, one of the chief directors of an enterprise framed “multicultural” children as “pearls in the mud” from the interview with the Chosun Ilbo on August 13, 2009. He argued, “If they would overcome the social stress of being different from others with the confidence that they ‘have special abilities,’ they have enough potential power to stand out in diplomacy and foreign trades through their cultural-linguistic strengths.” Likewise,

the *Hankook Ilbo* (October 4, 2009) also presented Kyungsangbukdo's new bilingual programs for "multicultural children. In conveying the information, the article specifically used the word "global human resources" in order to describe "multicultural" children who were supposed to be proficient in both Korean and mother's language. In a similar vein, the director of Changwon Multicultural Children's Library noted:

This library is not only functioning as the site for multicultural children's educational improvement and for cultural exchanges, but also serving as a stepping stone for helping multicultural children become bilinguals who are proficient in both Korean and their mother's language and who are global human resources." (The *Hankyoreh*, September 8, 2009)

As such, "multicultural" children's bilingual and bicultural potentialities are maximized when they are characterized as global human resources. This is astonishing to observe how the relative importance of "multicultural" families and children's linguistic and cultural resources is changed between discourses within the same time frame (i.e., between 2009 and 2013): the marginalized or threat discourses make them invisible, and the global human resources discourse makes them glaring.

Other newspaper articles concretize the global human resources discourse by introducing some outstanding "multicultural" children. The *Hankyoreh* on December 31, 2009 introduced a six-year-old boy with a Korean father and a Chinese mother who passed the advanced Chinese character exam. The *Chosun Ilbo* on August 13, 2009 also printed an article with the catchy headline, "Mother's Language Competition, scouting for a promising child." In addition to advertising the competition that aimed to promote "multicultural" children's learning of their mother's language, this news article highlighted the importance of teaching both mothers' and fathers' languages and cultures.

The global human resources discourse is replicated through the mouths of "multicultural" families as well. On August 14, 2009 the *Chosun Ilbo* reported Vietnamese foreign bride's success story and interviewed her family. Her Korean husband mentioned, "I hope our child to become the ambassador to Vietnam"; he continued, "Wouldn't President Obama come from a multicultural family? With the help of the government and local community, we will have leaders from multicultural families who are comparable to Obama." Although Obama certainly did not come from a working-class White American father and a foreign bride, the father in the newsprint and the *Chosun Ilbo* tended to use "multicultural" as an overarching term for individuals of mixed parentage. This suggests that by using the cases of authoritative people (e.g., the President of the United States), "multicultural" families and children would counteract the stereotypical discourses about them and resignify the meaning of "multicultural."

The Three Discourses Coupled with Ideologies of Democracy, Nationalism, and Neoliberalism

Playing the role of organs of public opinion, the newspapers inform the public of news and information. New policies enacted by the government, as one of the major subjects of reports, account for a large portion of the newspapers. This way, the newspapers appropriate the language of the government, and produce and circulate discourses about "multicultural" families and children. As shown in the beginning of this chapter, the media declared that Korea marched into the "multicultural" society in the context of globalization. The *Hankyoreh*, the *Hankook Ilbo* and the *Chosun Ilbo* invariably asserted that "multicultural" Korea was not a choice that Koreans could make but already an established, inevitable matter due to the nation-state's chronic

problems such as aging society, low birthrate, and labor shortage. This permitted the newspapers to publish articles that could demythify monoethnic, monocultural, and monolingual ideologies and enlighten Koreans about what the nation-state faced and how they could understand the new “multicultural” population.

A massive number of news articles about “multicultural” families and children have been printed, and this chapter revealed the three macro discourses about them. The most widespread discourse characterizes “multicultural” families as *the* marginalized group in Korea. When this marginalized discourse is instantiated in its most malevolent rendering, it positions these immigrants and their offspring as a threat to Korean society. At the other extreme, there is the counter-discourse that maximizes “multicultural” children’s bilingual and bicultural potentialities and that presents them as global human resources. On the surface, these three discourses seem to be incompatible and even in conflict with one another. Indeed, they tend not to appear together on an article; rather, the chosen newspapers commonly and repeatedly published articles that support each discourse between 2009 and 2013. However, precisely because these discourses correspond to the competing ideologies that have fundamentally sustained Korea, the marginalized discourse would emerge in conjunction with the threat discourse and the global human resources discourse. These apparent contradictions, however, can be understood in broader social and political themes within Korean society. To that end, I explore how ideologies of democracy, nationalism, and/or neoliberalism penetrate and permeate the discourses on “multicultural” families and what functions the discourses perform.

The underlying ideology substantiating the discourse of marginalization is democracy. Following Dewey (2004), I understand the term to mean more than “a system of government” (Oxford English Dictionary, 2015) but primarily as “a mode of associated living, of conjoint communicated experience” (p. 83) that broadens the areas of common concerns and emancipates a greater diversity of individuals’ capabilities. The rhetoric run through news articles promotes that Korea needs “multicultural” families to reside in its territory but they live in wretched conditions. The fact that they are the essential but poor group of people provides a warrant for Korean society to embrace them. Because the ideology of democracy prioritizes individuals’ human rights and equal and full participation in society, identifying the marginalized and helping them gain more access to resources become crucial. Thus, in the name of democracy, “multicultural” families are labeled as the new minority group and become the relief case.

While the ideology of democracy lets multiple parties contribute to the construction of a more egalitarian society, some traces show that the marginalized discourse is abused in two ways. First, under the veil of democracy, the marginalized discourse involves the purpose of assimilating “multicultural” families to Korea. A number of news articles emphasize that “we Koreans” need to support “multicultural” families because “they” are “Koreans” as well. Reflecting that other minorities such as foreign workers and their families have received negligible attention, the meteoric rise of the topic related to “multicultural” families demonstrates that only this particular group was chosen to be integrated into society and eligible to receive social benefits. This is further evidenced in the types of support provided to “multicultural” families. In addition to donations of clothing, food, or household goods, the support tends to be restricted to programs on the Korean language and culture for foreign mothers and “multicultural” children (e.g., making Kimchi and visiting some historical places in Korea⁵²). Then the marginalized discourse becomes a vehicle to impose the national identity of

⁵² For example, the Chosun Ilbo on March 5 in 2010 printed an article reporting one of the government-led programs for “multicultural” families. In the article, an official said, “While they are from various countries, through this

Koreans upon “multicultural” families and lead “non-multicultural” Koreans to accept them as Koreans.

The other function of the marginalized discourse is to reconstruct hierarchies and consolidate another layer of inequality in Korea. The advent of “multicultural” families inevitably disturbs the stability of the existing hierarchies. As a way to assign “multicultural” families a specific social stratum in society, the three newspapers extensively seemed to produce articles that stigmatize the population as marginalized and destitute. This is well exemplified in a couple of key articles. Without reservation, the Chosun Ilbo on May 14, 2009 spread National Assembly member’s argument, “Korea needs a system that makes multicultural children agricultural managers.” Similarly, an official announced that the local government set a plan to support “multicultural” children to become “future farming leaders” by teaching them the value of agriculture (the Hankook Ilbo on February 2, 2010). While fancier words including “agricultural managers” and “future farming leaders” were used to make the arguments more appealing and persuasive, the Korean government and entrenched groups after all designated and reinforced “multicultural” families and children’s social standing, i.e., farmers who would experience similar educational, economic, and social challenges like their fathers. This means that “multicultural” children are placed in hierarchies in line with the existing social ranks of their parents.

Under the figure of speech that is universally accepted (i.e., the ideology of democracy), the newspapers make distinctions between “multicultural” and “non-multicultural” families. This is the process through which “non-multicultural” Koreans formulate the other in Korea, perpetuating and institutionalizing racism.

The othering is more perceptible in the discourse that represents “multicultural” families as the potential threat to Korea. The following ideas are embedded in the discourse: Korea’s monoethnic, monolingual, and monocultural nature is something that Koreans need to be proud of; “non-multicultural” Koreans do not display any problems regarding language, culture, education, and security; “multicultural” children are not full “Koreans”; and foreigners including “half Koreans” like “multicultural” children have a high probability of producing many unresolvable social issues. With this rationale, the newspapers create an uneasy atmosphere of having a group of “multicultural” people in the Korean territory. In particular, by introducing various social conflicts happened in the Western countries, the media adds realism to the unsettling scenario.

Such threat discourse is based on the ideology of nationalism, “primarily a political principle, which holds that the political and national unit should be congruent” (Gellner, 1983, p. 1). This implies that nationalism imposes homogeneity, upon which Korea’s myths of monoethnicism, monoculturalism, and monolingualism are built. This leads foreign brides and “multicultural” children (i.e., people without fully common origin, ethnicity or cultural ties) to be treated as the obstacles, preventing Koreans from protecting and promulgating their traditions. From this nationalist perspective, issues surrounding citizenship, permanent residency, and resources originally offered only to “non-multicultural” Koreans become sensitive. Hence, some express a strong aversion to foreign brides and “multicultural” children because they are “not Koreans” or “not Korean enough.” Others worry that “multicultural” families and particularly

program, we hope that all applicants [both foreign mothers and multicultural children] have their national pride as Korean people.” When introducing the event in the article, the news writer wrote that this program was to implant the sense of belonging and confidence as Koreans in foreign brides and “multicultural” children.

foreign brides extort taxes from “non-multicultural” Koreans. The threat discourse even touches off controversy that there is reverse discrimination against “non-multicultural” Koreans.

Through this threat discourse, as the marginalized discourse ultimately does, the Korean newspapers mark “multicultural” families as different from “non-multicultural” families and make the public put on special alertness against “multicultural” families. This is certainly a way to fortify many different hierarchies in Korean society by classifying them as foreigners or potential criminals.

The last discourse about “multicultural” families—they are global human resources due to their bilingual and bicultural potentialities—is related to neoliberalism, a theory of political economic practices that inculcates an ideology of social and spatial mobility based on free enterprise and individual agency in order to increase economic profitability (Harvey, 2005). In the neoliberalized world, language and culture become commodities that can be transformed into a monetary value and therefore, be exchangeable (Duchêne & Heller, 2012). In this sense, the profits of “multicultural” families’ linguistic and cultural resources are calculated and accentuated in the global human resources discourse.

Thus, the discussion of how to raise “multicultural” children as bilingual and bicultural is ultimately related to the enhancement of national competitiveness. In particular, the issue of competitiveness is more concretized by “bridge” or “stepping stone” metaphors. For instance, through an interview with the Chosun Ilbo on August 14, 2009, a foreign bride argued, “As Central Asian countries’ geopolitical importance have grown, I want to raise my children as global leaders who are experts on the region.” Similarly, explaining her reasons of helping “multicultural” children, an activist said, “It depends on our efforts whether multicultural children become stepping stones that connect Korea and their mothers’ homelands or whether they become strangers holding Korean citizenship” (the Chosun Ilbo on June 18, 2012). Through the reenactment of the force of globalization, newspaper articles put an emphasis on the multilingual and multicultural home environment that enables “multicultural” children to learn more than one language and move around the world more freely. Here in the global human resources discourse, the linguistic and cultural capital that is used to stigmatize “multicultural” children is converted into the one that accelerates them to be more successful on the global stage. This displays Korea’s desire to enhance its international status and brand value and achieve economic growth through the utilization of “multicultural” children’s capital. In other words, “multicultural” children and their languages and cultures are instrumentalized for the purpose of increasing Korea’s competitiveness.

Up to this point, I have discussed how the three discourses are coupled with the ideologies of democracy, nationalism, and neoliberalism. For the sake of clarity, one discourse is presented as if it is related to only one ideology; however, all three discourses are undoubtedly influenced by all three ideologies. For example, while the discourse of marginalization is originated from the ideology of democracy, nationalism also comes into play when the discourse integrates “multicultural” families into Korea society and imposes on them a Korean identity. For the global human resources discourse, it not only stems from neoliberalism, but also is affected by nationalism since the discourse focuses on Korea’s competitiveness and prosperity. Furthermore, the marginalized discourse sometimes appears together with the global human resources discourse. This is most clearly manifested in the way colleges recruit students. More than 20 major colleges in Korea advertise their new admission process for “multicultural” children. Under the name of affirmative action,⁵³ these colleges give admission to “multicultural”

⁵³ “Multicultural” children are classified and labeled as “the socially underrepresented students.”

children because of their “openness,” “diversity,” and “competitiveness,” which Korea and the globalized world need.

It is then not surprising to encounter news articles signaling the tension between discourses. The Chosun Ilbo on August 13, 2009 printed an article called, “Living as ‘half Koreans’ or becoming ‘global human resources’ who play a remarkable part in father’s and mother’s countries, multicultural children’s future depends on their fathers’ thinking.” When reading the sentence once, the readers understand that “multicultural” children could become “global human resources” and their fathers’ role is important to raise them. But the very same sentence also insinuates that these children are generally considered “half Koreans” who would not become legitimate members of Korean society due to their racially/ethnically mixed backgrounds (i.e., the marginalized or threat discourse). The only way for “multicultural” children to overcome the stigma is to become “global human resources” that can produce profits to the nation-state. The oscillation between these two positions shows that Korea is in the process of persuading itself why it needs to have “multicultural” families, how it wants to classify the new group of people in its territory vis-à-vis “non-multicultural” Koreans, and how it perpetuates the existing hierarchies while preparing for an uncertain future.

Who is Speaking these Discourses?

Examining who produces, uses, and recycles these discourses and if there are any salient spokespeople for each discourse would be helpful to understand why these discourses are circulated. But because there have been various groups of people who converse about “multicultural” families, it is not easy to link them to the three discourses about “multicultural” families. For the discourse of marginalization, the newspaper articles used a lot of official statistics (e.g., demographics and household income) and borrowed words of experts such as government officers (e.g., their purpose of raising fund for “multicultural” families), corporations (e.g., their rationale for providing resources for “multicultural” families), researchers, educators, and activists. In particular, cases about the economic woes of “multicultural” families, the distressing experiences of foreign brides with linguistic and cultural adjustment, and the challenging school lives of “multicultural” were introduced without explaining how journalists collected them and how widespread these cases were.

Interestingly, the threat discourse was constructed and reproduced by journalists, researchers, lawyers, chief executive officers, priests, and activists. For example, journalists introduced surveys and websites that included “non-multicultural” Koreans’ negative attitudes toward “multicultural” families; furthermore, they reiterated a few catchy mishaps to put “non-multicultural” Koreans on special alert against “multicultural” families. From time to time, even individuals who worked for “multicultural” families argued that the very reason to support them was to prevent “multicultural” families from becoming social and economic burden to the future Korean society.

In contrast, a different player partakes in the creation and reproduction of the global human resources discourse. In addition to the local governments such as Multicultural Family Support Center and corporate executives (i.e., as a way to advertise their social welfare programs and social responsibility), “multicultural” families frequently adopted this discourse and disseminated their own potentialities as bi-/multi-linguals and bi-/multi-culturalists.

Conclusion

Overall, in this chapter, I appropriated a critical discourse analysis framework in analyzing the newspaper articles printed by the Hankyoreh, the Hankook Ilbo, and the Chosun Ilbo, in order to understand how “multicultural” families are characterized at the macro societal level. As shown in the preceding discussion of the discourses and ideologies, Korea reveals both fear and excitement of having “multicultural” families. Constructing some specific representations of “multicultural” families, the newspapers propose the ways the society and “non-multicultural” Koreans perceive them. In this sense, the generation and spread of the discourses about “multicultural” families mean that the nation-state produces knowledge of who they are, how they are identified, and how they can be classified (Bourdieu, 1994; Foucault, 1979). This is indeed structural and institutional violence on “multicultural” families because modes of discrimination are inherent in that process. Hence, to better understand their lives in relation to larger social, economic and political structures, it is essential to examine how valid these discourses are and how they structure and are structured by “multicultural” families. These issues will be more thoroughly discussed in the following chapters.

Chapter 5. Growth Trajectories in Korean and English Proficiency for “Multicultural” Adolescents in Korea: A Growth Curve Analysis

To probe the dominant belief about “multicultural” teenagers’ Korean deficiency (see Chapter 4), this chapter investigates how the level of Korean proficiency of “multicultural” teenagers compares to that of teenagers born to Korean mothers. In addition, this chapter also examines their English proficiency in comparison with “non-multicultural” children. This is to draw more attention to “multicultural” adolescents’ English learning—the language believed to provide symbolic capital to its proficient users (Pennycook, 1994) but the language paid little attention to “multicultural” children. By using the linear growth curve model (i.e., a subclass of Hierarchical Linear Modeling), I was attempting to uncover the factors that influence children’s Korean and English proficiency over broad intervals of time.

Descriptive Statistics for Categorical and Continuous Variables

The sample consisted of 4,864 students (48% girls and 52% boys) who were in 150 schools in Korea. Table 5.1 shows frequency counts of categorical variables, including gender, family background, and urbanicity.

Table 5.1 Descriptive Statistics of Categorical Variables

Variable	Category	N of Students (%)	Total
Gender	Female	2,331 (47.92)	4,864
	Male	2,533 (52.08)	
Family Background	Non-multicultural	4,807 (98.83)	4,864
	Multicultural	57 (1.17)	
Urbanicity	Metropolitan	2,241 (46.07)	4,864
	Micropolitan	2,207 (45.37)	
	Rural town	416 (8.55)	

The total of 57 children identified themselves as “multicultural” while 4,807 children identified themselves as “non-multicultural.” Although the sample size for “multicultural” children was small, this ratio between “multicultural” and “non-multicultural” in the dataset was in fact bigger than the actual ratio between the two in the Korean education system (Korean Education Statistics Service, 2007).⁵⁴ The percentages of students in metropolitan, micropolitan, and rural areas were about 46%, 45%, and 9%, respectively.

Table 5.2 reports the results of descriptive statistics for response (i.e., academic outcomes) and explanatory (i.e., potentially moderating or mediating) variables. The four explanatory variables, namely, self-concept, socioeconomic status (SES), teacher-student relations, and peer relations, had zero grand means.⁵⁵ These time-varying continuous explanatory variables had

⁵⁴ By using the statistics provided by Korean Education Statistical Service, I calculated the ratio between “multicultural” and “non-multicultural” children in 2007. The year of 2007 was selected because the KELS data used in this chapter were collected from 2005 to 2007. The total number of middle school students in 2007 was 2,063,159 while 1,588 were identified as “multicultural” children. This means that the ratio between the two in reality was 0.08%.

⁵⁵ The grand mean centering for the continuous explanatory variables was purposefully conducted to interpret the estimated regression intercept and slope coefficients more practically. For example, when the value of the SES variable is zero, this means that a child’s family has no income, her parents are unemployed, and her parents have

smaller variance within students than between students, meaning that more variation was found between students' responses in comparison with a student's response change across time points.

Table 5.2 Descriptive Statistics of Continuous Variables

Variable	N of Students	N of Obs.	Overall Mean	Standard Deviation			Overall Min.	Overall Max.
				Overall	Between	Within		
Explanatory Variables								
Self-Concept	4,864	12,060	0	0.54	0.48	0.27	-2.46	1.54
SES	4,864	12,060	0	1.35	1.35	0.22	-5.59	5.38
T-S Relations	4,864	12,060	0	0.74	0.60	0.46	-1.97	2.03
Peer Relations	4,864	12,060	0	0.67	0.54	0.42	-2.65	1.35
Response Variables								
Korean Score	4,864	12,060	397.03	101.70	65.59	82.46	157	787
English Score	4,864	12,060	406.48	113.92	72.53	92.74	151	748

Note 1: Statistics of both between and within persons were provided because of the longitudinal nature of the KELS data.

Note 2: The number of observations was 12,060 because it combined frequency counts across three time points; the number also implies that the dataset was unbalanced (i.e., the dataset included missing values).⁵⁶

The average scores of the two response variables were 397.03 for Korean and 406.48 for English.⁵⁷ The within standard deviations for the two scores were greater than the between standard deviations because the scores were transformed into vertical scaled test scores⁵⁸. Specifically, because Korean and English scores had means of 300 for the seventh, 400 for the eighth, and 500 for the ninth grade in middle school, more variation was detectable from a student's scores in the three years of middle school compared to scores between Student A and Student B, for example. The following table reveals more detailed information about students' Korean and English proficiency from Time 0 (i.e., 2005) to Time 2 (i.e., 2007).

Table 5.3 Descriptive Statistics for the Response Variables across Three Time Points

Variable	Time	N of Obs.	Mean	SD	Min	Max
Korean Score	0	4,433	304.82	56.97	157	644
	1	4,001	400.17	63.54	241	772
	2	3,626	506.30	60.31	381	787
English Score	0	4,433	301.34	56.32	151	511
	1	4,001	409.36	72.97	264	683
	2	3,626	531.84	64.58	423	748

zero years of education. Thus, to make the interpretation of the analysis results easier, the grand mean centering was conducted.

⁵⁶ The total number of students in the dataset was 4,864. If there was no missing value, the overall observation across the three time points should be 14,592; however, it was 12,060, implying that there were some missing values. The number of observation for the variables was identical (i.e., 12,060) because students who had complete Korean and English scores were exclusively chosen for the analysis.

⁵⁷ As Chapter 3 briefly noted, the sampled students' Korean and English listening, reading, and writing (grammar) abilities were tested.

⁵⁸ The vertically equated scale scores are useful to directly compare students' Korean and English scores across three years in middle school because the technique places the scores onto a common scale (Choi, Goldschmidt, & Yamashiro, 2006; H. J. Park, Sang, & Kang, 2008).

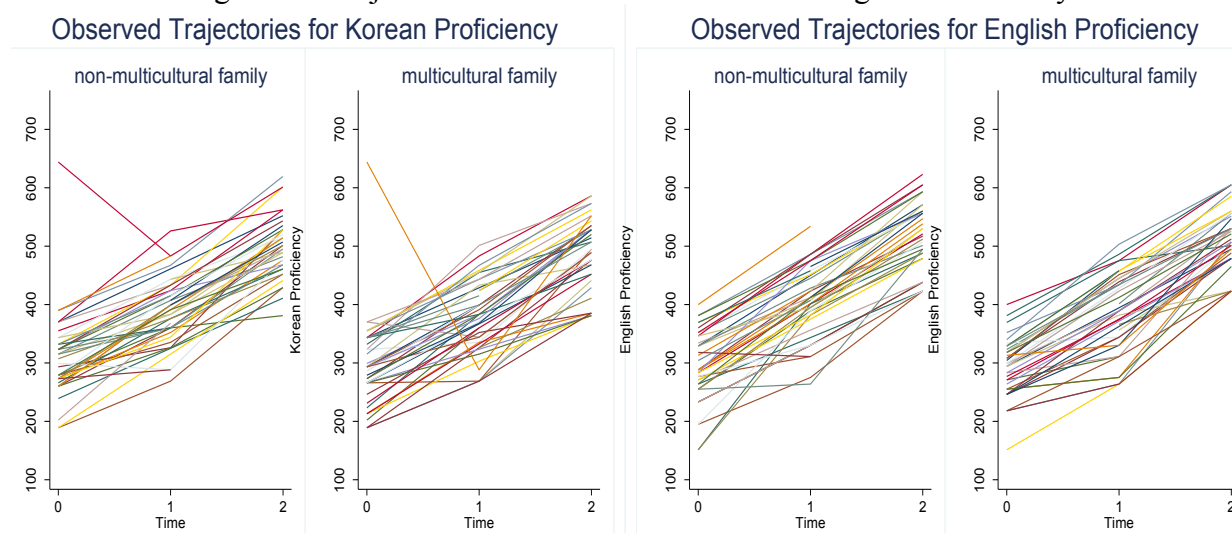
Note 1: The numbers, 0-2, refer to the three different time points in middle school.

The number of observations decreased from Time 0 to Time 2 because the student participants in the KELS dataset moved to other schools, studied abroad, dropped out of school, or stopped taking part in the project (see “KELS Survey Design, Sample Change,” n.d.).

The Process of Selecting Growth Curve Models

To find a statistical model that could better explain the data, the variability of each student’s growth trajectories was examined. Figure 5.1 shows Korean and English proficiency trajectories of randomly chosen 100 “multicultural” and “non-multicultural” students in total. From the observed trajectories, it is clear that there were linear growth patterns in students’ Korean and English proficiency. In addition, because considerable variations in students’ initial proficiency (intercept) and students’ growth rate (slope) were found, the random coefficient model (i.e., growth curve model) was used to analyze the data.

Figure 5.1 Trajectories for Students’ Korean and English Proficiency



To finalize a statistical model to use, the linear growth curve models with the time-invariant factors (e.g., gender and family background) were first developed (see Model 1 and Model 3). Then the time-varying factors (e.g., self-concept and SES) were added to the Model 1 and Model 3 (see Model 2 and Model 4). Tables 5.4 and 5.5 present the results of these models with the goodness-of-fit statistics (i.e., Likelihood-Ratio [LR] test⁵⁹).

Table 5.4 Three Statistical Models to Analyze Students’ Korean Proficiency

	Korean Proficiency	
	Model 1	Model 2
Fixed effects		
Intercept	320.31*** (1.46)	318.78*** (1.41)

⁵⁹ As a statistical test that compares the goodness-of-fit of two models (i.e., the null model versus the alternative model), the LR test examines how many times more likely the given data are better explained by one model than the other.

Male	-23.80*** (1.64)	-24.60*** (1.59)
Multicultural	-8.12 (7.65)	-8.40 (7.56)
Micropolitan City	-7.77*** (1.70)	-6.13*** (1.65)
Rural Town	-22.73*** (3.13)	-13.33*** (3.07)
Time	99.83*** (0.82)	100.52*** (0.83)
Time × Gender	-1.93* (0.92)	-1.91* (0.92)
Time × Multicultural	-2.61 (4.27)	-2.55 (4.45)
Time × Micropolitan City	1.86† (0.96)	1.95* (0.96)
Time × Rural Town	6.92*** (1.78)	6.01*** (1.78)
Self-concept		5.40*** (1.07)
Self-concept × Multicultural		-3.89 (10.22)
SES		9.11*** (0.51)
SES × Multicultural		-9.79* (4.54)
T-S Relations		2.49*** (0.70)
T-S Relations × Multicultural		-1.42 (7.46)
Peer Relations		3.07** (0.79)
Peer Relations × Multicultural		0.61 (6.51)
Random Effects		
ψ_{00}	1738.82*	1516.40*
ψ_{11}	4.34*	4.71*
ψ_{01}	86.88*	84.54*
θ	1541.76*	1545.01*
N of Observation	12,060	12,060
N of Students	4,864	4,864
Log likelihood	-64715.26	-64501.18
LR test (df = 8)	428.16***	

Note 1: Standard errors in parentheses.

Note 2: ψ_{00} = variance of the initial status; ψ_{11} = variance of the growth rate; ψ_{01} = covariance between ψ_{00} and ψ_{11} ; θ = variance of the Level-1 residual (ϵ_{ti}).

Note 3: *p < .05; **p < .01; ***p < .001.

Note 4: The fixed effects were tested by Wald z statistics; the random effects were tested by 95% confidence intervals.

Table 5.5 Three Statistical Models to Analyze Students' English Proficiency

	English Proficiency	
	Model 3	Model 4
Fixed effects		
Intercept	315.99*** (1.53)	313.76*** (1.40)
Male	-15.24*** (1.71)	-16.47*** (1.57)
Multicultural	-8.06 (8.00)	-8.87 (7.50)
Micropolitan City	-14.69*** (1.78)	-11.77*** (1.63)
Rural Town	-34.21*** (3.27)	-17.89*** (3.04)
Time	113.59*** (0.83)	114.26*** (0.84)
Time × Gender	-1.92* (0.93)	-1.93* (0.93)
Time × Multicultural	-2.22 (4.31)	-1.78 (4.52)
Time × Micropolitan City	2.48* (0.96)	2.57** (0.97)

Time × Rural Town	8.65*** (1.80)	7.52*** (1.80)
Self-concept		5.24*** (1.09)
Self-concept × Multicultural		4.10 (10.36)
SES		16.08*** (0.52)
SES × Multicultural		-12.12** (4.67)
T-S Relations		2.22** (0.70)
T-S Relations × Multicultural		-6.85 (7.49)
Peer Relations		2.08** (0.79)
Peer Relations × Multicultural		3.61 (6.54)
Random Effects		
ψ_{00}	2072.87*	1478.84*
ψ_{11}	25.21*	30.57*
ψ_{01}	228.58*	212.63*
θ	1514.53*	1530.23*
N of Observation	12,060	12,060
N of Students	4,864	4,864
Log likelihood	-65162.99	-64686.09
LR test (df = 8)	953.80***	

Note 1: Standard errors in parentheses.

Note 2: ψ_{00} = variance of the initial status; ψ_{11} = variance of the growth rate; ψ_{01} = covariance between ψ_{00} and ψ_{11} ; θ = variance of the Level-1 residual (ϵ_{ti}).

Note 3: *p < .05; **p < .01; ***p < .001.

Note 4: The fixed effects were tested by Wald z statistics; the random effects were tested by 95% confidence intervals.

In the table, Model 1 was nested in Model 2 for Korean proficiency, and Model 3 was nested in Model 4 for English proficiency. Thus, the LR test between the two nested models indicates which model is better fitted to the data. For both Korean and English proficiency data, the LR test confirmed that models with time-varying factors fit better (i.e., Korean - $LR \chi^2_{(8)}=428.16$, $p<0.001$; English - $LR \chi^2_{(8)}=953.80$, $p<0.001$). That is, the time-varying variables and interactions with the “multicultural” label better explained the longitudinal changes in students’ language proficiency. In addition, variance of the initial status (ψ_{00}) decreased in Model 2 and Model 4 in comparison with Model 1 and Model 3. Model 2 and Model 4 were thus chosen to investigate students’ growth trajectories in Korean and English proficiency.

Model 2 and Model 4: The Linear Growth Curve Models

Table 5.6 reports the results of the linear growth curve analyses for students’ proficiency in Korean and in English. The mean initial scores were 318.78 (Korean) and 313.76 (English) after controlling for the other variables.⁶⁰ Students’ gender significantly affected their proficiency in Korean and English ($\beta=-24.60$, $p<0.001$ for Korean; $\beta=-16.47$, $p<0.001$ for English). Male students’ initial mean Korean score was 24.6 points lower than female students’ mean score after controlling for all the other variables. In the case of English, the difference between male and female students was 16.47 points. Furthermore, the longitudinal impact of students’ self-concept on their Korean and English proficiency was statistically significant

⁶⁰ The initial means were for a female “non-multicultural” student who lived in a metropolitan city and who had zero values of self-concept, SES, teacher-student relations, and peer relations.

($\beta=5.40$, $p<0.001$ for Korean; $\beta=5.24$, $p<0.001$ for English); one unit increase of self-concept led to 5.40 points and 5.24 points increases in Korean and in English, respectively.

Students' familial background also influences their Korean and English performance. In particular, students' SES—the variable composed of education levels of both parents, occupations of both parents, and overall family income—had a significant impact on their language proficiency ($\beta=9.11$, $p<0.001$ for Korean; $\beta=16.08$, $p<0.001$ for English). One unit increase of the SES index was associated with increases of 9 points and 16 points in Korean and English proficiency, respectively. In relation to the residential district (i.e., urbanicity), the initial average Korean score of students who lived in a micropolitan city was 6 points lower than that of their peers living in a metropolitan city after controlling for the other variables ($\beta=-6.13$, $p<0.001$). Similarly, the initial average Korean score of students living in a rural area was 13 points lower than that of their metropolitan peers after controlling for the other variables ($\beta=-13.33$, $p<0.001$). This same pattern of differences arose in students' English proficiency ($\beta=-11.77$, $p<0.001$ for micropolitan city; $\beta=-17.89$, $p<0.001$ for rural town).

At the school level, students' relations with teachers and peers also have positive associations with their language proficiency. Specifically, one unit increase of the teacher-student relations index was associated with approximately 2 points increases of Korean and English average scores ($\beta=2.49$, $p<0.001$ for Korean; $\beta=2.22$, $p<0.001$ for English). Likewise, one unit increase on the peer relations variable resulted in 3 points and 2 points increases of Korean and English proficiency, respectively ($\beta=3.07$, $p=0.001$ for Korean; $\beta=2.08$, $p=0.008$ for English).

In general, the analysis added further evidence to the previous research on the close relationship between children's educational achievement and the key explanatory factors, including gender (e.g., Ma & Klinger, 2000), self-concept (S. Kim & Koh, 2007; Rogers, Smith, & Coleman, 1978), SES (e.g., .g., Bradley & Corwyn, 2002; Coleman, 1966; Lee & Kim, 2009; White, 1982), urbanicity (e.g., Park, Jeon, & Cho, 2006; Sung, 2006), teacher-student relations (e.g., Chen, 2005; Gottfried, Fleming, & Gottfried, 1998; S. Kim & Koh, 2007; Moon & C. Kim, 2003), and peer relations (e.g., Caprara, Barbaranelli, Pastorelli, Bandura, & Zimbardo, 2000; Wentzel, 1998).

Most important, the analysis revealed that “multicultural” background did not have a detrimental impact on students' Korean and English proficiency. Although “multicultural” students' initial mean Korean and English scores were approximately 8-9 points lower than those of “non-multicultural” students, the differences were not statistically significant ($\beta=-8.40$, $p=0.267$ for Korean; $\beta=-8.87$, $p=0.237$ for English). Furthermore, “multicultural” adolescents' growth rates in Korean and English were not significantly different from those of their “non-multicultural” peers ($\beta=-2.55$, $p=0.566$ for Korean; $\beta=-1.78$, $p=0.693$ for English).

Table 5.6 Results of the Linear Growth Curve Analyses for Korean and English Proficiency

	Korean	English
Fixed effects		
Intercept	318.78*** (1.41)	313.76*** (1.40)
Male	-24.60*** (1.59)	-16.47*** (1.57)
Multicultural	-8.40 (7.56)	-8.87 (7.50)
Micropolitan City	-6.13*** (1.65)	-11.77*** (1.63)
Rural Town	-13.33*** (3.07)	-17.89*** (3.04)
Time	100.52*** (0.83)	114.26*** (0.84)

Time × Gender	-1.91* (0.92)	-1.93* (0.93)
Time × Multicultural	-2.55 (4.45)	-1.78 (4.52)
Time × Micropolitan City	1.95* (0.96)	2.57** (0.97)
Time × Rural Town	6.01*** (1.78)	7.52*** (1.80)
Self-concept	5.40*** (1.07)	5.24*** (1.09)
Self-concept × Multicultural	-3.89 (10.22)	4.10 (10.36)
SES	9.11*** (0.51)	16.08*** (0.52)
SES × Multicultural	-9.79* (4.54)	-12.12** (4.67)
T-S Relations	2.49*** (0.70)	2.22** (0.70)
T-S Relations × Multicultural	-1.42 (7.46)	-6.85 (7.49)
Peer Relations	3.07** (0.79)	2.08** (0.79)
Peer Relations × Multicultural	0.61 (6.51)	3.61 (6.54)
Random Effects		
ψ_{00}	1516.40*	1478.84*
ψ_{11}	4.71*	30.57*
ψ_{01}	84.54*	212.63*
θ	1545.01*	1530.23*
N of Observation	12,060	12,060
N of Students	4,864	4,864
Log likelihood	-64501.18	-64686.09

Note 1: Standard errors in parentheses.

Note 2: ψ_{00} = variance of the initial status; ψ_{11} = variance of the growth rate; ψ_{01} = covariance between ψ_{00} and ψ_{11} ; θ = variance of the Level-1 residual (ϵ_{it}).

Note 3: *p < .05; **p < .01; ***p < .001.

Note 4: The fixed effects were tested by Wald z statistics; the random effects were tested by 95% confidence intervals.

Among the time-varying factors, furthermore, the longitudinal effect of SES on language proficiency was moderated by the “multicultural” variable. In other words, the interactions between the “multicultural” label and SES were statistically significant for Korean proficiency ($\beta=-9.79$, $p=0.031$) and for English proficiency ($\beta=-12.12$, $p=0.009$). But the impact of SES exhibited different patterns on each language. In terms of proficiency in Korean, one unit increase on the SES index was associated with a 9.11 point increase, over time, in “non-multicultural” students’ mean score; however, despite the elevation of SES, “multicultural” students’ average Korean score decreased (i.e., one unit increase of SES was associated with 0.68 points decrease, over time, in “multicultural” students’ mean score). In contrast, over broad intervals of time, while one unit increase of SES led to 16.08 points increase in “non-multicultural” students’ mean English score, one unit increase of SES resulted in 3.96 points increase in “multicultural” students’ mean English score. In sum, compared to their “non-multicultural” peers, “multicultural” students’ Korean and English achievement tended not to be sensitive to SES.

Overall, these results imply that the “multicultural” background was not a significant factor for students’ Korean and English proficiency and for their longitudinal development of the two languages over the course of three years. The results also highlight the limited relationship between the “multicultural” label and students’ understanding of themselves, interactions with teachers, or peer relations. While the findings did demonstrate the significant consequence of SES on students’ Korean and English learning, it also functioned as a moderator for

“multicultural” adolescents’ language proficiency. The findings indicate that “multicultural” teenagers’ initial Korean and English competence and growth rate were not different from those of their “non-multicultural” peers.

The Manipulation of the “Multicultural” Label

It is commonly believed that “multicultural” children’s deficiency in Korean causes numerous issues in society (see Chapter 4). Specifically, because their mothers use Korean as a second language, “multicultural” children are described as though they have speech impediments; this is then used to characterize their adjustment to school, peer relations, and academic achievement as “problematic.” The discourses, however unwarranted, about “multicultural” children’s marginalized status ultimately lead some critics to claim that they are likely to become unemployed, querulous burdens or rebels in the future. Given these claims, it was crucial to explore whether these dominant beliefs about “multicultural” children were legitimate.

A statistical analysis of the longitudinal development of teenagers’ Korean and English proficiency invalidates the foundational assumption of the prevailing negative discourses about “multicultural” adolescents. The findings indicate that “multicultural” label in itself had little explanatory power in understanding students’ Korean and English learning; furthermore, SES more strongly influenced their language proficiency, as confirmed by many researchers (e.g., Bradley & Corwyn, 2002; Coleman, 1966; White, 1982). This suggests that the “multicultural” label has served as a way to control growing economic inequality exacerbated by globalization⁶¹. To put it concretely, the influx of migrant workers and the relocation of manufacturing plants to developing countries—driven by forces of globalization—hit underprivileged Korean men especially hard (e.g., Dreher & Gaston, 2008). For example, they cannot maintain stable jobs, accrue savings, and/or marry Korean women. Globalization, however, also enables these men to seek their wives in neighboring developing countries, which is more affordable. At the same time, to overcome poverty or to have better futures, women in poorer countries imagine themselves migrating to relatively wealthier countries via marriage (Cha, 2008; Pearce, 1978). As such, the formation of so-called “multicultural” family is the manifestation of local and global economic inequality. Yet, through the term “multicultural,” this international marriage practice is packaged as a new cultural phenomenon in the context of globalization that is only relevant to a particular group of individuals rather than what it really is—a practice of broader impact stemming from international/interpersonal economic relations.

But how can the prevailing discourse make the case that “multicultural” children are academically at risk when they perform on the same level as “non-multicultural” children in Korean and English? One possibility is that the Korean media may map “multicultural” children into the American category of “minority” and thus mimic the way the American media presents minority youth in the United States (see Chapter 1 for deficit perspectives on minority youth). As the Korean media reproduces the discourse that “multicultural” children could become leaders like “Obama” in the future (see Chapter 4), it may imitate certain American media discourses about minority youth.

In this sense, the results of this study also function as a warning to the research stigmatizing “multicultural” children as troublesome. A number of research studies (e.g., Y. Cho & O. Lee, 2010; E. Kim, A. Kim, & H. You, 2012; H. Park, J. You, & B. Park, 2013) have assumed that “multicultural” children would have issues in using Korean, adjusting to school,

⁶¹ I understand globalization as the intensified flows of people, capital, and merchandise, driven by innovative technology such as the Internet (Appadurai, 1990; Castells, 1996).

interacting with peers, and/or understanding course materials. This chapter's findings, however, offer empirical evidence that necessitates the shift in the way "multicultural" families are researched. In other words, instead of strengthening the challenges and problems that "multicultural" children may have, there needs studies that highlight their linguistic and cultural practices, schooling experiences, and agency. This way, as Korea Educational Development Institute (2008) did, researchers can better understand "multicultural" children's proficiency in languages and overcome their own biases toward the "multicultural" label.

Additionally, this chapter identifies policy implications. First, the use and meaning of the term "multicultural" needs to be re-examined. The term was introduced in 2003 to abolish social and cultural discrimination against people with mixed blood. And since 2005, it was used as an official, legal term referring to a family of a Korean national and a foreign national. In opposition to the origin of the term, the stereotypes associated with "multicultural" are perilous. As this chapter found that the label does not deserve such derogative stereotypes, there needs more attempts to resignify the meaning of "multicultural" (Butler, 1997). Second, the existing policies for "multicultural" families should be more targeted. The current policies require the government and its agencies to provide various resources to any family legally classified as "multicultural." This means that their SES is not taken into consideration in selecting eligible recipients. Because this chapter uncovers the stronger impact of SES—instead of one's "multicultural" status—on children's language proficiency, policies that aim to countervail socioeconomic imbalances between classes need to be enforced.

Last but not least, a direction for future research can be pointed out. One of the findings of this study was that the "multicultural" label moderated the longitudinal effect of SES on children's development of Korean and English proficiency. While this hints a certain relationship between SES and children's family backgrounds, it is not yet known whether this relationship originates from a peculiar feature of "multicultural" families. To investigate this further, future research can compare "multicultural" families to a subgroup of "non-multicultural" family that has equivalent SES and explore whether there is a consistent interaction between SES and family background in predicting children's proficiency in languages.

Conclusion

The analyses for this chapter produced counter-evidence to the stereotypical discourse about the deficiency of "multicultural" teenagers in their use of the Korean language. Through linear growth curve models, it demonstrated that the level of Korean proficiency of "multicultural" teenagers was comparable to that of teenagers born to Korean mothers after controlling for the personal, familial, and school-level variables. Furthermore, the similar results were found for their English proficiency. One of the most crucial implications of this study was the strong impact of SES on children's learning of Korean and English. While further exploration of the relationship between SES and the "multicultural" label is necessary, it is also urgent to provide more tailored educational programs that can mitigate socioeconomic imbalances between classes.

Chapter 6. “Multicultural” Teenagers Becoming “Korean-Plus” Citizens of Korea

This chapter introduces two focal “multicultural” adolescents whose ambitions are to be legitimate and successful members of Korean society. The two teenagers (i.e., a girl with a Vietnamese mother and a boy with an ethnic Korean Chinese mother) are eager to fit into the Korean education system by trying hard to become high achievers and model students in school. At the same time, they are in the process of learning what the term “multicultural” family means and how they can normalize and/or capitalize their linguistic and cultural resources to become more competitive members of society. Thus, I ultimately refer to Tayo and Sungho as “Korean-Plus” citizens who own features of a traditional sense of elite in Korea (e.g., socially well-connected and/or strong educational background) and who further develop critical thinking skills, a sense of responsibility, international networks, and multilingual/multicultural potentialities.

Tayo’s Story: From “Like a Native Korean” to “a Successful Case” An Alternative Profile for “Multicultural” Children

The statement of her homeroom teacher, “Tayo is a successful case [for a multicultural student],” summarizes Tayo’s life in school. Claiming that “Tayo is like a native Korean child (*tojong hangukae*; 토종 한국애)” (from Interview on November 6, 2014), Tayo’s homeroom teacher described her as “successful” because she differed from typical “multicultural” students who were “either not adjusting to school well or getting along with peers but academically lagging far behind” (from Interview on November 6, 2014). This remark exemplifies dominant stereotypes associated with “multicultural” children (see Chapter 4): they look different, have limited Korean proficiency, lag behind in school, and are bullied due to these physical features. However, Tayo did not take on such a stereotypical profile. Instead, she demonstrated positive peer interactions, active participation in classroom learning activities, and outstanding academic achievement.

Tayo got along with her classmates without any problem and had several intimate friends in and out of school. In school, she was always together with two of her classmates, including when they moved from class to class, had lunch, and went from and to bathrooms. Mentioning a couple of students as Tayo’s close friends and praising her bright personality, her homeroom teacher also confirmed that Tayo’s peer relations in school were very positive.⁶² Out of school, Tayo also frequently hung out with her classmates by preparing for a school-wide dance competition, spending time together at a local library, and going window-shopping. In particular, Tayo and her friends were connected through technology at all times; they frequently text-talked with each other, shared pictures and stories on their social networking sites, and left comments under those postings.

In addition, Tayo was eager to learn and actively took part in classes. Tayo’s homeroom teacher reported that Tayo completed her homework (e.g., memorizing important phrases and vocabulary in English) and frequently presented her ideas to the class.

(1)

1 MSY: She often raises her hand to present her ideas when she has something to say. ...

⁶² In explaining Tayo’s positive peer relations, her homeroom teacher argued that Tayo’s Korean proficiency and Korean-looking appearance would prevent her peers from recognizing Tayo as a “multicultural” student. She said, “Tayo looks very much like Korean so she does not hear a comment like half-breed or mixed from her peers” (from Fieldnotes on March 11, 2014).

2 (Looking for Tayo’s participation grade) So far, the record shows that she
 3 memorized whatever she was asked to do and that she took great notes. Although
 4 she got some questions wrong when she took pop-up quizzes, she regularly did her
 5 homework without failure.

(Original utterances in Korean; from Fieldnotes on November 6, 2014)

Similarly, every time I visited Tayo’s English class, taught by a native speaker teacher from the United States, Tayo nicely organized class materials. Her textbook and notebook were also filled with thorough, colorful notes that she made during the class. Even though her voice was soft, she responded to the teacher’s questions well and was diligently involved in classroom learning activities (e.g., pair work and dictation); furthermore, Tayo was not shy about asking questions to both her English teacher who was not proficient in Korean and her peers who were good at English.

Her positive peer relations and active participation in classes helped Tayo having an impressive academic achievement profile (see Table 6.1). Not only were her average scores and standings in her class/school outstanding, but also her continuous progression across four exams in 2014 was noteworthy. Starting her first midterm in middle school with the average score of 90.71, Tayo ended her first year with the average score of 95.89. That is, her school rank was 29th in the beginning of the year and escalated to 4th at the end of the year.

Table 6.1 Tayo’s Academic Achievement in 2014

	1 st Midterm	1 st Final	2 nd Midterm	2 nd Final
Korean	78	89	97	97
English	86	94	91	100
Math	92	100	100	99
Social Studies	94	95	94	100
Science	100	100	95	100
Home and Technology	100	92	86	96
Ethics	85	88	90	96
Music	N/A	88	N/A	95
Physical Education	N/A	94	N/A	80
Average Scores	90.71	93.33	93.29	95.89
Class Rank (n=30)	3	1	2	1
School Rank (n=215)	29	8	13	4

Note: Each subject had a maximum scale of 100 points.

Other than these four exams, Tayo was also ranked as the first place in her class for the national scholastic ability test in December 2014. This implies that Tayo, as the only “multicultural” student in her class, outperformed the other “non-multicultural” students.

Tayo’s favorable peer relations, active participation in class, and outstanding academic performances were inseparable from her desire to be “perfect.” In October 2014, Tayo’s status message on her social networking site was “To be perfect.” During our mentoring session on October 8, she wondered how she could be considered a “perfect” person—namely, an attractive and smart person. This explained, despite her pretty and slim appearance, why “Going on a diet” was always on her to-do list and why she trimmed her eyebrows, powdered her face, wore manicures on weekends, and dyed her hair during vacations. For her academic achievement, she

planned her exam preparation three-four weeks prior to her exam and requested me to ask any possible questions that she would encounter on her exams. Indeed, her bucket list that she produced in her Ethics class reflected her wish to be “perfect”: losing weight, going on a backpacking trip with friends, living with friends, winning the first prize at a competition, and being ranked at the top of the whole school (from Fieldnotes on November 16, 2014).

Tayo’s social and academic success encouraged her to hope for more conventionally-respected professions in Korea. During elementary school, she wanted to become a pharmacist or work in the fashion industry (e.g., fashion designer or merchandiser). After she entered middle school, Tayo found math and science more exciting compared to Korean and English and therefore, she wanted to enter Science High School⁶³ and become an engineer. Regardless of the nature of Tayo’s dream careers, they were socially-respected professions that commonly required strong educational background and that offered stable or high salary. And these characteristics were encapsulated in her aspiration to have an “ordinary office job” (from Interview on December 19, 2014).

In sum, Tayo defied the narrow life paths presented to “multicultural” children (i.e., a marginalized child, a threatening child, or a proficient bilingual child). By illustrating how “multicultural” children would succeed through their educational outcome and relationships with other “non-multicultural” children, Tayo demonstrated how she would function as a legitimate member of Korean society.

Tayo’s Potentiality of Becoming a Multilingual Citizen

In addition to her social and educational achievements that capitalized on her potentiality to grow into an elite, Tayo enjoyed familial, linguistic, and cultural resources within her surroundings. Thus, this section discusses how her parents’ attitudes toward education, her relationship with Vietnam, and the Vietnamese language functioned as her asset and ultimately facilitated her developmental process as a Korean-Plus citizen.

One of the most fundamental benefits that Tayo enjoyed was her parents’ attitude toward learning. Having no access to higher education, both of Tayo’s parents believed that education would be a (or the only) form of upward mobility available to their daughter. This led them to pay attention to Tayo’s education and encouraged her to focus on her learning.

(2)

- 6 FAT: Tayo, what is this announcement about? What is this?
 7 TAY: What is that?
 8 FAT: The information about taking the Korean History Proficiency Test.
 9 TAY: (1.0) That’s nothing. Throw it away.
 10 RES: //@@@//
 11 FAT: //Don’t// say that’s nothing. If you know this kind of thing, you have to at least try
 12 to take the test.
 13 TAY: It’s difficult to get the certificate.
 14 FAT: Yeah that that attitude itself is wrong!
 15 RES: I agree.
 16 FAT: You can do anything if you try hard, but if you don’t even attempt to do
 17 ANYTHING, your words don’t make sense at all. THINK ABOUT IT AGAIN.

⁶³ It is a specialized school designed for gifted students in math and science. Graduates from the high school mostly get socially and economically prestigious occupations such as doctor, scientist, and patent attorney.

18 TAY: The test is already finished.

(Original utterances in Korean; from Fieldnotes on April 22, 2014)

As a way to support Tayo's academic performance, her parents' sent her to a local private academy where English and math instructions were given every day after school. According to her father, he was willing to spend more than \$400 per month for the academy if Tayo could enter a prestigious university and join a large-scale enterprise (from Fieldnotes on November 23, 2014).

Within the larger emphasis on educational achievement, Tayo's parents invoked the discourse of the Korean education system that English is a powerful form of symbolic capital and a panacea for social, political, and economic challenges in Korea (see Pennycook, 1994). In particular, they argued that English, as an international language (McKay, 2002), would enable Tayo to travel the world and communicate with extended family members. For instance, listening to Tayo's reading of English, Tayo's father sat down with us and told her to become a proficient English speaker if she wanted to travel abroad (from Fieldnotes on November 23, 2014). In a similar vein, Tayo's mother made a close relationship of English proficiency, travelling around the world (from Fieldnotes on March 5, 2014), and visiting her relatives in the United States, the Great Britain, and Germany (from Fieldnotes on April 29, 2014).

(3)

19 MOT: Your mother (1.0) If Tayo speaks good English, I want to travel with you to the
20 United States. I want to visit my aunts there.

21 TAY: Don't even dream about it, Mom.

22 RES: Let's study English hard.

23 MOT: My uncle is there.. My aunt's son is there.. In Germany, in the Great Britain.. I
24 wanted to learn English, but my brain couldn't process it.

25 RES: You're totally fine as you are proficient in Korean. Tayo is proficient only in
26 Korean. //@@//

27 TAY: //Hey, // I'm also good at English! //@@//

28 MOT: //I didn't// learn Korean in a classroom
29 setting. I learn to speak it while living here. And while I raise my kids.

(Original utterances in Korean; from Fieldnotes on April 29, 2014)

Furthermore, Tayo's mother prioritized English because her Vietnamese nephews and nieces, the ones who were of similar ages to Tayo, were learning English in and out of school and therefore, Tayo and her relatives would be able to communicate in English (from Fieldnotes on March 5, 2014). This implies that to Tayo's parents, the value of English was not simply about national competitiveness, personal joys, and communication. Rather, through the presentation of English as a means to travelling and re-building family ties around the world, they showed Tayo her social networks and ultimately allowed her to utilize them in the future.

The emphasis on studies and English that Tayo's parents put, however, did not mean that they obliterated Vietnam and the Vietnamese language from Tayo's life. In fact, Tayo built close relationships with these cultural linkages because of her residence in Vietnam, her memory of speaking Vietnamese, and her experiences of learning Vietnamese. Specifically, even though it was less intentional on the part of her parents, Tayo was sent to Vietnam when her mother faced marital problems (e.g., having a vicious drinker as a husband and raising two children while

working full time). So Tayo lived with her grandparents in Vietnam for two years, interacted with other family members and neighbors, and learned and used the Vietnamese language. This means that Tayo was close to her relatives and familiar with the neighborhood she resided in. She kept a number of photos taken in Vietnam (e.g., swimming pools, amusement parks, markets, and houses); in some of the pictures, she also wore the traditional Vietnamese conical hat (i.e., non la) or traditional costume (i.e., ao dai) with her cousins.

Once Tayo returned to Korea in 2004, she visited Vietnam every few years with her mother and elder brother. So despite her description of Vietnam as an uncomfortable place to live due to its weather, bugs, and pickpockets (from Interview on May 4, 2014), she often thought of Vietnam especially when she “was worn with studies” (from Interview on December 19, 2014). She also added that she would be willing to go to Vietnam if she was offered an opportunity to work there (from Interview on December 19, 2014). This suggests that her familiarity with Vietnam and its culture enabled Tayo to see alternative career/life paths, build knowledge about Vietnam, and develop her multicultural capability.

It goes without saying that Tayo’s attachment to Vietnam was closely linked to Vietnamese, the language she predominantly used in her early childhood. After coming back to Korea, according to Tayo’s mother and her brother, she continued to use Vietnamese with her mother and mixed Vietnamese and Korean with her brother. Although Tayo began to lose her Vietnamese after realizing her mother’s Korean proficiency, she also resumed her learning of the language at Vietnamese Saturday School⁶⁴ when she was a fourth grader. Thus, when Tayo’s mother used Vietnamese with her clients on the phone, Tayo reported that she was able to grasp what the conversation was about; furthermore, when her grandmother and uncle’s family in Vietnam visited her house in May 2014, Tayo, with the help of a Korean-Vietnamese translator application, communicated with them.

Indeed, Vietnamese seemed to be one of the most important aspects of who she was. For example, her signature was composed of both English and Vietnamese as Figure 6.1 shows.

Figure 6.1 Tayo’s Signature



The letter “M” referred to the first letter of her name in English; the “goc” component represented the last part of her name in Vietnamese (“Ngõc”). Interestingly, she also reported that her language of prayer was Vietnamese. Even after going to Catholic Church in Korea for years, she did not know how to recite the Lord’s Prayer in Korean but used Vietnamese to repeat the prayer from the memory. Tayo shared that she recited the Lord’s Prayer in Vietnamese every night before going to bed.

(4)

30 RES: So you don’t use Vietnamese at all these days?

31 TAY: Only when I pray.

32 RES: How do you pray?

33 TAY: Um (1.0) Lạy Cha chúng con ở trên trời [Lord’s Prayer in Vietnamese] @@ You

⁶⁴ Tayo learned the language for three years with other children including her own brother, Heedong, and Heedong’s elder brother.

- 34 know the prayer starting with “Our Father in heaven.” That one.
 35 RES: You recite that in Vietnamese?
 36 TAY: Yeah.
 37 RES: Wow.
 38 TAY: But I learned it when I was young without knowing the meaning of the prayer, and
 39 I memorize it in Vietnamese until now so I don’t know what it means but can
 40 memorize as a whole.
 41 RES: I see. It becomes automatic to you. Do you recite it in Korean, too?
 42 TAY: In Korean? No, I don’t know [it in Korean].
 43 RES: Hey, then do you go to a Vietnamese mass?
 44 TAY: No?
 45 RES: Then what?
 46 TAY: At home. (1.0) When I go to bed.
 (Original utterances in Korean; from Interview on May 4, 2014)

Due to this intimate bond between Tayo and the Vietnamese language, she hoped to learn Vietnamese again once she graduated from high school (from Interview on December 19, 2014).

Overall, Tayo benefited from various familial, cultural, and linguistic resources. Her parents helped her focusing on her studies including English, building close relationships with Vietnam and Vietnamese family members, and learning the Vietnamese language. This suggests that through these forms of capital, Tayo was accumulating the possibility of becoming more than a traditional sense of elite in Korean society—who would not only be socially well-connected and have strong educational background, but also possess networks in other parts of the world and own multilingual/multicultural capacities to make the world as her stage.

The Effects of Familial Environment

Importantly, her family’s economic power as well as her parents’ promotion of Koreanness facilitated Tayo’s project of becoming a Korean-Plus citizen. First, the financial strength of Tayo’s parents and her Vietnamese family members played an important role in helping Tayo understand the term “multicultural family” more favorably and ultimately do better at school. For example, Tayo did not reveal any concern related to her family’s domestic economy, which differed from many of the student participants in this project. The fact that her parents bought a three-bedroom apartment and gave Tayo her own room influenced her sense of economic stability; in addition, they created a study-friendly home environment and sent Tayo to a private academy on weekdays. This means that after school, she secured her time and space to study and enjoyed extra scaffoldings provided by her academy teachers who reviewed what she learned in school and who prepared her for exams. As Chapter 5 uncovered the tight relationship between students’ socioeconomic status and their academic achievement, Tayo’s schooling life might not have been as successful as she hoped it to be without her parents’ support.

Second, in addition to her parents’ economic resources, the financial power of her family members in Vietnam prevented Tayo from associating her parents’ wedding with negative perspectives on international marriage. Specifically, Tayo was not aware of stereotypical discourses about the marriage practice, including poor foreign brides are “sold” to Korean men and they remit money to poverty-stricken Vietnamese family members (Shin, under review).

Instead, Tayo, her brother, and her mother⁶⁵ proudly told me stories about their Vietnamese family members' social and economic establishment.

(5)

- 47 BAE⁶⁶: By the way, my grandfather in mother's side=
 48 RES: =Yeah
 49 BAE: He had an EXTENSIVE human network in Vietnam.
 50 RES: A human network? Why?
 51 BAE: I didn't know this.. I just thought that he was the head of a family but when he
 52 passed away=
 53 TAY: =Ah
 54 BAE: I was really surprised to see everything. Just just anyway it [the funeral] was
 55 TREMENDOUS.
 56 RES: Did you go to Vietnam when your grandfather passed away?
 57 BAE: Yeah.
 58 TAY: Um.. A whole lot of people constantly came and went.
 59 RES: I see. Many people made a call of condolence.
 60 TAY: And and people just it was thronged with people. People stood in front of the
 61 house, and neighbors' houses were also fully filled with people. And there was
 62 much food.
 63 RES: I see.
 ...
 64 BAE: My uncle in my mother's side runs a signboard company, and=
 65 TAY: =A millionaire.
 66 BAE: A millionaire.
 67 RES: Yeah, I've heard that he is very rich.
 68 BAE: I've heard that he is the best in that signboard field.
 69 RES: Is that why you are thinking of going to Vietnam?
 70 TAY: But you know his house was seriously huge. But only four people live there.
 71 BAE: Four people live there but what story is the house? A five-story house?
 72 TAY: But every single story is like a hotel.
 73 RES: Do you guys stay there when you visit Vietnam this time?
 74 TAY: No, we'll stay at our grandmother's house.
 75 BAE: Her house is a four-story house.
 76 RES: So your grandmother's house is a four-story one.
 77 BAE: It is right next to my uncle's house.

(Original utterances in Korean; from Fieldnotes on December 19, 2014)

These repetitive narratives about Vietnamese family members' wealth led Tayo to believe that people would perceive "multicultural" families in Korea "pleasantly," leading her to openly reveal that she was a "multicultural" child in school (Lines 97 to 99).

⁶⁵ During our first interview, Tayo's mother lengthily explained how successful her parents and siblings were (e.g., her father working for the U.S military, her relatives' migration to developed countries, her siblings' business and wealth).

⁶⁶ Baewoo is Tayo's elder brother who was 16 years old. From May to December 2014, he joined the last half of our mentoring sessions so the three of us had some opportunities to talk.

- (6)
- 78 RES: Have you ever been called by a teacher because you're a multicultural child?
- 79 TAY: Oh yeah. Multicultural family. (1.0) My school, my elementary school had a lot of
- 80 events for multicultural children. So there was even a class for multicultural
- 81 children. We made some food and ate it.
- 82 RES: Did you go to the class if your teacher asked you to go to the multicultural
- 83 classroom?
- 84 TAY: But they did not push me to go. The teacher in charge of multicultural students
- 85 made some announcements.
- 86 RES: So when you went to the class, it was not during the regular school hours.
- 87 TAY: Right. After school was over on Wednesdays.
- 88 RES: Then how did your peers know that you're a multicultural child?
- 89 TAY: There are some students who received the announcements, and I told my peers that
- 90 I'm multicultural. (1.0) You know our textbooks also dealt with it. Like Vietnam.
- 91 So I told my peers [about my familial background].
- 92 RES: Oh to your friends?
- 93 TAY: [I told them] I went to Vietnam but it was too hot. And pho is quite tasteless.
- 94 RES: @@
- 95 TAY: But my peers said that they wanted to go to Vietnam. So I did not recommend it.
- ...
- 96 RES: Then what do you think about the way other people think of multicultural family?
- 97 TAY: Pleasantly?
- 98 RES: Pleasantly? What do you mean pleasantly?
- 99 TAY: Pleasantly.

(Original utterances in Korean; from Interview on May 4, 2014)

These two excerpts show that the “multicultural” label did not offend Tayo precisely because she understood the label confidently—backed up by economic resources of her parents and her extended family members. Indeed, across the academic year, she continuously reported that she shared her familial background and related events to her classmates (e.g., her Vietnamese relatives' visit to Korea in May 2014, her plan to go to Vietnam in January 2015, and her previous trips to Vietnam).

While Tayo had a positive relationship with her family and accepted her “multicultural” background, “Koreanness” was given priority in the house. For instance, the location for portraits of Korean and Vietnamese grandparents at home was a banal but representative illustration of how Tayo's family put the essence of being Korean before that of being Vietnamese. On the family's living room wall that one would see for the first time after entering the apartment, the portraits of Tayo's grandparents on her father's side were hung. On the other hand, the portrait of Tayo's grandfather on her mother's side was hung on the wall of Tayo's room. This means that one would not see his picture if he/she did not open the door of Tayo's room. And due to geographical distances, while Tayo's family participated in Korean relatives' auspicious occasions or funerals, they selectively took part in Vietnamese relatives' gatherings.

Additionally, cultural practices adopted by Tayo's family were all Korean. They rarely had Vietnamese food at home because Tayo's father did not like the spice of some Vietnamese food; instead, the family predominantly consumed Korean food. In fact, Tayo's mother

complained that she could not understand why her children did not like bean paste pot stew⁶⁷ although they were Korean (from Fieldnotes on August 17, 2014). Moreover, Tayo's father stressed the patriarchal structure within a family and reinforced the gendered role at home. As a girl, Tayo was not allowed to partake the memorial service for ancestors on national holidays such as the lunar New Year's Day and Korean Thanksgiving Day; likewise, she was pushed to cook for her father and was compared to others like his friends' daughters or his sisters. In sum, Tayo was persistently taught what it meant to live like a "Korean" and what roles "Korean women" were expected to play at home.

The zenith of the family's embodiment of Koreanness was their use of the Korean language as the only means of communication. Although Tayo's mother used Vietnamese on the phone in talking with other Vietnamese-speaking individuals (i.e., Vietnamese was in presence in the home setting), no one in the family, including Tayo, initiated a conversation with Tayo's mother in Vietnamese. While Tayo's Vietnamese proficiency allowed her to grasp what her mother talked about on the phone, she preferred to use Korean with her mother; Tayo's father and Tayo's brother had minimal proficiency in Vietnamese. In fact, Tayo's mother, who was assimilated to the Korean language and culture, emphasized Tayo's success in Korea (in comparison to Vietnam or other countries), and considered Korean the appropriate means of communication at home (from Interview on December 20, 2014). She also added that Tayo could learn Vietnamese if she decided to work in Vietnam later on. Such attitudes of Tayo's mother led Tayo to regard her as "Korean" rather than "Vietnamese" (from Interview on May 4, 2014).

In general, the centrality of Koreanness in Tayo's family practices—reducing the presence of Vietnamese linguistic and cultural practices—gave Tayo an impression that she was not different from peers who had Korean family members, lived with Korean cultural practices, and used the Korean language. This in turn influenced her confident, active ways of interacting with others, taking part in classes, and ultimately growing up a Korean-Plus citizen.

Without doubt, these circumstances could not protect Tayo fully from derogatory discourses and perceptions about "multicultural" families. Whenever Tayo's peers expressed their surprise after informed about her "multicultural" background, she was puzzled.

(7)

100 TAY: They said the fact that I'm multicultural is surprising.

101 RES: Why?

102 TAY: They said that I am like Korean. But am I NOT Korean?

103 RES: Right, you are Korean.

104 TAY: Can't really understand.

(Original utterances in Korean; from Interview on December 19, 2014)

Her perplexed feeling continued when her schoolteachers advised "non-multicultural" students not to bully "multicultural" students and when her textbooks discussed social issues related to "multicultural" families and children. While she found those situations "childish" and "cringed" (from Fieldnotes on April 22, 2014), she persistently expressed her wish to be considered "normal." For instance, she had not stood as a candidate for a class president election in school not because she would need to work a lot, but because she hoped to "become an ordinary student." (from Fieldnotes on March 11, 2014). In a similar way, Tayo frequently asked me if she was "okay" or "normal" when I compared her with other study participants (from Fieldnotes

⁶⁷ This is one of the most typical Korean dishes.

on March 18, 2014). In fact, she shared her concern that she might be “abnormal” (from Fieldnotes on March 5, 2014). This suggests that although she was not fully aware of what meaning the “multicultural” label entails, she strived to construct her “normal” self in Korean society. And her desire to be “perfect” might be an outcome of her pursuit of normality.

Overall, Tayo demonstrated her friendly, hardworking, and intelligent nature in and out of school; furthermore, she manifested some signs of her potentiality to grow up a Korean-Plus citizen through her various linguistic and cultural experiences in Korea, Vietnam, and possibly other countries where her extended family members resided. Importantly, this chapter highlights that both Tayo’s personal characteristics and other influential factors such as family’s financial power and home atmosphere promoting Koreanness (see Bourdieu, 1991) facilitated her developmental process as a Korean-Plus citizen. Indeed, the case of Tayo calls for (a) the problematization of various stereotypes associated with “multicultural” families and children, (b) the deconstruction of what the “multicultural” label means, and (c) a more nuanced and complex understanding of “multicultural” children’s academic performances.

Sungho’s Story: Becoming a Critical Multilingual Citizen

Two Different Aspects of Sungho

Sungho was an undisputed model student who showed his excellence in every subject. In school, he did not sleep or drowse and confidently identified himself as the only student who listened to teachers. Indeed, Sungho often presented his answers to teachers’ questions and actively participated in classroom learning activities although he seemed to be slightly distracted from time to time (e.g., biting his fingernails, touching his face or pimples, or playing with his pen). Sungho’s homeroom teacher also noted that Sungho paid all his attention to his studies in school (from Interview on September 1, 2014), reflecting the weight he put on his academic performance.

Sungho was a devoted and hardworking student out of school as well. Thanks to his mother, he lived a well-regulated life at home and developed good study habits. For example, Sungho got up at 7:00 a.m., had breakfast at 7:25 a.m., and went to school at 7:45 a.m. These schedules prevented him from being late for school in 2014. Similarly, he reviewed and previewed what he learned and would learn in school every night; he utilized weekends to complement plans and goals he could not accomplish during weekdays. In addition to doing his school homework, Sungho almost always completed what his private academy teachers (i.e., math and English) and I asked him to do—even by sacrificing his sleeping hours. After our mentoring sessions, he frequently contacted me to ask more questions, get some feedback on his performance tests, and share his daily experiences.

These features of Sungho allowed him to prepare for his exams more effectively and ultimately perform well in school (see Table 6.2). Across the year, his school rank progressed from 45th (midterm in Spring) to 19th (final in Fall) out of 366 students.

Table 6.2 Sungho’s Academic Achievement in 2014

	1 st Midterm	1 st Final	2 nd Midterm	2 nd Final
Korean	85	96	88	96
English	82	94	87	85
Math	99	95	89	100
Social Studies	97	95	94	96
Science	96	90	95	88

Technology and Home Education	80	80	90	84
Information	N/A	88	N/A	89
Fine Arts	N/A	95	N/A	95
Physical Education	N/A	87	N/A	90
Music	N/A	90	N/A	100
Average Scores	89.83	91	90.5	92.3
Class Rank (n=37)	3	3	4	2
School Rank (n=366)	45	38	42	19

Note: Each subject had a maximum scale of 100 points.

Indeed, his academic profile was comparable to that of a high-achieving “non-multicultural” children group in the Korean education system; furthermore, by designating his specialty as “studying” (from Fieldnotes on March 8, 2014), he expressed his desire to earn at least a master’s degree and dreamed of having traditionally more prestigious professions such as professor and schoolteacher.

Besides being a model student, Sungho was a versatile student involved in various extra-curricular activities. Representatively, he learned to play the violin and for more than three years performed as a member of chamber orchestras. He participated in multiple music performances through his school orchestra, and contributed to the orchestra’s performance, which earned them third place at a music festival in November 2014. Moreover, Sungho inherited a good athletic sense from his father, who used to be a member of the national judo team. So he practiced Taekwondo for years and after becoming a black belt in Taekwondo, he began to take lessons in table tennis every Tuesday.

While diverse factors such as academic achievement, participation in extra-curricular activities, and parents’ support nourished him with confidence, he became shy and timid especially when making friends. According to his homeroom teacher, Sungho was not popular enough to be elected as the class president in the beginning of the academic year, for he was not active in keeping company with his classmates and advertising himself to them (from Interview on September 1, 2014). However, this does not mean that Sungho had poor peer relationships; he had some close friends shortly after the new semester began (e.g., a few classmates of Sungho visited and slept over at his place), and interacted with others without any problem. But it was Sungho who put a wall up and let only a certain group of peers—“multicultural” children—get closer to him. In other words, contrary to his ambition to be popular (e.g., elected as the class president), he conceptualized friendship in a rigid way: “non-multicultural” children could not be his “real” friends because all his “real” friends, including his girlfriend, were “multicultural.”

(8)

105 RES: Were there many multicultural children in your elementary school?

106 SUN: (shaking his head)

107 RES: Not quite?

108 SUN: No. (1.0) Except Artanis and me, there were few multicultural children.

109 RES: Really? Did your girlfriend go to a different elementary school?

110 SUN: Right.

111 RES: I see.

112 SUN: (2.0) My friends are all multicultural.

113 RES: Your friends are all multicultural?

- 114 SUN: Yes.
 115 RES: Where did you meet them?
 116 SUN: You know.. All my friends.. Other friends.
 117 RES: You said that Hakmin was not multicultural, no?
 118 SUN: I mean real friends. Since I was young.
 119 RES: Old friends when you met young?
 120 SUN: Yeah.
 121 RES: Why do you think so?
 122 SUN: (3.0) Well.. Like attracts like. And coincidentally? Coincidentally.
 (Original utterances in Korean; from Interview on May 3, 2014)

By saying, “Like attracts like” (Line 122), Sungho argued that “multicultural” peers could be his “real” friends possibly because they would be able to better understand his life. Sungho also added that he wanted to marry a “multicultural” woman, for their similar familial backgrounds would make each other feel more comfortable (from Interview on May 3, 2014).

Sungho’s rather binary understanding of friendship seemed to be inseparable from his unpleasant experience in elementary school, an experience that both Sungho and his mother shared on different occasions.

- (9)
 123 RES: Did Sungho experience any uncomfortable event in school due to his multicultural
 124 background?
 125 MOT: When he was in sixth grade, one of Sungho’s classmates, you know they all knew
 126 Sungho was multicultural. So knowing that Sungho was multicultural, he [a non-
 127 multicultural child] said, “you China, China, Chinese brat, go back to China!” So
 128 Sungho beat him up.
 (Original utterances in Korean; from Interview on April 23, 2014)

The xenophobic comments, which characterized Sungho as if he was “not Korean enough” or even “Chinese,” wounded him and ostracized him. And this led him to be sensitive to who was “a native Korean” and who was not “a real native Korean” (Line 139):

- (10)
 129 RES: Then which one do you feel more comfortable with between programs with
 130 multicultural children and schooling life with your school friends?
 131 SUN: School friends?
 132 RES: Do you feel your school life is more comfortable?
 133 SUN: Yes, with native [*tojong*; 토종] Koreans.
 134 RES: You don’t think you are a native Korean?
 135 SUN: (3.0)
 136 RES: What do you think?
 137 SUN: You know, I think I am Korean but not a native Korean.
 138 RES: A native Korean..
 139 SUN: A real native Korean.
 140 RES: Do you want to be a real native Korean?
 141 SUN: No, not really.

- 142 RES: Not really.
 143 SUN: Don't people want to be seen differently from others?
 144 RES: Do you want to be seen differently?
 145 SUN: Yes.
 146 RES: Then have you ever told your peers that your mother was born in China? Have you
 147 uttered such thing?
 148 SUN: (shaking his head)

(Original utterances in Korean; from Interview on May 3, 2014)

What is worth noting here is how the term “multicultural” pushed Sungho to distinguish himself from other “non-multicultural” children, despite his mother’s ethnic Korean background (see Chapter 3). Specifically, Sungho’s grandparents in mother’s side were born and raised in Korea, but were forced to move to China in the late 1930s under Japanese rule. This means that although Sungho’s mother was born in China and went to Chinese schools, not only was her first and most-used language Korean but she also followed Korean culture at home (e.g., using Korean as the home language and maintaining Korean customs like food and holidays). However, due to the fact that she held Chinese citizenship by the time she migrated to Korea, she was understood as “foreign” and her family was labeled as “multicultural.” And this label ultimately prevented Sungho from more openly engaging with others, and imposed a “multicultural” and subsequently “nonnative” identity on Sungho.

Sungho’s Emergence as a Global Citizen

Other than his life in and out of school, largely three characteristics of Sungho made him exceptional among the study participants in this project: his vision for the future, international mindedness, and multilingual potentiality. First of all, Sungho critically understood the perspectives on “multicultural” families and attempted to find his own ways to contribute to the well-being of “multicultural” children. For example, he grumbled at the fact that people viewed “multicultural” families derogatively (e.g., Essay on May 26, 2014; Essay on June 9, 2014) and questioned how accurately those stereotypes described the lives of his parents and him (from Interview on December 20, 2014).

(11)

- 149 RES: Did your classmates say something about the student list⁶⁸?
 150 SUN: No.. They just asked me if I am multicultural, and when I told them I am, they just
 151 said, “Oh okay” and left.
 152 RES: So what did you feel?
 153 SUN: (1.0) The same.
 154 RES: The same? Didn't feel strange?
 155 SUN: Didn't feel strange. You know. (1.0) All are the same human beings. [My parents
 156 were] Not married to aliens.

(Original utterances in Korean; from Interview on May 3, 2014)

⁶⁸ This student list included students’ personal information (e.g., “multicultural” family background, special-needs children), and was mistakenly distributed to the class in the beginning of the academic year.

His revelation might have only a minimal impact on his peers' beliefs about the "multicultural" label; however, it would be still a way to speak back to the stereotypical gazes on "multicultural" families and children.

Moving one step further, Sungho recounted his desire to help more marginalized "multicultural" children when he became a college student.

(12)

157 RES: Are you really interested in the issues about multicultural families and children?

158 SUN: Yes.

159 RES: What kinds of issues are you interested in?

160 SUN: You know.. When I see that some multicultural children are struggling, I want to help them.

162 RES: Oh when you see struggling multicultural children?

163 SUN: Yes.

164 RES: Have you ever met them? I mean such struggling multicultural children?

165 SUN: Not so many.

...

166 RES: Then how do you want to help them?

167 SUN: Through the Rainbow School?

168 RES: Do you want to become a Rainbow teacher?

169 SUN: I want to give it a try.

(Original utterances in Korean; from Interview on December 20, 2014)

Although Sungho ran the risk of characterizing "multicultural" children who benefited from various educational foundations as maladjusted outsiders, he imagined working as a volunteer teacher for the Rainbow School. As a "multicultural" child who was recognized as a high-achiever and who wanted to have a teaching profession, Sungho seemed to believe that supporting "multicultural" children through education would be a way to play his role in society.

While Sungho's critical thinking ability and vision for the future cultivated his development, his sense of international mindedness also contributed to the project of becoming a Korean-Plus citizen. Representatively, he was keen on major events happening around the world. When the Ebola crisis was at its height in October 2014, Sungho not only researched the virus, but also followed the flow of the virus around the world. In fact, during my visit to the United States in October 2014—the month of three cases diagnosed with Ebola in the nation-state, Sungho contacted me if I was safe and gave me some advice (from Chat Log on October 25, 2014). Similarly, his trip to China and interactions with his relatives there allowed him to build knowledge about the country. He was able to explain the relationship between Han Chinese and Joseonjok (i.e., ethnic Koreans in China) as well as Chinese policies (e.g., one-child policy and educational curriculum). During the Asian Olympics season in 2014, he checked China's game schedules, analyzed its strength, and cheered the team along with the Korean team.

Moreover, Sungho did not avoid adventure. In August 2014, he seized the opportunity to go to Cambodia, a country he had never thought of going to. After spending a week in Phnom Penh, Sungho reported that he learned some musical instruments (e.g., Khloy), visited historical sites (e.g., Killing Fields), and met Cambodian students. In particular, Sungho was excited that he met North Koreans in Cambodia. Learning that North Korea was not a closed country (e.g., some people have access to the country), he began to envision himself having a chance to visit

North Korea, especially Pyeong Yang, at one point or another in the future. In sum, through direct and indirect international experiences, Sungho expanded his horizons and built global mindedness.

Lastly, Sungho was boosting his multilingual potentiality by speaking Korean as his mother tongue, by learning English as the major foreign language emphasized in the Korean education system, and by imagining learning Chinese. To begin with, as the only national language, Korean was predominantly used in Sungho's daily life. In school, Korean was the language of schooling (even when English was taught), and all social interactions with teachers as well as peers were conducted in Korean. At home, because all three family members were Korean native speakers, the standard language of communication was Korean. This means that Sungho was embedded with the Korean language and used it proficiently both in academic and casual settings.

In addition, Sungho was eager to learn English due to the values attached to the language in Korean society. Specifically, by making a connection between the power of the United States and English, he argued that English proficiency was "essential"; the fact that English was taught as one of the three most important subjects in the education system reinforced his belief.

(13)

170 RES: Why do you think you are learning English, Sungho?

171 SUN: English?

172 RES: Yes.

173 SUN: Because the United States is rising.

174 RES: Because the United States is rising? Isn't China rising too?

175 SUN: The Chinese language is not in the school curriculum.

176 RES: As it is not taught in school?

177 SUN: Yes.

178 RES: So=

179 SUN: =English is said to be essential.

(Original utterances in Korean; from Interview on December 20, 2014)

Inasmuch as Sungho's parents also believed that English would guarantee Sungho's upward mobility (from Interview on April 23, 2014), they supported his English learning by sending him private academies or hiring tutors.

Sungho's willingness to learn English led him to transform casual, daily incidents into learning opportunities. For example, while surfing on the Internet, Sungho accessed to blog posts about his favorite games and American TV series which were sometimes in English (from Fieldnotes on April 9, 2014). He also visited foreign game servers to play games with foreigners and to compare the same game on the U.S. and Korean servers. Moreover, due to his love of Disney movie soundtracks, Sungho watched a number of video clips available on YouTube. So he regularly reported new English vocabulary he learned on the Internet such as "mineworker," "teleport," "certificate," "status," and "twerking," and sometimes asked me to transcribe or translate some English phrases and lyrics.

(14)

- 180 SUN: Um.. Teacher! The music file⁶⁹ that I sent to you included some English. Can you
 181 translate that for me?
 182 RES: “They serve the purpose of changing hydrogen into breathable oxygen,” she
 183 explains, rewriting the laws of chemistry and biology without a backward glance.
 184 “And they’re as necessary here as the air is, on Earth.” “But I still say...they’re
 185 flowers.” “If you like.” “Do you sell them?” “I’m afraid not.” “But, maybe we
 186 could make a deal.” Here you go! hahaha
 187 SUN: Wow.. Can’t understand anything.
 188 RES: Let’s translate them together when we meet on Sunday!
 189 SUN: Okay!

(Original utterances in Korean except the underlined part; from Chat Log on December 4, 2014)

- 190 SUN: Excuse me, Teacher! The text you sent to me.. I know some words but can’t
 191 understand the sentences. :((Inside of oxygen, hydrogen blah blah blah.....
 192 RES: Hahaha
 193 SUN: The most difficult part to understand was.. What does Serve of purpose mean?
 194 Reach the usefulness?
 195 RES: Serve is a verb— the purpose of changing is a cluster!
 196 SUN: Oh I see. Please translate the text on Sunday.
 197 RES: Sure. It’s tomorrow!
 198 SUN: Okay!

(Original utterances in Korean except the underlined part; from Chat Log on December 6, 2014)

As the excerpt exemplifies, the resources that Sungho chose on the Internet were in English if not Korean. This reflects his passion to learn English, backed up by his awareness of the importance of English.

Contrary to Sungho’s and his parents’ emphasis on English education, their attention to Sungho’s learning of Chinese had been minimal. This was because the family had a mutually intelligible language (i.e., Korean) and because traditional social perceptions about China hindered Sungho’s mother using Chinese to her son.

(15)

- 199 MOT: You know (1.0) at that time, China gave an impression that it was a poor country
 200 so my family-in-law [did not like me to use Chinese]. I think I felt that way. The
 201 attitude was not too direct or obvious but at that time, when people knew that I
 202 was a foreign bride, they tended to ignore me or to think that my husband had
 203 some problems. So because I noticed those gazes in public, I cowered so I didn’t
 204 use any Chinese in public. From there, I didn’t even think of teaching Chinese to
 205 my son. ... Once China got better and the Chinese language was understood as
 206 essential, it was already too late [to teach Chinese to Sungho].

(Original utterances in Korean; from Interview on April 23, 2014)

Indeed, Sungho was proficient in Chinese, nor did he had desire to learn the language. It was a mere foreign language to him, as other “non-multicultural” children in Korea would regard it as such. Sungho’s attitude toward Chinese in the beginning of 2014 reflected the trivialized status of the language at home.

⁶⁹ He sent a song titled, “Flower Dances.”

- (16)
- 207 RES: What language did you use with your cousins?
 208 SUN: Cousins (2.0)
 209 RES: Are they all Chinese?
 210 SUN: I'm KOREAN.
 211 RES: You're Korean, and they're Chinese?
 212 SUN: (nodding)
 213 RES: How did you communicate with them?
 214 SUN: Via my mom.
 ...
 215 RES: Do you want to learn Chinese?
 216 SUN: No.
 217 RES: No? Why?
 218 SUN: I'm KOREAN!
 219 RES: You're Korean so you don't need to learn Chinese?
 220 SUN: (nodding)
 221 RES: No. (1.0) You don't like the Chinese language?
 222 SUN: (smiling)

(Original utterances in English; from Fieldnotes on March 8, 2014)

In the excerpt above, Sungho seemed to feel vulnerable or even threatened by my question about his cousins' nationality; instead of answering to my question, he firmly stated, "I'm Korean" (Line 210). His attachment to the Korean nationality re-appeared when I more directly asked him if he wanted to learn Chinese (Line 218). He said that because he was Korean, he did not want to or need to learn Chinese. This implies that Sungho was reluctant to learn the language because being proficient in Chinese might (a) reveal his Korean Chinese mother as well as his "multicultural" background and (b) impair his identity as "Korean." He eventually argued that the U.S. would continue to exercise its hegemonic power; and therefore, proficiency in Chinese would give him no privilege now and in the future (from Fieldnotes on April 16, 2014) and he did not have "a particle of intention" to learn the language (from Interview on May 3, 2014).

However, Sungho began to see the Chinese language differently beginning in July 2014. At first, by incorporating more recent discourses about the increasing political and economic power of China (e.g., Lee & Kwak, 2012; Park, 2013), Sungho argued that Chinese would become one of the global languages that people would have to know along with English. This ultimately led him to express his willingness to learn Chinese.

- (17)
- 223 RES: But why do you now want to learn Chinese?
 224 SUN: The Chinese language will=
 225 RES: =Do you think it will be helpful?
 226 SUN: Yes.
 227 RES: In what ways will that be helpful?
 228 SUN: In our generation, I've heard that English is essential and now resources flow into
 229 China.
 230 RES: Oh now they flow into China? Did your mother tell you that?
 231 SUN: No. I've heard it from economic people.

232 RES: Economic people? Who are they?

233 SUN: Mr President. I mean Ms President.

(Original utterances in Korean; from Fieldnotes on July 29, 2014)

Sungho then more strongly asserted the value of learning Chinese by saying, “The Chinese language is attractive because it makes me think that it will make my social life easier” (from Interview on December 20, 2014). But the social and economic benefits of learning Chinese were not the only reasons for Sungho to want to learn Chinese. After interacting with his family members in China more frequently in 2014, he recognized the need for learning Chinese to better understand his mother and to have smoother communication with his monolingual Chinese-speaking cousins (from Fieldnotes on August 12, 2014; from Interview on December 20, 2014). In sum, although Sungho was unenthusiastic about learning Chinese in the beginning, his realization of the values of Chinese (i.e., economic and symbolic power of the language on the global stage, the language of his family) inspired him to learn the language.

Overall, Sungho was more than so-called a member of the elite in Korea. As a critical student, he raised questions dealing with social perceptions about “multicultural” families and contemplated specific ways to support other “multicultural” children. He also paid attention to events occurring around the world and put himself in various international settings. Furthermore, by understanding the meanings associated with English and Chinese and by showing his willingness to learn these languages, he exhibited the potential to become a multilingual speaker. Due to these features, I would argue in this chapter that Sungho—a “multicultural” child—not just successfully adjusted to the Korean education system, but also would grow up a Korean-Plus citizen. Indeed, in some ways, he represents the emerging exemplar of a truly global citizen.

The Power of Economic Resources

While Sungho was becoming a Korean-Plus citizen, it is crucial to point out that the process was not made solely by his innate capabilities. Instead, his family’s financial resources as well as his mother’s interests in his schooling and active guidance seem to play pivotal roles in his accomplishment.

Sungho’s dual-income parents enabled Sungho to concentrate on his learning and to benefit from various educational programs. For instance, as the only child, Sungho occupied two out of three rooms in the apartment, one for his bedroom and the other for his study/computer room. These two rooms were filled with educational materials such as a multi-volume encyclopedia, exercise books, self-teaching manuals, desks, chairs, and a white-board. Moreover, to support his excellent academic performance, Sungho’s parents sent him into a private math academy three times a week and hired an English tutor for two individual lessons a week; especially when Sungho’s English midterm score put him in an intermediate class⁷⁰ in Fall 2014, his parents enrolled him at another English private academy designed to provide the intense preparation of an exam. For the involvement of extra-curricular activities, Sungho also received a violin lesson twice a week and went to a table tennis academy once a week. Thus, on average, the private education expenditure of Sungho’s parents was approximately \$700 per month.

⁷⁰ Sungho’s school tried to offer English and math classes that were more closely matching students’ abilities. Thus, depending on students’ midterm or final exam results, they were put into basic, intermediate, and advanced classes. Although Sungho was in the advanced class in Spring, he was put in the intermediate class in the second half of the Fall semester.

These supports given to Sungho, which were backed up by his parents' economic power, were closely related to their beliefs that it is their responsibility, as parents, to give Sungho a first class education.

(18)

- 234 MOT: You know there are too many accidents these days so children lose their lives in
 235 one way or the other so now we want Sungho to study until whenever he hopes to
 236 do without worrying about anything.. If he does not misbehave too much, we are
 237 okay. It would be great if he can succeed with his study, but we understand that
 238 these days it is too difficult to be successful with study.
 239 RES: There's no job even after finishing a graduate school.
 240 MOT: Right. Yeah, true. So we will just look after him so that he can do whatever he
 241 wants to do. And if things don't turn out to be positive, what can we do? He has to
 242 learn techniques and get a job there.

(Original utterances in Korean; from Interview on April 23, 2014)

Indeed, in order to help Sungho move up the social ladder, Sungho's parents were ready to do everything they possibly could do. Then it seems undeniable that without his parents' financial support and emphasis on study, Sungho would not be able to demonstrate impressive daily and schooling life like now.

In particular, Sungho's mother paid a considerable amount of attention to Sungho's academic and personal development. She helped Sungho build good study habits. For example, they set a study time during weekdays (e.g., 8:30 or 9:00 p.m. to 10:00 p.m. every weekday) so that he could preview and review all learning materials; she regularly monitored if Sungho did all his school, academy, tutoring, and mentoring homework. Playing computer games or watching TV were not permitted if he did not complete what he had to do. And when Sungho received report cards, Sungho's mother carefully examined how he did and sometimes expressed her dissatisfaction if he could not earn As on core subjects. In sum, the interest Sungho's mother put into her son's study led him to be ready for school and to be better prepared for exams.

Sungho's mother also influenced Sungho's understanding of the concept of "multicultural" family. Representatively, she criticized that the "multicultural" label stigmatized a certain group of individuals based on their family backgrounds; simultaneously, she said that she tried not to conceal her foreign bride status because she did not want her son to feel ashamed of her Chinese cultural heritage.

(19)

- 243 MOT: Prejudice is helpless. In every aspect, Korea stresses its homogeneity and it is
 244 deep-rooted. The idea of *Shintobulyi* (신토불이) that Koreans can live well when
 245 they eat products grown in Korea is deep-rooted. While I think this is a factor that
 246 prevents further development, I don't know why Koreans are all about
 247 homogeneity. You know when I explained my parent conference experience⁷¹ at
 248 my work, my coworkers said, "Hey, why did you reveal that you're a foreign bride
 249 even though your Korean is not distinguishable. You shouldn't disclose your
 250 background." They recommended to me not to say about my background. But I'm

⁷¹ Some mothers in the parent conference publicly expressed their negative attitudes toward "multicultural" families because their sons' class was identified as an "integration" class.

251 thinking that when I'm not feeling confident about it, how come my child can say
 252 that my mother is from China in public? So I said to my coworkers, "Wouldn't my
 253 child say such thing [that my mother is from China in public]? He should always
 254 conceal where I'm from." If I ask him not to say about my Chinese background,
 255 my child would wither wherever he goes. I really don't like that, but my
 256 coworkers constantly said that other mothers would have some prejudice about
 257 multicultural family.

(Original utterances in Korean; from Interview on April 23, 2014)

Growing up hearing these narratives of his mother, Sungho—despite his hurtful experience in elementary school—would be able to become more open to his family background; ultimately, he raised critical questions about the “multicultural” label, including why his parents’ marriage needed to be distinguished, why people linked the “multicultural” label with negative stereotypes, and what he could do with those stereotypes and perspectives.

The influence of Sungho’s mother on his development was not limited to his academic performance and understanding of the term “multicultural.” She also helped him assume an identity as an internationally minded and multilingual person. As a representative example, she persuaded Sungho to go to Cambodia in August 2014, which enabled him to interact with people around the world and to be exposed to new surroundings (from Fieldnotes on July 29, 2014). In a similar vein, by overcoming her own low self-esteem originating in Koreans’ negative social perceptions about China and the Chinese language (see Excerpt 15), Sungho’s mother started using some daily Chinese phrases⁷² to Sungho with a hope that he could learn the language.

(20)

258 RES: Do you want Sungho to learn the Chinese language?
 259 MOT: Yes, I hope he will learn the language. It is a sort of ability. English is you know
 260 everywhere. There are a lot of people who use English so it reaches a limit. So
 261 learning Chinese is beneficial but now he does not have enough time so these
 262 days, I try to use Chinese from time to time when we go to bed or have meals.
 263 RES: Really?
 264 MOT: Yeah. I try to use it but with very simple Chinese. But I sometimes forget to use
 265 Chinese so I only use Korean. Other times when I remember to use Chinese, I use
 266 it again.
 267 RES: When you use Chinese, does Sungho accept it naturally?
 268 MOT: Yeah yeah.
 269 RES: Does he understand?
 270 MOT: Yes.. Especially when we go to my maiden home in Changchun⁷³, we can use
 271 Korean but the generation of my nephews and nieces do not know Korean at all.
 272 So when Sungho goes there, he becomes a loner so I'm a little worried. ... When
 273 Sungho graduates from college or something, I want to send him to China so that
 274 he can learn the language for a few years.

(Original utterances in Korean; from Interview on April 23, 2014)

⁷² For instance, Sungho’s mother used phrases such as “xǐ nǐ de shǒu [洗你的手; wash your hands],” “cǎiqǔ línǜ [采取淋浴; take a shower], and “chī wǎnfàn [吃晚饭; have dinner].”

⁷³ Changchun [Chángchūn; 長春] is the capital of Jilin Province in China.

Sungho's substantial attitudinal changes about the Chinese language (see Excerpts 16-17) reflected his mother's explanations of the importance of Chinese learning: the social/economic benefits granted to a proficient Chinese speaker and the maintenance of family ties. To sum up, by providing various supports to Sungho (e.g., building studying habits, developing critical thinking, introducing new surroundings, and learning the benefits of Chinese proficiency), Sungho's mother sought to make her son into a Korean-Plus citizen.

Overall, Sungho demonstrated his hardworking and insightful nature in and out of school; in addition, he exhibited his potential to become a Korean-Plus citizen through his vision for the future, his sense of international mindedness, and his willingness to learn multiple languages. In addition to adding an example of how "multicultural" children establish themselves as Korean-Plus citizens, this chapter offers a subtler picture of what enables them to exert their power to become more competent citizens in Korean society. Namely, the economic power and guidance of caregivers had a considerable impact on their academic and personal development. Sungho's story, like the story of Tayo, also demands more critical perspectives on the "multicultural" label and more attempts to deconstruct the negative assumptions about "multicultural" families and children.

The Conflicted Status of "Korean-Plus" Students

The cases of Tayo and Sungho cast more light on two critical issues: the power of family socioeconomic status and stereotypes about "multicultural" families. To begin with, the two cases corroborate the major finding of Chapter 5: instead of the "multicultural" label itself, the effect of socioeconomic status on children's academic achievement was significantly stronger. While it would be inadequate to denounce their efforts on studies, Tayo and Sungho—the two most affluent children in this project—were certainly fortunate enough to focus on their studies without worrying about the lack of educational resources.⁷⁴ Just as Sirin (2005) found that family socioeconomic status was one of the strongest factors of students' academic performances, the two focal students' family socioeconomic status would provide them with various resources as well as social capital necessary to do well in school (Bourdieu & Passeron, 1990).

In relation to the power of family socioeconomic status, both Tayo and Sungho provide evidence to disprove stereotypical features of "multicultural" children (see Chapter 4). Specifically, in conflict with the prevailing stereotype that "multicultural" children lag behind in school, Tayo and Sungho were high achievers. And as García-Vázquez, Vázquez, López, and Ward (1997) found the tight relationship between language proficiency and academic success, the cases of Tayo and Sungho refute another stereotype that "multicultural" children have limited Korean proficiency. Furthermore, because their parents were not impoverished—the direct opposition to the stereotypical belief that "multicultural" families are poor, Tayo and Sungho had access to various resources such as private education and extra-curricular activities. In sum, contrary to some critics' arguments (e.g., Huh, 2011; Kim, 2012), Tayo and Sungho were not likely to become "a potential threat" to the future Korean society.

Indeed, both Tayo and Sungho appeared to fit into the description of "global human resources" who would cross national boundaries by using their linguistic and cultural resources (see Chapter 4). But I would argue that they are more than patriotic laborers who would connect

⁷⁴ Although Jinsoo in Chapter 7 was a model student in and out of school, he was not a high-achiever comparable to Tayo and Sungho. Jinsoo's words that "Because I do not have any exercise books, I plan to read my textbooks (from Fieldnotes on June 24, 2014)" might explain where the gap between the two focal students in this chapter and Jinsoo came from.

Korea and their mothers' homelands, make profits for Korean corporations, and ultimately contribute to the development of Korea. Tayo and Sungho showed the possibility of becoming more critical citizens of society who would serve as agents of change in various settings. For example, if Tayo begins to interrogate the meaning of "normality" in her life, she would become not merely an elite of Korean society, but also a more mature and reflective citizen; when Sungho continues to question what the term "multicultural" entails and to ponder what he can do for "multicultural" children, he would be able to more actively resist stereotypes imposed upon "multicultural" families and children.

Some may devalue the academic success of these two focal students' academic success and doubt their processes of becoming Korean-Plus citizens. Like Tayo's homeroom teacher, they may suspect that foreign brides pushed their children to study hard as a way to overcome their sense of inferiority⁷⁵ and to prevent their children from following in the wake of them (from Interview on November 20, 2014). However, I would argue that through their demonstrations of how the stereotypical meaning about "multicultural" families can be deconstructed, Tayo and Sungho would be able to function as alternative figures of "multicultural" children, namely, as Korean-Plus citizens. This in turn would become the basis of reconstructing what "multicultural" means and who "multicultural" children are.

Conclusion

The two focal "multicultural" teenagers, Tayo and Sungho, reveal the ways in which they become Korean-Plus citizens in society. Building upon their outstanding academic performances in school, they proved that they fit into the Korean education system comparable to other "non-multicultural" students. Furthermore, as a trilingual speaker who lived in Vietnam and in Korea, Tayo showed how she would utilize her linguistic and cultural resources in the future. In particular, Tayo also illustrated the possibility of capitalizing her networks around the world via her family members. The case of Sungho suggested a different kind of a Korean-Plus citizen; by questioning others' negative perceptions about "multicultural" families and by envisioning himself contributing to the lives of more marginalized "multicultural" children, Sungho was in the process of becoming a more critical social agent. As such, these two "multicultural" teenagers were establishing themselves in Korea as more competent and conscious members of society and calling for a more nuanced, complex understanding of "multicultural" families and children. Finally, cases like Tayo and Sungho uncover a pathway for "multicultural" teenagers in Korea to lead the movement from Korean-Plus to truly global citizenship.

⁷⁵ According to Tayo's homeroom teacher, foreign brides may have the sense of inferiority because of their "impure" reason to marry Korean men (i.e., the financial reason).

Chapter 7. “Multicultural” Teenagers Becoming Cosmopolitan Citizens: Searching for Alternatives on the Global Stages

This chapter introduces two focal “multicultural” adolescents who envision their mothers’ countries as alternative places to study or work. One is Jinsoo, a son of a Filipina woman, and the other is Heedong, a son of a Vietnamese woman. By learning English, Jinsoo perceives the Philippines as a stepping-stone for his educational career in the United States. Similarly, observing his father, who moved to Vietnam to work, Heedong imagines Vietnam as a place to obtain a more stable job. With these two cases, I argue in this chapter that their linguistic and cultural resources enable them to dream what they could have not thought of if they were not so-called “multicultural” children.

Jinsoo’s Story: The Philippines as a Path to Reach the United States

The Maturity of Jinsoo

Jinsoo was known as a mature student who acted like a grownup. His mother gave much praise to him for helping her at home (e.g., taking care of his younger sister and assisting her in learning Korean). Jinsoo’s schoolteachers commonly depicted him as a polite, sincere, and hardworking student. Specifically, Jinsoo’s homeroom teacher reported that Jinsoo took responsibility for his own schooling even by dealing with the majority of school-related paperwork, which was supposed to be completed by his parents.

(1)

- 1 MSJ: It is my impression that Jinsoo completes everything, including reading school
2 announcements and other documents that need parents’ input, BY HIMSELF. He
3 said that his mother is not yet able to write in Korean. She can speak but can’t write
4 so he himself has to fill out all forms.

(Original utterances in Korean; from Interview on August 25, 2014)

Reflecting on Jinsoo’s submission of a financial support form for students in the second-to-the bottom income bracket, Jinsoo’s homeroom teacher hypothesized that his family background, specifically his socioeconomic status and his mother’s Korean proficiency, functioned as the source of his maturity.

Indeed, Jinsoo experienced less favorable living conditions; Jinsoo and three other family members lived in a 1.5 bedroom apartment. The family did not have proper fans or a washing machine; until July 2014, they did not have any wi-fi Internet connection, but gained access to the Internet only through a LAN line. In addition, because of work commitments, his parents seemed not to provide enough care to Jinsoo. For example, his father worked in construction sites and rarely slept at home. His Filipina mother taught English but was not proficient in Korean. This prevented Jinsoo from talking about his peer relations and schooling experiences with his mother; consequently, she was not well aware of her son’s daily life (e.g., what kinds of afterschool programs he takes part in; what time he comes back home). Admittedly, Jinsoo’s mother considered the language barrier the most frustrating challenge in rearing her children. In these surroundings, Jinsoo became more independent and mature.

Jinsoo’s maturity was more clearly revealed through his motivation to study. His social networking site often revealed his firm resolve to study. Representatively, on June 11, 2014, he wrote in Korean, “The pain of studying is temporary; the pain of not studying is lifelong.” He

explained that his mother introduced a list of mottoes on the wall of the Harvard University library, and he chose his favorite and posted it on the Internet as a way of reminding himself of the importance of studying. As his homeroom teacher commented, Jinsoo “might think that studying is the only way he can survive in society” (from Interview on August 25, 2014).

Jinsoo’s drive to study was easily observable in school. He always straightened up in his seat and was ready to study. With a loud voice, he answered almost all questions that teachers asked. Furthermore, he hardly glanced at materials irrelevant to studying or talked to others during classes; for instance, although some students made jokes in the middle of a class, Jinsoo smiled without looking at them. But Jinsoo also helped his peers around him when they asked him questions. Familiar with Jinsoo’s motivation to study, his content area teachers spoke with the highest praise of his attitude in school. In fact, some of his classmates half-jokingly said in their math class that they wished to see Jinsoo punished before their graduation (from Fieldnotes on December 1, 2014).

Jinsoo’s academic achievement in Table 7.1 demonstrates the amount of attention he put on studying.

Table 7.1 Jinsoo’s Academic Achievement in Spring 2014

	1 st Midterm	Homeroom Teacher’s Remarks	1 st Final	Homeroom Teacher’s Remarks
Korean	75	Thanks to his desire for academic achievement, Jinsoo is the outstanding student who always actively participates in class. In addition, he enjoys the confidence of his peers because he helps struggling friends in class.	91	Due to his kind heart and attitude, Jinsoo enjoys the confidence of his peers; in addition, Jinsoo is the sincere student who works hard. He deserves his excellent academic achievement.
English	87		88	
Math	91		95	
Social Studies	88		78	
Science	93		90	
Ethics	96		96	
Chinese Characters	84		100	
Japanese	100		95	
Physical Education	N/A		94	
Average Scores	89.25		91.89	
School-wide Rank	27		21	

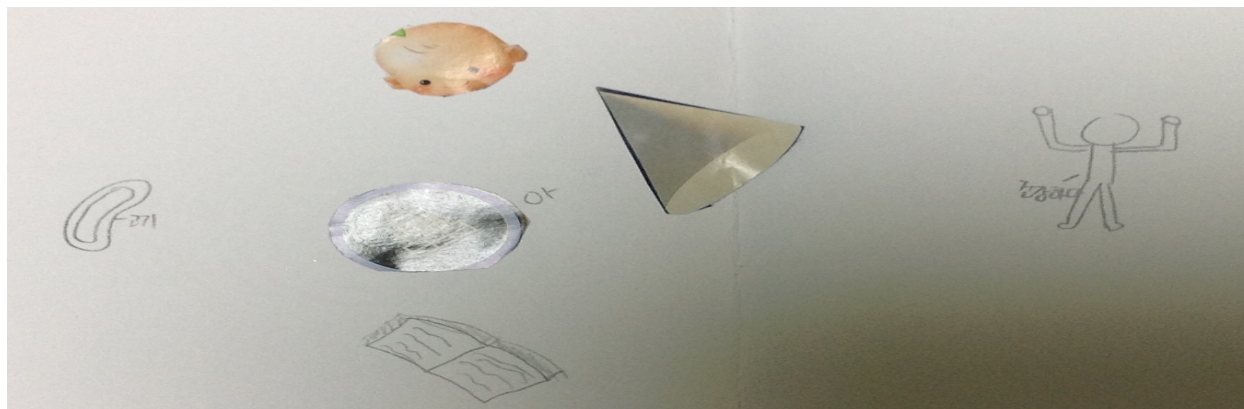
Note 1: Each subject had a maximum scale of 100 points.

Note 2: The total number of students in Jinsoo’s school is 242.

Note 3: Jinsoo’s school adopted a “free-learning semester” in Fall 2014, and the students did not take any formal exams.

Although Jinsoo frequently expressed his desire to become one of the top 20 students in his school, he was proud of his academic achievement. Together with other students and teachers’ recognition of his outstanding schooling life, his self-confidence in his achievement allowed Jinsoo to construct the high-achieving model student identity. In particular, his involvement in Science Program for Gifted Students in elementary and middle schools as well as his interaction with other students in the program enabled Jinsoo to identify himself as “a gifted student.” Figure 7.1, one of the artifacts that he created in his Art Therapy class in Fall 2014, shows how Jinsoo positioned himself in various settings.

Figure 7.1. Images Chosen by Jinsoo to Describe Himself



Note: On his body, he wrote, “건강하다 (*geonganghada*)” in Korean, which means healthy.

Jinsoo elaborated that he chose an image of a smiling baby, for he smiled a lot; a circular cone signaled his love of math; rectangular structures in a circle represented logic and consistency; books implied his membership in a book club and his dedication to reading; an image of meat was selected because it was his favorite food (from Fieldnotes on December 7, 2014). Interestingly, he located the circular cone and the circle containing rectangular structures in the center of the whole figure which suggests that his studiousness is vital to who he is and to the centrality of his interests in math and science.

As expected, Jinsoo argued that studying would help him achieve his dream, namely, becoming a mechanical engineer.

(2)

5 RES: Jinsoo, what would be the reason for you to study this hard?

6 JIN: Someday, it will help me. And it will help my dream and and also it can provide me
7 with various keys and hints to realize my dream.

8 RES: When is the first time that you dream of becoming a mechanical engineer?

9 JIN: Since I was a second grader in elementary school. Before that, I dreamed of
10 becoming a pilot, but when I was in second grade, I read robot-related experiments
11 in books. Reading them makes me have the dream.

(Original utterances in Korean; from Interview on May 4, 2014)

Because he could not count on family to help him achieve his dream (e.g., attending private institutes or looking for information about how to become a mechanical engineer), Jinsoo believed that studying would save him from the cycle of poverty. Thus, although he just started his first year in middle school, Jinsoo already began to prepare to apply for Incheon Science High School, a specialized school designed for gifted students in math and science, by attending admission presentations and talking to his senior peers going to the school.

Despite his academic achievement, love of math and science, and identification as a “gifted” student, Jinsoo was barely free from the “multicultural” label. Some of his friends, including “smart” or “gifted” ones, expressed their amazement that Jinsoo was a hardworking, model student in school— in spite of his “multicultural” family background.

(3)

12 JIN: Sometimes, for example, when I had lunch with Jaesung, he said, “Hey, I’ve never

- 13 seen any multicultural child studying well like you. You are better [than anybody].”
- 14 RES: Oh did he REALLY say so?
- 15 JIN: YES. He says such thing.
- 16 RES: What do you feel when you hear such words?
- 17 JIN: Um.. I feel good.
- 18 RES: Feeling good? Why do you feel good, Jinsoo?
- 19 JIN: In school, there are more multicultural students, other than me.
- 20 RES: Yeah
- 21 JIN: Ha, you know he [Jaesung] says I’m better than Sookwan or others.
- 22 RES: So what you are saying is that although Sookwan is studying well, Jaesung chooses
- 23 you to be a high achiever and that makes you feel good?
- 24 JIN: So so I asked him, “Hey, isn’t Sookwan studying well?” [He said,] “Is he studying
- 25 well?”
- 26 RES: Oh
- 27 JIN: [Jaesung] seemed not to know that. He seemed not to know that.
- 28 RES: Ah ah so Jaesung talks about such thing while you guys have lunch together with
- 29 other peers? Or when you two have lunch?
- 30 JIN: Just two of us.
- 31 RES: So when you two have lunch=
- 32 JIN: =Of course. He has to be sensible.

(Original utterances in Korean; from Interview on December 14, 2014)

Excerpt 3 exhibits Jinsoo’s tangled attitude toward the “multicultural” label. Jaesung’s utterance clearly positioned Jinsoo as a “multicultural” child and reiterated the prevalent stereotypes about “multicultural” children that they are lagging behind in school (see Chapter 4). However, Jinsoo did not feel offended by Jaesung’s remark; instead, he felt good about being acknowledged and about being an exception to the stereotypes. At the same time, he showed his reluctance to reveal his family background to others, as his utterance, “He has to be sensible (Line 32),” signals. This reflects his awareness of various stereotypes about “multicultural” families and his anxiety about those stereotypes possibly shadowing him in school. Indeed, Jinsoo later confessed that the term was a burden, and came to a conclusion that it is his “destiny (*unmyeong*; 운명),” something he could not resist but had to endure.

- (4)
- 33 JIN: To me, the concept of multicultural is destiny.
- 34 RES: To me, the concept of multicultural is destiny. Why?
- 35 JIN: Um.. When I was born again⁷⁶, why was I unfortunately a multicultural child, of all
- 36 others? Until now, the probability of being born as a multicultural child is still very
- 37 small. But why was I chosen to be included in that small probability, of all things?
- 38 RES: Yeah.
- 39 JIN: So I thought, “Is it destiny? What was going on? What happened to me?”
- 40 RES: I see.
- 41 JIN: Thinking about this, I found that it is my destiny.
- 42 RES: Because it is something you can’t change?

⁷⁶ Jinsoo used the word, “rebirth (*hwansaeng*; 환생)” in Korean. This might be related to a doctrine in the Unification Church.

- 43 JIN: Exactly.
 44 RES: So that's why it is your destiny?
 45 JIN: Yes.
 46 RES: For better or worse, it is just your destiny?
 47 JIN: Just my destiny.
 48 RES: Um. So you are going to just accept it?
 49 JIN: Yes.
 50 RES: How would you accept it? How would you understand the label?
 51 JIN: I gain an advantage of learning other languages.
 52 RES: Um=
 53 JIN: =When I hear that, that is the advantage. Ah the multicultural label at least feels
 54 better.

(Original utterances in Korean; from Interview on December 14, 2014)

In particular, by using passive voice in describing his relationship with the term “multicultural” (Lines 35- 39), Jinsoo implied that his “multicultural” identity was an imposed, inevitable one that he could not change (i.e., “destiny”). Jinsoo’s explanation demonstrates how intensely he attempted to make sense of the label. And reiterating what he heard about the benefit of being surrounded by multiple languages at home and in society as a “multicultural” child (Lines 51 to 54), Jinsoo consoled himself that being labeled as “multicultural” would have at least an advantage. In particular, he used active voice that he would “*gain* an advantage of learning other languages” (Line 51, my emphasis), revealing that he exerted his agency in understanding his “multicultural” identity.

In fact, Jinsoo argued that he was in a more beneficial environment for learning the English language. As the excerpt below shows, the simple fact that his Filipina mother spoke English allowed him to presume that he could learn the language without expending too much time and energy.

- (5)
 55 RES: Then Jinsoo, what is the best thing about the fact that your mother was not born in
 56 Korea?
 57 JIN: I can learn English easily.
 58 RES: Do you use English a lot at home?
 59 JIN: No. At home? No. It's not like that, but somehow I would be similar to my mother
 60 so when I study English, I feel like I can master it only after putting a small amount
 61 of effort.

(Original utterances in Korean; from Interview on May 4, 2014)

Jinsoo’s attitude toward English learning did not change much across 2014. When I prompted him to play a metaphor game during the last interview (i.e., “what does [this person] mean to you?”), Jinsoo repeated that his mother was his “English learning assistant” (Line 65).

- (6)
 62 RES: What does your mother mean to you?
 63 JIN: Ah..
 64 RES: @@@

- 65 JIN: Well. To me (1.0) My mother means my English learning assistant. To me.
 66 RES: Ah-ha. Is that because your mother speaks English?
 67 JIN: Yes.
 68 RES: I see. Then // what does your father mean to you? //
 69 JIN: // Yes. We are helping each other. //
 70 RES: Um
 71 JIN: My mother sometimes does not know the Korean language.
 72 RES: Yes.
 73 JIN: Yesterday, too. She asked me to check if there is any typo when she wrote a self-
 74 introduction in Korean for volunteer work.
 75 RES: I see. She asked you to take a look at her writing in Korean.
 76 JIN: Yeah.
 77 RES: Then in turn, your mother helps your English homework?
 78 JIN: Of course.
 79 RES: So language exchanges..

(Original utterances in Korean; from Interview on December 14, 2014)

To Jinsoo, his mother seemed to derive meaning from her English proficiency. Moreover, he characterized the relationship with his mother as interdependent—namely, Jinsoo helped his mother when she needed the native speaker of Korean while he learned English from his mother when he had English-related questions. In sum, the discourse that “multicultural” children are in a more advantageous situation to learn languages due to their foreign mothers appears to have led Jinsoo to be more optimistic about becoming a Korean-English bilingual speaker. This bilingual potentiality and his Filipina mother allow him to dream something that is not easily imaginable by his “non-multicultural” peers: locating the Philippines as an alternative dwelling place and as a stepping-stone to study in the United States.

Jinsoo’s Goals to Go to the United States (via the Philippines)

Jinsoo’s strategy to “go global” was closely related to his mother’s country of origin, for his Filipina mother brought him to the Philippines several times and proposed to him that he study there.

(7)

- 80 RES: Do you have any intention to live in the Philippines?
 81 JIN: For my study, yes.
 82 RES: Oh so you want to study abroad?
 83 JIN: Yes.
 84 RES: What kind of studying abroad? For college? When?
 85 JIN: I don’t know about that, but when I am asked to study abroad, I would go with
 86 some money.
 87 RES: Are you saying that if your mother asks you to go to the Philippines, you would go?
 88 Or did she ask you to go to the Philippines and study there?
 89 JIN: When I was young, she said that but not anymore. She doesn’t say that these days.
 90 RES: Ah so when you were young, she asked you to study in the Philippines.
 91 JIN: Yes.
 92 RES: Then at that time did you want to study in the Philippines?

- 93 JIN: At that time, I didn't want to.
 94 RES: Oh you didn't want to then. But now you think you can go to the Philippines.
 95 JIN: Yeah.

(Original utterances in Korean; from Interview on May 4, 2014)

Although “non-multicultural” children in Korea tended not to perceive the Philippines as a possible destination for their study (J. Kim, 2013; T. Kim, 2009),⁷⁷ Jinsoo from a young age vaguely conceptualized the Philippines as a place to go abroad for study.

Then it was August 2014 that Jinsoo's plan to go to the Philippines took shape. He read “*Robot Davinchi, ggum-eul seolgyehada* (로봇 다빈치, 꿈을 설계하다; Robot da Vinci, Design the dream),” written by Dennis Hong who was a professor in Virginia Tech in the Department of Mechanical Engineering. Jinsoo was impressed by Dennis Hong's humanoids and explanations of how robots can improve the life of blind people.

(8)

- 96 JIN: This book is written by Dennis Hong, a scientist who achieved a feat
 97 commensurate of the moon landing. The impact this book had on me is enormous.
 98 This person is a scientist at Virginia Tech and the founder of robotics research
 99 institute, RoMeLa. ... As I was reading the book, I searched for a kind of scientific
 101 achievement equal to the magnitude of a moon landing. And I found that it was the
 102 development of the first American humanoid HARLI. The development of HARLI
 103 was a significant achievement. ... Another achievement of his is the development
 104 of a robotic car for the blind. This has worldwide importance and is a source of
 105 hope for the blind because the impossible was made possible. Because Dennis
 106 Hong proclaimed that his achievements were the results of incessant research
 107 despite the accompanying hardships, I became a believer of the saying “The
 108 impossible is nothing for humanity.”

(Original writing in Korean; from Jinsoo's Book Log on October 11, 2014)

Because the book addressed his interests and gave fundamental reasons to research robots, Jinsoo identified Dennis Hong as his role model. Jinsoo proudly reported on November 2, 2014 that he changed his cell phone background image to Dennis Hong's image. Indeed, from August to the end of the year, Jinsoo's interests in Dennis Hong and his work never ended and ultimately, he began to more strongly express his goals to go to the United States and work with him (see Excerpt 9).

While visualizing his study in the United States, Jinsoo encountered the issue of English learning and had to concretize how he would master the language.⁷⁸ Specifically, he decided on the United States as the ideal place to study, and planned to take advantage of the Philippines as a temporary place to learn English. In the following transcript, Jinsoo explained why learning

⁷⁷ Many “non-multicultural” children have a tendency to prefer the United States (and other “inner-circle” English-speaking countries) or Mainland China due to the nation-states' political and economic power.

⁷⁸ Prior to Jinsoo's concretization of how to master English, he was aware of the symbolic value of English in Korea. For example, he explained that English would be a key to get a more prestigious job in society, to study abroad, and to make Korea a developed country. Moreover, because he felt that English sounded fancier than Korean, he sometimes posted some English sentences on his social networking sites (e.g., “I like cube and pen. Today is a wonderful day” from Fieldnotes on May 21, 2014).

English was more important than learning Tagalog and why he was tempted to go to the Philippines:

(9)

- 109 RES: You don't yet want to learn Tagalog, do you?
 110 JIN: Not yet.. Not yet.. @@ But I have to study English hard.
 111 RES: Oh well. Why are you trying to study English so hard?
 112 JIN: For the globalized world.
 113 RES: Oh my. Tell me what you think, not what others think.
 114 JIN: @@@ Um.. When I went to Korea University thanks to your sister, she told me
 115 that the majority of research articles are published in the United States so they are
 116 written in English. So I thought to myself, wow, I have to study English hard. That
 117 is one reason. The other reason is that in terms of diplomacy, when we receive
 118 information about the United States such as prices or other information, it is ALL
 119 English. And when you want to speak, you have to do English. In addition, for
 120 example, when you study abroad, you have to speak in English. That makes me
 121 think that I have to learn English, and that becomes another reason.
 122 RES: So are you thinking of studying abroad?
 123 JIN: Probably, probably. I'm thinking.
 ...
 124 RES: What is your concern?
 125 JIN: Whether I will study abroad in the Philippines or not.
 126 RES: Like whether you want to go to the Philippines or to the United States?
 127 JIN: Yes, studying abroad. You know schools in the Philippines use English in classes.
 ...
 128 RES: But why do you want to go to the Philippines if you study abroad? Why are you
 129 thinking of going?
 130 JIN: Environment.
 131 RES: Environment? A better environment? Didn't you say that the Philippines is
 132 dangerous?
 133 JIN: What?
 134 RES: You said that the Philippines is dangerous before.
 135 JIN: Only at night.
 136 RES: Ah during the daytime, it has a better environment compared to here?
 137 JIN: Um it is not about safety but the natural environment.
 138 RES: Oh the natural environment is good. And?
 139 JIN: Um.. And I have to do some English.
 140 RES: To learn English?
 141 JIN: Yes.

(Original utterances in Korean; from Fieldnotes on November 16, 2014)

By reflecting on his visit to research laboratories in a prestigious Korean university in November 2014, Jinsoo reinforced his need to study English harder (Lines 114 to 121). Then he added that English was necessary to study abroad. At the end, Jinsoo revealed that the Philippines was appealing because its schools used English as a medium of instruction and thus he could learn English. This means that he regarded the Philippines as a place to learn English rather than

mechanical engineering or robotics. Interestingly, as Excerpt 10 discloses, Jinsoo envisioned himself using English to communicate with “American foreigners” and preferred to learn American English to British or Filipino English—even though his learning of English might be carried out in the Philippines.

(10)

- 142 RES: Then when you learn English, to communicate with whom are you learning the
 143 language?
 144 JIN: Foreigners.
 145 RES: Foreigners. What group of foreigners?
 146 JIN: American foreigners.
 ...
 147 JIN: [Because the Philippines used to be colonized by the Great Britain and by the
 148 United States,] Some people use British English while others use American English
 149 in the Philippines.
 150 RES: Then when you go to the Philippines, what variety of English do you want to learn?
 151 JIN: American.
 152 RES: American English. So you just love the United States?
 153 JIN: @@@ Not sure.
 154 RES: Not sure?
 155 JIN: I think I turned into like that after reading Dennis Hong’s book.
 156 RES: After learning about Dennis Hong..
 157 JIN: I somehow want to study under his supervision.
 158 RES: Oh at the university in Virginia?
 159 JIN: Um // just //
 160 RES // Virginia Tech? //
 161 JIN: Yeah.

(Original utterances in Korean; from Interview on December 14, 2014)

The reason for Jinsoo to learn American English in the Philippines was to work with Dennis Hong, who would be able to allow him to study in the United States and teach him robotics. This suggests that the Philippines—the country of his mother’s origin which was colonized by the United States for approximately 50 years and where English is the official language along with Tagalog—functioned as the stepping-stone to go to the United States.

The Philippines as a Tourist Site Learning English

Jinsoo’s imagination went beyond the Korean territory and expanded to the Philippines and to the United States. However, his perception of the Philippines and languages in the nation-state demonstrated the global power structure in a dramatic way. Although the Philippines was introduced as an alternative place to learn English, Jinsoo constructed the country as a dangerous “tourist site.” Thinking about his visit to Cebu—his mother’s hometown where Jinsoo’s grandparents and other family members lived, Jinsoo described the Philippines as “hell.”

(11)

- 162 RES: I wish I could go to the Philippines when you go there in September.⁷⁹
 163 JIN: I feel like it is hell.
 164 RES: Why? The Philippines?
 165 JIN: I hate bugs, but there are many bugs. And I don't like summer, but it's summer
 166 there.
 167 RES: But once you are there, wouldn't you feel more familiar with it because you have
 168 already been there?
 169 JIN: (3.0) Feels awkward.
 170 RES: Feeling awkward?
 171 JIN: After feeling awkward for a week, it gets better but I just can't deal with bugs.
 172 Especially my grandmother's house is in a rural area, especially in the middle of
 173 forest, maybe a side of forest, so bugs are oh my.
 174 RES: Full of bugs?
 175 JIN: Yeah, shoot.

(Original utterance in Korean; from Fieldnotes on August 17, 2014)

In similar fashion, as Jinsoo's trip to the Philippines approached, he characterized Manila as a dangerous city and Cebu as a tourist site in a rural area.

(12)

- 176 RES: Are you going to Manila?
 177 JIN: Yes.
 178 RES: Can't you go to your grandmother's place?
 179 JIN: I have to be careful with rape.
 180 RES: You will be fine.
 181 JIN: But you know there's a possibility of my pocket being picked.
 182 RES: Ah.. Then you have to be careful.
 183 JIN: Cebu is free of pickpocketing.
 184 RES: So Cebu is safe?
 185 JIN: Cebu is just a rural area. It is a tourist site.
 186 RES: It is a tourist site. I want to go to Cebu.
 187 JIN: But Manila's air pollution is horrible because it is a city.
 188 RES: Really? It should be quite a city!
 189 JIN: Yes. You know there're traffic jams. Traffic jams.

(Original utterances in Korean; from Fieldnotes on November 2, 2014)

By comparing Cebu with Manila, which he characterized as crowded and dangerous with air pollution and traffic tie-ups, Jinsoo presented Cebu as a more peaceful, clean tourist site in a rural area. But noticeable in Jinsoo's description was that the Philippines was not a place that he

⁷⁹ Due to the marginalized status of "multicultural" families and children in Korean society, Jinsoo had multiple opportunities to go to the Philippines for free. Government-funded institutions and other private or religious agencies have launched projects that send "multicultural" children to their mothers' homelands so that these children would work as a "bridge" between Korea and their mothers' countries of origin. By using these opportunities, Jinsoo visited the Philippines multiple times. In November 2014, he went to the Philippines for six days via a non-profit organization; Jinsoo also registered the volunteer trip to the Philippines via the Unification Church in January 2015. When I referred to "September" in the transcript, it was the Unification Church trip that used to be scheduled in September 2014 but rescheduled in January 2015.

hoped to study to become a robot-scientist. Ultimately, Jinsoo identified the Philippines with the word, “tourism”:

(13)

190 RES: Then what does the Philippines mean to you?

191 JIN: The Philippines means to me... um.. (sigh) Tourism.

192 RES: What? A site for tourism? (sigh)

193 JIN: @@@

(Original utterances in Korean; from Interview on December 14, 2014)

Jinsoo’s attitude toward the Philippines corresponded to the description of his trip to the Philippines in 2014. His keyword was “fun.” After coming back to Korea, he wrote on his social networking site, “The Philippines... It was fun” (from Fieldnotes on November 16, 2014). Jinsoo explained that he visited some famous tourist sites in the Philippines, including an aquarium, the biggest shopping mall in Asia, and one of the most famous Filipino international schools. He shared some pictures of food that he had eaten in the Philippines such as various kinds of meat and mangos. Jinsoo’s travel log, which was required by the funding agency, also was full of his excitement regarding his visit to tourist sites.

His perception of the Philippines—not as a place to study but as a place to enjoy the sites—seemed inseparable from his attitude toward Tagalog and Bisaya (i.e., a regional language in Cebu). He did not feel any need to learn Filipino languages because they were not useful and because he did not want to put his time into learning them (e.g., from Interview on May 4, 2014; from Fieldnotes on November 16, 2014). This attitude did not change even after interacting with other “multicultural” children who were proficient in Tagalog, English, and Korean.

(14)

194 RES: So are they [other “multicultural” students in the trip] able to speak their mothers’ language?

196 JIN: They do speak the language.

197 RES: Oh do they speak Tagalog?

198 JIN: Yes. Two high school girls are the oldest ones. One is from School A and the other is from School B, but those girls are SO proficient in Tagalog and they even explained our trip in Tagalog to others.

201 RES: Ah so they are proficient enough to explain the trip.

202 JIN: Yes. Extremely proficient. SERIOUSLY. WOW. Goosebumps.

203 RES: How many students were there who couldn’t speak Tagalog?

204 JIN: Including me, approximately fifty percent? The total number of students was twenty.

206 RES: So how did you feel about that?

207 JIN: I was nervous, but it was fun.

208 RES: No I mean you should be nervous and fun, but what do you think about the fact that you are included in those ten students who could not speak the mother’s language?

210 JIN: Ah about that. So so. Regarding that, I didn’t care about it, but I thought the trip was comfortable and good. It’s vacation. I went to Manila Ocean Park where even my mother has never visited.

213 RES: Really?

- 214 JIN: It is a very famous place. Aquarium. I bought some souvenirs, too.
(Original utterances in Korean; from Fieldnotes on November 16, 2014)

Although Jinsoo expressed his amazement when he witnessed several peers socializing with Filipino people in Tagalog, this did not motivate him to learn the language. Rather, Jinsoo came back to the touristic aspect of the Philippines, diminishing the value and meaning of learning his mother's language(s). In contrast to his attitudes toward learning of Tagalog or Bisaya, Jinsoo reported that he tried to use English with people in the Philippines because he wanted to practice the language. During our last interview, Jinsoo reaffirmed that he hoped to learn English rather than Tagalog if he studied in the Philippines.

(15)

- 215 RES: When you go to the Philippines, do you want to learn its languages and cultures?
216 JIN: Yes, primarily English.
217 RES: So you want to learn primarily English?
218 JIN: Yes.
...
219 RES: When you go to the Philippines for your study, don't you have any intention to
220 learn Tagalog?
221 JIN: No, I don't want to learn it.
222 RES: (sigh) Boy, you're very determined.
223 JIN: @@@

(Original utterance in Korean; from Interview on December 14, 2014)

Unfortunately, Jinsoo's attitudes toward the Philippines and Filipino languages were taught and inherited by his own Filipina mother. His mother—irrespective of her position as a multilingual speaker who knew Tagalog, Bisaya, English, and Korean—hoped Jinsoo would become a proficient Korean and English speaker. She argued that the two languages were essential for her son to be successful in Korea and in the world. In particular, she belittled her home language (i.e., the Bisaya language) by saying, "Speaking English well is enough because people in the Philippines all understand English. So I will be happy if Jinsoo speaks good English. Only English and Korean similarly" (from Interview on April 21, 2014). She added that other people in the Philippines would not understand the Bisaya language, for it was not used in other regions.

Indeed, when Jinsoo's mother encountered her children's insistence on using Korean alone, she utilized her proficiency in English to justify her position as a Filipina mother in Korea.

(16)

- 224 RES: Were there any instances that your children did not like you using multiple
225 languages or code-switching at home? Or did they ever say, "Use Korean," to
226 you?
227 MOT: Yes. A long time ago, my children said, "You're living here in Korea so you have
228 to use the Korean language."
229 RES: Oh so they said that?
230 MOT: Yes. I was really shocked. Especially Jinsoo's sister.
231 RES: Oh.. Especially Jinsoo's sister..

- 232 MOT: Yes. So I told them, “Your mother can’t master the Korean language so how about
 233 mixing languages? You have to understand some English, too.”
 234 RES: Then would the reason why you mix more English with Korean rather than mixing
 235 Filipino languages with Korean be that you think English is more important?
 236 MOT: Yes yes yes. English is also important so I only did with English, which is
 237 important.
 ...
 238 RES: You know because Jinsoo is doing really well in school so I’m curious how you
 239 raise him.
 240 MOT: @@ I read a lot of books to him.
 241 RES: Korean books or English books?
 242 MOT: Both.
 243 RES: Have you ever read books written in Filipino languages?
 244 MOT: No, [not] at that time. Only English storybooks.

(Original utterances in Korean; from Interview on December 14, 2014)

In the situation that she was a non-native speaker of Korean and occupied the precarious status in society as a foreign bride, the option to teach her own children Filipino languages might be considered unthinkable. Then she strategically used her proficiency in English to be recognized as a legitimate interlocutor and caregiver. The way she utilized English to signal her position at home could instill the symbolic power of English in Jinsoo.

Overall, Jinsoo’s understanding of the Philippines was no more than a vacation spot, and he believed that it was not relevant to learn Tagalog, the official language of the country. Similarly, because Cebu was described as “a tourist site” in a rural area of the Philippines, regardless of the values associated with the Bisaya language (e.g., his mother’s home language, a means of communication with his Filipino family members), Jinsoo did not see the importance of learning the language. The only aspect of the Philippines that attracted Jinsoo’s attention was the other official language of the country, English, that reflected the colonial history of the Philippines with the United States. In other words, Jinsoo tried to use the Philippines as a stepping-stone to reach the United States. Although his aspiration of becoming a cosmopolitan citizen by creatively responding to challenges he faced and by visualizing his future in different parts of the world, his imagination seems to reinforce the existing political, social, and linguistic hierarchies in the world.

Heedong’s Story: Expanding the Scope of Life to Vietnam and to the United States A Unique Demographic Feature

Heedong was a 15-year-old boy who started the ninth grade in 2014. Like other “multicultural” teenagers in this project, he was not visible as “multicultural.” His appearance and use of the Korean language did not distinguish him from his “non-multicultural” peers; he had several close friends in his classroom, interacted with other peers he met in middle school, and maintained a close relationship with his best friends in elementary school. Although his academic profile was not impressive, he was not struggling (see Table 7.2).

Table 7.2 Heedong’s Academic Achievement in 2014

	1 st Midterm	1 st Final	2 nd Midterm	2 nd Final
Korean	72	76	59	79

English	85	90	82	88
Math	100	100	100	100
Social Studies	96	69	75	90
Science	75	0 ⁸⁰	81	56
History	74	60	39	62
Chinese Characters	70	53	41	62
Ethics	N/A	77	N/A	78
Physical Education	N/A	88	N/A	77
Music	N/A	89	N/A	87
Average Scores	81.7	70.2	68.14	77.9

Note 1: Each subject had a maximum scale of 100 points.

Note 2: Heedong was ranked around 120-130th out of 280 students in middle school.

In fact, Heedong demonstrated an outstanding performance on math by getting perfect scores across four exams in 2014 and by winning the first prize at a school-wide math competition. At the end of the school year, his homeroom teacher characterized Heedong as “a decent, sincere student” (from Interview on December 21, 2014).

Unlike other aspects of Heedong, he had a unique demographic feature among my study participants: His father was half-Korean and half-Vietnamese, for he was also born into a transnational family. He lived in Vietnam more than a decade and received all his education in Vietnam from elementary school to high school. Heedong’s father perceived the Vietnamese language as one of his home languages along with Korean, and the Vietnamese language functioned as a means of communication with his wife⁸¹. Both parents’ proficiency in Vietnamese allowed Heedong to grow up hearing the language at home, and prevented the couple from having any language barriers. However, the family suffered from financial hardship that was attributable to the father’s long-term unemployment, his delayed wages when he worked, and inability to retrieve the money the family loaned to friends. The family lived on the earnings of Heedong’s mother, who worked for a Multicultural Family Support Center as a translator and interpreter.

These circumstances seemed to guide Heedong in thinking about his Vietnamese mother in Korea, his unemployed father, and the “multicultural” label. First, Heedong felt ambivalent about his mother. On the one hand, he was well aware of his mother’s difficulty living in Korea as a foreign bride. He became more independent (e.g., preparing his own meals), explained some difficult Korean words for her, and helped her when she prepared a Vietnamese culture booth at a festival. On the other hand, Heedong also complained about his mother’s thick Vietnamese accent in Korean and her “know-it-all” attitude. This discontent was particularly conspicuous when Heedong’s peers visited his place.

(17)

245 RES: Is there any uncomfortable thing because your mother was born in a foreign

⁸⁰ Heedong received “0” on his Science final exam in Spring because he was accused of cheating. Although nobody witnessed Heedong’s cheating, one of his classmates reported that Heedong’s desk had some science-related scribbles after the exam. Thus, Heedong was asked to come before the guidance committee and received 0 points on the exam. Heedong’s homeroom teacher reported that she and her colleagues could not save Heedong because of other students’ “suspicious eyes” and possible cheating in the future.

⁸¹ As described in Chapter 3, Heedong’s mother was a bilingual speaker who was proficient in both Vietnamese and Korean.

- 246 country?
 247 HEE: Sometimes my mother can't understand what my friends talk about.
 248 RES: She can't understand your friends' words when they visit your place?
 249 HEE: Yeah, they have to speak slowly.
 250 RES: I see. They have to speak slowly.
 251 HEE: Or they have to say the same thing twice.
 252 RES: So you think that not having a smooth communication in Korean with your mother
 253 is an uncomfortable thing.
 254 HEE: Yes.

(Original utterances in Korean; from Interview on May 13, 2014)

The idea that his mother did not belong to the linguistically homogenized Korean society led Heedong to occasionally behave rudely to her (e.g., responding to mother's questions grumpily if responding at all or refusing to be hugged or touched). His mother was cognizant of her son's attitude toward her and described him as "considerate" but "blunt" as well as sometimes "obnoxious" (from Interview on May 8, 2014).

Second, Heedong felt sympathetic for his father who constantly studied construction design at home despite his unemployment. Heedong had never blamed him for the family's financial hardship; to secure some money to hang out with his peers, he saved some of his allowance⁸² by going to and from school on foot. However, because of the similarities that Heedong shared with his father (e.g., born into transnational marriage families, learning both Korean and Vietnamese at home, holding Korean citizenship), Heedong seemed to use his father's case as a lesson. Specifically, Heedong's goal of his life was to have "a stable job"—irrespective of the type of job—so that he could live without financial worries (from Fieldnotes on March 11, 2014). Heedong asked me for some examples of stable jobs, searched for career information on the Internet (e.g., how to be a banker), and mapped out his path beyond high school (e.g., vocational training or entering college). Because Heedong's desire to have a steady job was so strong, he planned ahead what he could and should do in the future as opposed to what he wanted to do.

Third, possibly because both parents were closely related to Vietnam, Heedong associated the term "multicultural" with an outsider not fully belonging to Korea and its culture. Defining a "multicultural" child as "a son of a foreigner" and "a special child" who is "mixed" (from Interview on May 13, 2014), Heedong wondered if he was "different from" or "unfamiliar to" other "non-multicultural" children in Korea and ultimately made his family background a "secret"⁸³ (from Interview on December 18, 2014). Yet, paradoxically, he revealed a strong sense of affiliation with the "multicultural" category.

(18)

- 255 RES: But why do you think the word "multicultural" is necessary [if you are Korean, use
 256 Korean as the first language, and look Korean]?
 257 HEE: It is not me without the label.
 258 RES: It is not you without the label?

⁸² Heedong was given an allowance of \$40 a month.

⁸³ Only a handful of his best friends in elementary school knew Heedong's family background. He argued that advertising his "multicultural" identity widely when interacting with others was not necessary because he did not want them to have any stereotypes associated with him.

- 259 HEE: I'm Korean, but my mother is Vietnamese.
 260 RES: So to refer to who you are, you think using the word "multicultural" is okay.
 261 HEE: But wouldn't the word "mixed [*honhyeol*; 혼혈]" sound more luxurious?
 262 RES: Does that word sound more luxurious? Compared to "multicultural"?
 263 HEE: Yes.
 264 RES: Then do you prefer to be called as a "mixed"?
 265 HEE: Not necessarily bad.

(Original utterances in Korean; from Interview on May 13, 2014)

As Lines 257-259 show, Heedong argued that the "multicultural" label explained his social existence because his mother was Vietnamese although he was Korean. This positioning implies that even though he did not like the "multicultural" label (i.e., he felt that it stigmatized him and could lead to bullying or discrimination), he accepted it as the identity that Korean society imposed upon him.

Knocking on Doors of Vietnam and the United States

Heedong's embodiment of the "multicultural" identity seemed to be influenced by his exposure to the Vietnamese language at home (e.g., hearing Vietnamese when his parents talked to each other and his mother's mixing of Vietnamese and Korean when communicating with Heedong). This reminded Heedong of his parents' Vietnamese background and eventually reinforced the importance of learning the Vietnamese language.

(19)

- 266 RES: Then do you use the Vietnamese language to Heedong at home? Or do you use the
 267 Korean language alone?
 268 MOT: Both.
 269 RES: You are mixing the two?
 270 MOT: Yes.
 271 RES: When you and your husband talk, do you only use the Vietnamese language?
 272 MOT: Yes.
 273 RES: Then your children understand what you talk about and learn=
 274 MOT: =In our daily life, there is no line between children and parents. My children all
 275 understand Vietnamese.
 276 RES: So when you use Vietnamese=
 277 MOT: =Yes, they all understand.
 278 RES: Does Heedong respond to you in Korean? Or does he respond to you ever? @@
 279 MOT: He answers in Korean but when I ask him to use Vietnamese, then he uses it
 280 COMICALLY. In the past, when I asked him to do that, he said, "No." But these
 281 days, he says in Vietnamese.
 282 RES: Oh these days he=
 283 MOT: =Yes, he says in Vietnamese. And he uses it in a funny way, like a comedian. @@

(Original utterances in Korean; from Interview on May 8, 2014)

As Heedong's mother said, Heedong grasped what his parents conversed in Vietnamese and used Vietnamese if necessary. He also reported that he communicated with his families in Vietnam in Vietnamese without much difficulty. Indeed, his proficiency in Vietnamese let him enjoy

multiple bilingual programs fully supported by nongovernmental organizations or large corporations in Korea. For example, he participated in a Vietnamese Saturday School for a few years; he was also selected as a “gifted bilingual child” by a corporation, stayed in Vietnam for a month, and learned the Vietnamese language at no cost in January 2014.

Characterizing the Vietnamese language as “a necessary language I need to master eventually” (from Interview on December 18, 2014), Heedong emphasized the intertwined relationship of himself, his “multicultural” identity, and his proficiency in Vietnamese.

(20)

284 HEE: The reasons why I learn the Vietnamese language are not only because it is my
285 mother’s language, but also because I have to know the language at least to some
286 extent to communicate with my mother’s family in Vietnam when I make a visit.
287 In addition, these days, trade and exchange between Vietnam and Korea become
288 very active so the Vietnamese language is needed for my college or job
289 application. If I’m not good at Vietnamese, when I go to Vietnam for pleasure or
290 when I visit my relatives’ house, there can be a communication breakdown. And I
291 can’t easily explain what my mother does not understand in Korean. Although I
292 wouldn’t have trouble living in Korea without Vietnamese, because I am
293 multicultural, I will learn Vietnamese well.

(Original writing in Korean; from Diary on June 4, 2014)

As the statement “because I am multicultural, I will learn Vietnamese well” (Lines 292 to 293) shows, Heedong conceptualized that his “multicultural” identity necessitated Vietnamese because the language functioned as an important link with his family members. Although he thought that his Vietnamese proficiency would not be essential in Korea (Lines 291 to 292), he did convey a sense of responsibility in learning Vietnamese. It is almost as if he embraced the stereotypes associated with “multicultural” families in Korea. In addition, Heedong understood the Vietnamese language as a form of capital that could serve as a source of profit (see Duchêne & Heller, 2012). He argued that his Vietnamese proficiency would grant him access to more prestigious universities or companies. According to him, those institutions would actively recruit individuals who were proficient in less-commonly taught languages such as Vietnamese to survive in the context of globalization. This demonstrates how Heedong calculated the value of his linguistic resources and designed possible strategies he would use for his future. What is worth noting in Heedong’s writing is that he took risks by framing his Vietnamese-user identity as a consumer of Vietnam. Namely, Vietnamese would be needed when he visited Vietnam “for pleasure” (Line 289). Such characterization of Vietnam as “a preferred vacation spot” rather than a place to study or work was repeated in the first half of 2014 (e.g., Interview on May 13, 2014).

However, after his father decided to move to Vietnam to work in June 2014, Heedong began to regard Vietnam differently. Vietnam was considered an alternative place that he could go to find a more stable job, as his father did. One of the first visible signs of his attitudinal change was his social networking site post on June 10, 2014. He had a chance to visit Vietnam⁸⁴ and uploaded a photograph of an airplane with the phrase, “Will be back with success.” Then on July 29, 2014, Heedong again brought up the issue of “success” in relation to Vietnam.

⁸⁴ This trip to Vietnam was co-supported by a government agency and an NGO. This program was similar to what Jinsoo participated in when he visited the Philippines in 2014.

(21)

- 294 HEE: Can one succeed when going to Vietnam?
 295 RES: (2.0) Why? Are you worrying about your father if he can be successful or not?
 296 HEE: No, I'm just thinking that although one earns money in Vietnam, isn't income
 297 there lower than the income here? ... The currency rate is different.
 298 RES: True, the currency rate is different. But wouldn't your father think that he could
 299 succeed in Vietnam if he goes there?
 300 HEE: Isn't that why he moved there?
 301 RES: That seems to be why. But I assume that he moved to Vietnam because
 302 circumstances can be improved. Your mother also seems to have a challenging
 303 time due to family separation, but she appears to believe that for his life, the
 304 decision was inevitable.
 305 HEE: (1.0) A couple of days after he moved to Vietnam, we created that. What is it?
 306 Every Vietnamese house has this. You know something like altar. Candle? Is that
 307 right? Incense. We created that at home, over there.
 308 RES: To pray for your father?
 309 HEE: Yeah, it seems so.

(Original utterances in Korean; from Fieldnotes on July 29, 2014)

In the process of making sense of his father's decision to move to Vietnam from various perspectives (e.g., earning, currency rate, family, and quality of life), Heedong started more actively visualizing Vietnam as a possible place to work. Throughout the last half of the year, Heedong initiated many conversations about types of high school or college majors beneficial to him, wages of various professions (e.g., banker, logistics employee, and international trader), and his possible career paths in both Korea and Vietnam. This means that Heedong, who was threatened by stereotypes about "multicultural" families, enjoyed a unique privilege in imagining working in Vietnam where few "non-multicultural" children in Korea envisioned themselves going.

In our last interview in December 2014, Heedong made it clear that Vietnam could be his next stop.

(22)

- 310 RES: Do you still think of working in Vietnam?
 311 HEE: Yeah.
 312 RES: Why?
 313 HEE: No jobs.
 314 RES: What?
 315 HEE: I think I no longer have that idea.
 316 RES: You no longer have that idea? Do you just want to live in Korea?
 317 HEE: No, I'll just work in Korea.
 ...
 318 RES: Then if things are going wrong in Korea, where do you think you first want to go?
 319 HEE: Tentatively, I will look into Vietnam.
 320 RES: You know how things work in Vietnam.
 321 HEE: Yeah, but can't I work in the United States?
 322 RES: In the United States? You can work, you can work.

(Original utterances in Korean; from Interview on December 18, 2014)

In lines 310 to 317, Heedong attempted to say that he would go to Vietnam if he did not have a stable job in Korea. When I did not understand his words and asked him to explain what he said further, he expressed his resolution to find a job and work in Korea. Because I was puzzled after hearing Heedong's remarks, I later came up with a reading that centers on the possibility of going to Vietnam if his life in Korea did not go as he planned. Then he commented that Vietnam would be the first place to look for solutions and surprisingly, he added that the United States could be another possibility for him. This particular excerpt of our interview indicates that Heedong constantly weighed the pros and the cons of his possible career paths in different parts of the world. For example, he expressed his willingness to go to Vietnam only if he did not have a stable job in Korea; due to the excessive influence of the U.S. on Korea and the emphasis of English education in school, he posed a question of whether he could work in the U.S. This suggests that Heedong utilized his linguistic resources—Korean and Vietnamese as home languages in addition to English as a foreign language taught in school—to navigate his relationship with Korea, Vietnam, and the United States and to assess what would give him advantage and honor.

Sources of Heedong's Imagination

Heedong's contemplation of Vietnam or the United States as a possible destination was inseparable from the following three factors: his parents' transnational scope for movement, his mother's effort to find quality but complimentary educational programs for Heedong, and the global human resources discourse around him. In the first place, Heedong's parents contributed to the transnational migration since 1960s and did not loosen their Korean and Vietnamese networks in Korea and Vietnam. Heedong's father moved to Vietnam when he was six years old and came back to Korea after finishing his secondary education in Vietnam. While working in Korea for decades, he made some trips to Vietnam and married a Vietnamese woman. When Heedong's father suffered from Korea's unstable job market and family's financial hardship, he contacted some of his friends and colleagues in Vietnam to find a job and returned to Vietnam in 2014. Similarly, as a Vietnamese woman who did not know a word of Korean and who had never been to Korea, Heedong's mother migrated to Korea to marry a man and gave birth to two boys. Furthermore, she not only kept close ties with her family members in Vietnam, but also built a network with Vietnamese migrants in Korea by establishing an organization for them. Importantly, she had an idea of running a business with her sons in Vietnam and left open the possibility of dividing her time between Korea and Vietnam when she got old.

(23)

- 323 MOT: Um.. You know there are many Vietnamese people who expect to have a lot of
324 resources in Korea. Having a lot of hopes. But I'm different. To me, Vietnam and
325 Korea are the same. They all have good things and bad things. <un> xxxxxx </un>
326 If you go to Vietnam without money, it's also not possible to live there.
327 RES: Yeah, without money, it's hard to live anywhere.
328 MOT: But if Korea is more stable now, we can raise our kids more and better. And we
329 hope to have better paying jobs.
330 RES: Um.. Then do you have any intention to return to Vietnam and live there? I mean
331 to Vietnam.. Your husband speaks Vietnamese and went to school in Vietnam so

- 332 wouldn't your family live more comfortably if you live in Vietnam?
 333 MOT: When I become old.
 334 RES: Do you want to live there when you become old?
 335 MOT: Um.. OR going back and forth.
 336 RES: Ah going back and forth..
 ...
 337 MOT: I sometimes ask my kids, "Why don't we go to Vietnam and open a business?"
 338 Then they say, "Okay! That's alright." I also ask them, "Do you want to marry a
 339 Vietnamese woman?" Then, "No no no."
 340 RES: @@

(Original utterances in Korean; from Interview on May 8, 2014)

As such, both parents' close connections with Vietnam and their worldviews (e.g., willingness to leave one's homeland to search for more opportunities) could inevitably influence Heedong's attitude toward life and his plans for the future.

Next, Heedong's mother expended a great deal of time and effort to find educational programs for Heedong that could expand his horizons. She emphasized that she carefully sifted "quality" programs from numerous low-quality programs for "multicultural" children. For instance, she enrolled Heedong at a Vietnamese Saturday School, and asked him to apply for several programs that sent him to Vietnam. Through his learning of the Vietnamese language and frequent visits to Vietnam, Heedong accumulated the sense of familiarity with the country and built an idea that he could sustain himself in Vietnam. Similarly, the way Heedong's mother joined my dissertation project also illustrated her ambition to teach Heedong English and inform him of the United States. Although she explicitly expressed her reluctance to take part in the project because she did not want her family to become "animals in a zoo" (from Fieldnotes on February 18, 2014), she could not set aside my proposal that I, who was a Korean-English bilingual speaker from the United States, would teach Heedong English as his mentor in 2014. She later explained that she decided to participate in the project because she felt chagrined by her limited support of Heedong's English learning (from Interview on May 8, 2014). Likewise, Heedong's mother made comments about the United States, particularly when I made visits to the country in 2014.

(24)

- 341 MOT: I envy you that you are going to the United States. @@ I also want to go to the
 342 United States. Many of my Vietnamese family members are living in the United
 343 States. ... Teacher, take Heedong with you to the United States! ... Will you bring
 344 Heedong to the United States if he collects many stamps⁸⁵? If you use that as a
 345 deal, then Heedong will study harder. @@ ... Is the United States more fun
 346 compared to Korea?

(Original utterances in Korean; from Fieldnotes on March 18, 2014)

- 347 MOT: Are you going to the United States AGAIN? You would spend a lot of money on
 348 plane tickets. ... Can't you bring Heedong to the United States?

(Original utterances in Korean; from Fieldnotes on October 7, 2014)

⁸⁵ I imprinted a motivational stamp (e.g., "Excellent") when Heedong did all his homework. I told him that once he gathered 10 stamps, I would treat him to some snack.

Heedong's mother not only half-jokingly requested me to bring Heedong to the U.S., but also showed me some pictures of her family in San Jose through her social networking site and told me their immigration stories. These comments and behaviors imply that Heedong would have been growing up hearing about his Vietnamese relatives in the United States and his mother's desire to visit the country, which overall allowed Heedong to think that the U.S. would not be an unreachable place to work (see Excerpt 23).

Last but by no means least, Heedong was surrounded by the global human resources discourse emerged in my analysis of newspaper articles (see Chapter 4). Owing to his Korean, Vietnamese, and English proficiency, Heedong was frequently encouraged to move between national boundaries. In particular, Heedong's schoolteachers asked him if he spoke Vietnamese with his mother, and they commented that he was in a more advantageous situation to learn multiple languages.

(25)

- 349 MSJ: When I talked to Heedong, I asked him, like a joke, "Heedong, do you speak
350 Vietnamese with your mother?" Then he said, "Yes, I use Vietnamese." I told him
351 "Wow, good for you! Then you speak Korean, speak Vietnamese, and if you study
352 harder, you will speak English well. You will have incredibly huge value. Wow, I
353 really envy you." I expressed my thoughts like that to him once.
354 RES: Then what did Heedong react to that?
355 MSJ: He smiled. At that time, he smiled and said, "Yes." So I told him, "Heedong, you
356 also know that you have incredibly huge value, right?" He said, "Yes." So I
357 continued to say that I hope he can develop his strength well. He agreed and
358 smiled again.

(Original utterances in Korean; from Interview on December 21, 2014)

The discourse about Heedong's multilingual potentiality that would enable him to take an active part on the global stage seemed to attract his attention to this dissertation project, because he was aware of his limited English proficiency and wanted to learn the language further. Indeed, he contended that English would be beneficial to him wherever he goes because of its status as "lingua franca of the world."

(26)

- 359 RES: Why do you learn English?
360 HEE: Lingua franca of the world?
361 RES: Lingua franca of the world..
362 HEE: So English will be beneficial to know.
363 RES: It is beneficial to know. Then if you have to choose only one language between
364 Vietnamese and English, for example=
365 HEE: =English!
366 RES: Will you choose English?
367 HEE: English is widely used in Vietnam as well.
368 RES: I see. Is English widely used in Vietnam as well?
369 HEE: When they [Vietnamese people] see Koreans, because they don't know Korean
370 but know how to use English, they use a lot of English.
371 RES: Then do they use English to you? When people there first see you?

- 372 HEE: Yeah.
 373 RES: Oh.. So you are a visible foreigner there so they don't speak the Vietnamese
 374 language to you.
 375 HEE: Right.
 376 RES: What do you feel when they speak English to you?
 377 HEE: But when I initiate the conversation in Vietnamese, like asking them in
 378 Vietnamese, "When do you close?" they respond to me in Vietnamese. They then
 379 know that I know Vietnamese. ... English is simply a tool.

(Original utterances in Korean; from Interview on May 13, 2014)

In the excerpt, Heedong mentioned the widespread presence of English in Vietnam. Although he had at least several reasons why he needed to learn Vietnamese well (see Excerpt 21), they became empty when he was asked to choose one between Vietnamese and English. In other words, while the global human resources discourse persuaded Heedong that Vietnamese is crucial to him as a "multicultural" child, it also (a) strengthened the linguistic hierarchy that English as "lingua franca of the world" is more valued and therefore (b) taught Heedong to prioritize English over Vietnamese in order to enjoy a rare privilege.

Overall, Heedong positioned himself and was also positioned by others as a Korean-Vietnamese-English multilingual speaker who could overcome his stigmatized family background in Korea and who could cross national boundaries freely through his linguistic resources. Nevertheless, similar to Jinsoo, Heedong formulated the United States as the object of yearning and described Vietnam as more of a tourist spot. This means that his construction of multilingual, cosmopolitan identity uncovered the existing political economic hierarchies among the three nation-states: The United States as the global super power and as the ultimate destination for success, Korea as the homeland to enjoy his ordinary life, and Vietnam as the alternative place to escape from Korea if his work in Korea did not go well. This is consistent with his understanding of the power of the English language as the global language. In sum, the hegemonic discourses about the United States and the English language leads Heedong to seek solutions for his challenges in Korea, but forces him to develop a strategic, instrumental mind-set that tends to deflate the value of Vietnam and the Vietnamese language.

The Tension between Cosmopolitan Citizenship and the Hegemony of the U.S.

The cases of these two "multicultural" teenagers dispute the prevailing stereotypes about them. Jinsoo and Heedong were proficient Korean speakers, and Heedong was also a proficient Vietnamese speaker. Neither of them lagged behind in school and both maintained positive relationships with peers and teachers. In fact, Jinsoo positioned himself and was positioned as a gifted student. Despite their families' low socioeconomic status, both of these youth actively navigated their futures in the context of globalization.

However, as the process of ideological becoming (Bakhtin, 1981) inherently entails friction, Jinsoo and Heedong also experienced "struggle and dialogic interrelationships" (p. 342) of competing discourses about globalization, multilingualism, and neoliberalism, to name a few. Among many, this section discusses the major, ongoing tension centering on the lives of Jinsoo and Heedong: becoming cosmopolitan citizens when surrounded by discourses about the United States as the land of opportunity.

On the one hand, the cases of Jinsoo and Heedong show their potentialities as cosmopolitan citizens by demonstrating their unique processes of understanding themselves,

their surroundings, and the world. Derived from a Greek term, *cosmopolitan* refers to “the citizens of the world” who are in a “universal circle of belonging that involves the transcendence of the particular and blindly given ties of kinship and country” (Cheah, 2006, p. 487). Specifically, cosmopolitan citizens are understood as individuals embodying largely two features: their mobility and their ethical stance.

First, cosmopolitan citizens would build connections, earn multilayered affiliations, and enjoy multiple contacts (Canagarajah, 2013). Jinsoo and Heedong positioned themselves as cosmopolitan citizens by imagining moving around the globe. They were willing to go to their mother’s countries of origin and aspired to go to an unknown place such as the United States. This implies that they were open-minded teenagers who would feel everywhere at home and who would belong to different communities around the world.

The other key component of cosmopolitan citizens is their ethical stance, which includes tolerance, solidarity, empathy, and respect for diversity (Appiah, 2006; Hansen, 2014). In fact, Appiah (2006) argued that such values would be developed through dialogue, namely, the ability to open up the conversation and enter into communication to understand others. In this sense, Jinsoo and Heedong illustrated their capacities to foster the ethical stance of cosmopolitan citizens. For example, Jinsoo suffered due to the burden of the “multicultural” label, but through the word “destiny,” he accepted that his family background was different from his “non-multicultural” peers. He then reframed the meaning of “multicultural” by arguing that he would be in a more advantageous situation to learn languages. Similarly, to Heedong, “Vietnam,” as his mother’s country of origin, was an emotional burden because it stigmatized him as an outsider in Korea. So he was not willing to reveal his association with Vietnam to others. But by showing his sense of responsibility to learn Vietnamese as a son of a Vietnamese woman (i.e., an ethical dilemma for him), he embraced the difference between him and his “non-multicultural” peers. In particular, he wrote that he needed to learn Vietnamese well in order to communicate with his family members in Vietnam. This indeed would be a first step to have a dialogue about similarities, differences, conflicts, and ambiguities.

What is noteworthy is that it is through the use of their linguistic and cultural resources Jinsoo and Heedong actively looked outward to transform challenges into opportunities to advance in the world. For instance, they commonly focused on their learning of English, which as the lingua franca, was understood as a means to have access to the global stages. Jinsoo perceived that his proficiency in English would allow him to study in the United States; Heedong also believed that his proficiency in Korean, Vietnamese, and English would provide him with alternative career paths in various parts of the world. This indicates that their linguistic resources enabled them to see more possibilities beyond the Korean territory. At the same time, these linguistic resources not only helped them familiarized to Filipino and Vietnamese cultures, but also developed their cultural competences. Rebuilding the historical and political relationship between Korea, the Philippines, and the United States, Jinsoo considered the Philippines a place to learn English and envisioned his educational career in the United States. Heedong also imagined the world as a well-connected community where he could live with his proficiency in Korean, Vietnamese, and English. As such, the two “multicultural” teenagers’ imagination, along with their linguistic and cultural resources, opens up wider possibilities for them to become cosmopolitan citizens.

On the other hand, however, in the presence of the hegemonic power of the United States, their processes of becoming cosmopolitan citizens revealed how ambivalent or even paradoxical this project can be. Jinsoo and Heedong conceptualized the United States as the ultimate

destination for their success. This implies that the United States' political, economic, and cultural influence on Korea as well as their mother's countries of origin⁸⁶ gave them an impression that it is the land of milk and honey full of educational and professional opportunities. Representatively, Jinsoo believed that studying in the U.S. would be more rigorous than studying in Korea or in the Philippines; Heedong wondered if working in the U.S. would be fancier than working in Vietnam. In contrast, the Philippines and Vietnam were often characterized as a vacation spot where they would not want to live for an extensive period of time.

The excessive influence of the United States on the two focal students is also revealed in their desire to become proficient in English. Describing English as the “lingua franca of the world” that functions as the major means of communication among researchers, business people, and diplomats, both Jinsoo and Heedong articulated that English would make them more competitive and marketable in the education or job market. In addition, they also believed that proficiency in English would grant them access to the United States. This unfortunately led them to prioritize English over Tagalog or Vietnamese and sometimes belittle the languages by presenting them as a means to consume Filipino or Vietnamese cultures. Indeed, they capitalized the hierarchy of the prestige and uncovered the excessive discourse about the United States as the land of opportunity full of its specialness as well as exceptionalism.

To summarize, Jinsoo and Heedong were going through the inevitable friction of the time: becoming cosmopolitan citizens under the hegemony of the United States. I argue that this tension, regardless of its impact and scale, will cultivate them and help them find their own ways of being in and understanding the world. This is because they are the ones who would endeavor to make sense of their challenges, know how to use their linguistic and cultural resources strategically, and put themselves at risk. Thus, they will be potentially able to become cosmopolitan citizens who critically engage in different values and ideologies and who would “be responsive to the demands of justice toward others” (Hansen, 2010, p. 8) in the future.

Conclusion

By presenting two cases of Jinsoo and Heedong, this chapter has sought to understand how these two “multicultural” teenagers position themselves in various contexts—ranging from Korea to their mothers' countries of origin, to the United States—by using their linguistic and cultural resources. As demonstrated in the preceding discussion of these two youth, both Jinsoo and Heedong sought alternative places of studying and/or working. Their unique processes of making sense of their experiences in Korea and constructing their identities as “multicultural” show how they were engaging in the project of becoming cosmopolitan citizens. While these processes unavoidably reveal the impact of U.S. economic hegemony due to its prevalent influence on their lives in Korea, I argue that the two “multicultural” teenagers' welcoming of uncertainty will ultimately raise them as cosmopolitan citizens who will live with differences and foreignness, respect diversity, and feel responsibility for others (Appiah, 2006; Hansen, 2010).

⁸⁶ Korea and the Philippines have been greatly affected by the U.S.' desire to extend their political and military control in Asia. Korea has been occupied by the American military since 1945 after Japanese colonialism and the Korean War; the Philippines was colonized by the U.S. until 1946 and still uses English as an official language. Furthermore, despite the aftermath of the Vietnam War, Vietnam has been one of the most pro-American countries (Lamb, 2003) that signed political and economic agreements with the U.S. (e.g., Bilateral Trade Agreement in 2000).

Chapter 8. “Multicultural” Teenagers Becoming Artistic “Multilingual” Subjects

This chapter discusses “multicultural” teenagers’ creative ways of communicating with themselves as well as others. It also describes the ways in which they construct who they are in both physical and virtual realities. This chapter presents two focal teenagers, Hayang and Artanis. Hayang is a daughter of a Filipina woman, and Artanis is a son of a Chinese woman. The two tend to fit the stigmatized representation of “multicultural” children (see Chapter 4). Yet, they find their own ways to relieve their stress, develop their interests and talents, and interact with others by using various semiotic resources available to them. Although these students’ accomplishments would not be always acknowledged or rewarded by the school system, I argue that Hayang and Artanis are becoming “multilingual” subjects by drawing their experience and fantasy. Specifically, through drawing—a semiotic means of communication, they cultivate ingenious ways of living their lives in Korea.

Hayang’s Story: Living in an Isolated and Imaginary Wonderland Language Barriers at Home

Hayang was a loner in her family. While she looked Korean, spoke like most Koreans, and resided in Korea from birth, she lived with family members who all were Filipino by origin.⁸⁷ Unlike Hayang’s half-brother who was born in Korea but was systematically labeled as “Filipino,” Hayang was identified as either “Korean” or “not pure Korean.” She was never recognized as “Filipina” in her family and therefore, she was considered “different.”

Not fully integrated into her family, Hayang rejected her Filipino family members. She had frequent quarrels with her mother; she not only accused her mother of leaving her father, but also hated her mother’s foreign appearance and languages. Hayang scarcely interacted with her stepfather (e.g., did not greet him). She talked to her uncle only if necessary, for example, when they had to clean the room that they shared or when she had math-related questions. In fact, Hayang hoped her uncle would return to the Philippines. Hayang expressed her jealousy and anger toward her half-brother. When her mother praised the nine-month-old baby, Hayang shouted that she would give him tit for tat when he grew up. Hayang’s sense of exclusion at home led her to describe herself as a girl from an “idiosyncratic” land and long for a “normal” life (from Interview on May 5, 2014).

In addition, Hayang was linguistically isolated at home. Her family members did not have sufficient opportunities to learn and use Korean. Because they were not proficient in Korean, Hayang did not have opportunities in the home to practice and fine tune her skills in Korean—the language she found most comfortable to speak. Even with her mother, who lived in Korea for more than 15 years, Hayang experienced communication breakdowns. The excerpt below demonstrates a mundane, representative example of such failure:

(1)

- 1 HAY: Mom, look at this card. Teacher, explanation please. In English.
- 2 RES: Try it. Try to explain that to her well.
- 3 HAY: This card is (looking at the researcher)

⁸⁷ As Chapter 3 discussed, Hayang’s biological Korean father was divorced from his Filipina wife (i.e., Hayang’s mother). Hayang talked to her Korean father often on the phone but rarely met him in person due to time and financial constraints. At the most, they met three times (for half a day each time) in 2014. Because Hayang’s mother married to a Filipino man several years ago, Hayang lived with family members who were Filipino by origin.

- 4 RES: It is currently for children
 5 HAY: (speaking very slowly and clearly) This card is currently for children so we have to
 6 change this card. Have to change the card. So we have to change the card to the
 7 latest card at a convenient store. Changing the card is necessary to have the fair for
 8 middle school students. (tone fell; looking at the researcher)
 9 MOT: Okay.
 10 HAY: Understand?
 11 MOT: (shaking her head, smiling)
 12 RES: (smiling)
 13 HAY: You see! @@@
 (Original interaction in Korean except Line 9; from Fieldnotes on March 5, 2014)

Because I did not know the degree to which Hayang and her mother could not communicate, I prompted Hayang to explain the situation to her mother. By adopting foreigner talk, Hayang uttered very slowly and clearly and repeated the key phrase “change the card.” This was to help her mother better understand Hayang’s challenge so that they could find a solution. After listening to Hayang’s explanation, Hayang’s mother said, “Okay” in English (Line 9). Hayang was surprised and questioned her mother if she indeed understood the situation. Then she shook her head and smiled. Although this incident ended with smiles and laughs, the excerpt illustrates that Hayang’s mother was not informed of practical issues occurred in Hayang’s life and that she would not be helpful in resolving them.⁸⁸

Instead of Korean, Hayang was surrounded, perhaps from her perspective besieged, by languages of the Philippines such as Tagalog, Kapampangan, and English, because her Filipino family members used some mixture of them.⁸⁹ This implies that although she would be familiar with foreign languages in Korea where Korean is the only national language, the multilingual home environment automatically reminded Hayang of her divorced parents and marked her as different, foreign, and abnormal in society. Furthermore, as she could not fully understand the languages in use at home, Hayang seemed to be frequently left out of conversations with her family members. Thus, she continually expressed her frustration with languages spoken at home.

Hayang’s adverse feelings about Tagalog, Kapampangan, and English were reflected by her unwillingness to polish these languages further. For example, Hayang’s mother and uncle judged that Hayang understood approximately 50-60% of utterances enunciated in Tagalog and Kapampangan. But since Hayang did not envision herself living in the Philippines—which she frequently described as “dirty,” “dangerous,” and “boring”—she did not see the necessity of developing proficiency in those languages. Moreover, Hayang found that Tagalog and Kapampangan were not used or taught in school and that few Koreans asked her about her proficiency in them, which influence her neglect of the languages.

⁸⁸ This is also applicable to Hayang’s school life. For instance, Hayang’s mother texted me once in ten days on average in 2014, for she had difficulty in understanding messages sent by Hayang’s school or by Hayang’s homeroom teacher. Conscious of her mother’s Korean proficiency, Hayang rarely gave parent information letters and academic records to her. Furthermore, as Hayang’s homeroom teacher experienced some communication breakdown with Hayang’s mother in March 2014, her teacher relied on me in interacting with Hayang’s mother. Representatively, she asked me to translate her Korean text messages into English and forward them to Hayang’s mother so that she could be kept up to date.

⁸⁹ Tagalog is the national, official language in the Philippines; Kapampangan is a regional language in the Philippines and a home language to Hayang’s Filipino family members; English is another official language and the medium of instruction in the Philippines.

The case of English was not too different from Tagalog or Kapampangan, except that Hayang was aware of the symbolic power of the language in Korea and in the globalized world: for example, she said, “It [English] is certainly necessary” because “the majority of people work with English” (from Fieldnotes on July 4, 2014). However, her recognition of the importance of English did not motivate her to learn the language. It carried too heavy an emotional load. For instance, as Excerpt 2 suggests, Hayang felt uneasy when her Filipino family members spoke in English (i.e., a language she could not fully understand); moreover, believing that she was pushed to learn English, Hayang also argued that her resistance to learning English was a rebellion against her stepfather.

(2)

14 HAY: Especially because I am not good at English.. So when my mother and uncle have
15 a conversation in English, I constantly ask, “Uh?” “What is it?” “What is it?” “What
16 are you doing?” “What did you say?” ... Then they [my (step)father and my
17 mother] get pissed off. ... “If you are going to ask like that again and again, you’d
18 better study English.” He said that, too! So I don’t like [to learn English].

(Original interaction in Korean; from Fieldnotes on March 17, 2014)

In this situation, Hayang suffered from English-related questions in public because of her Filipina mother. For example, “Can you speak good English?”; “Is your mother teaching you English?”; and “Can you too read books written in English?” are a few common questions that Hayang received from others. Because she was not proficient in English⁹⁰ and because these questions assumed her mother’s country of origin, Hayang reported that she felt ashamed and stressed. Ultimately, her persistence not to learn English and other Filipino languages but to use Korean alone would be an act of signaling her identity as Korean who was born/raised in Korea and who was a native speaker of Korean.

Hayang’s experience of language barriers at home turned into the basis of what would be “normal” and “abnormal” in Korean society.

(3)

19 HAY: Honestly, playing with my cell phone is better than talking to my mother and
20 father.

21 RES: Why?

22 HAY: I don’t like that we can’t communicate well.

23 RES: Can’t communicate very well?

24 HAY: No, I hate the most when I can’t understand.

25 RES: Right. That would be tough.

26 HAY: Anyways, I like a Korean mother.

27 RES: You like a Korean mother? Whose Korean mother?

28 HAY: A mother who speaks good Korean. Instead of being good at English, I like the

29 mother who speaks good Korean. I want to have a normal mother.

(Original interaction in Korean; from Fieldnotes on March 17, 2014)

⁹⁰ After her first semester in middle school, Hayang mastered English letters (e.g., she was confused “b” with “d”). When asked to read the main text from her English textbook, Hayang guessed the pronunciation of words by looking at the word shape and by thinking of the words she already knew. For example, encountering the word “player,” she read it first as [pleinj], then [plei], and [pleis]; seeing the word “sport,” she said [su:p].

Hayang conceptualized a “normal” mother as a person who spoke and understood Korean without any difficulty, regardless of her proficiency in a *lingua franca* like English. Altogether, although Hayang was in surroundings that could facilitate her learning of multiple linguistic repertoires, she did not fully benefit from them. This implies that her sense of linguistic isolation coming from language barriers with her family members was more distressing than her recognition of the values linked to having multiple linguistic repertoires.

Hayang’s Struggles in School

Similar to her life at home, Hayang struggled in school. As Table 8.1 presents, she lagged behind in school. Her homeroom teacher euphemistically assessed Hayang’s academic achievement, “Not yet hitting the bottom, her academic records are not good either. If she reaches a lower class-wide rank, it is obvious that she does not have a good school-wide rank. She is even below average” (from Interview on August 29, 2014).

Table 8.1 Hayang’s Academic Achievement in 2014

	1 st Midterm	1 st Final	2 nd Midterm	2 nd Final
Korean	48	46	52	52.5
English	39	41	25	25
Math	42	18	57	32
Social Studies	73	49	56	38
Science	40	29	10	29
Technology & Home Education	49	63	61	49
Chinese Characters	42	19	24	27
Music	N/A	59.2	N/A	25
Physical Education	N/A	62.6	N/A	42
Average Scores	46.57	42.98	40.71	35.5

Note: Each subject had a maximum scale of 100 points.

In her first year in middle school, Hayang did not have a strong subject that could contribute to her overall academic achievement. Observing her for several months, Hayang’s homeroom teacher commented that despite her maintenance of good behavior in class, Hayang did not have a good foundation for studying. She reported that although Hayang’s textbooks were filled with notes written in colored pens and traces of highlighters, she did not understand why the notes were important and what they meant because she recorded whatever her teachers asked her to write down.

Expectedly, Hayang found studying uninteresting or unnecessary. What motivated her to study was teachers’ threat that they would punish her when she did not do her homework. Even those times, Hayang usually copied answers from the Internet or from her peers in school. Dealing with multiple-choice questions, she picked random answers without reading questions. In addition to doing her homework for the sake of completion, she tended not to care much about her midterms and finals. One day, Hayang confessed that within five to ten minutes after receiving the science exam sheets, she took answer sheets and haphazardly marked answers not to turn in blank answer sheets. Given these situations, Hayang wanted to drop out of school.

Despite Hayang’s struggle in studying, Hayang’s mother and other family members seemed not to pay enough attention to her academic achievement. They neither knew when

Hayang received report cards nor asked her to share them. Interestingly, Hayang's mother (and sometimes her uncle) blamed Hayang for her limited academic achievement.

(4)

30 MOT: I always scolded Hayang WHY you're so foolish, WHY you're so stupid, WHY
31 you're not same with me, WHY in your school why you're, why you cannot study
32 well, WHY you cannot perfect at school, WHY you're like that, just like that
33 because I was SO mad like that because actually that was wrong.

(Original interaction in English; from Interview on April 21, 2014)

Reflecting on her own educational trajectories in the Philippines, Hayang's mother frequently complained that her daughter was different from her and her siblings. Hearing these hurtful words at a young age, Hayang began to throw her report cards away in order not to be criticized, shamed, or dishonored.

The term describing her in Korean society, "multicultural," added another layer of stress to Hayang. When she was a primary school student, teachers summoned her to attend special classes for "multicultural" children. Whenever it happened, Hayang's peers whispered about why Hayang was called, and Hayang feared that her peers knew about her "multicultural" background. Similarly, in middle school, her homeroom teacher made a public announcement that her students should treat Hayang nicely because she was a "multicultural" student. She reported that these incidents made her think if she was "lacking" or "handicapped."

Being used to the "multicultural" label, Hayang argued that it no longer irritated her. Yet, the way she positioned herself with the word as well as the way she understood the word is noteworthy. First, Hayang seemed to accept the term because she was not readily perceived as "multicultural" in public. Hayang's appearance and Korean proficiency prevented her from receiving any comment or question about her family background for her entire life, unless she voluntarily revealed the information. This daily experience taught her that the label was only obvious to herself (e.g., "[The label] doesn't matter because everybody sees me as a Korean person."). Second, Hayang positioned herself as "multicultural" only in school where she was marked as such. Interestingly, although she was open with her peers that her mother was a person of non-Korean origin, she did not let her peers know her mother's country of origin. By using her mother's English proficiency and profession as an English teacher, Hayang in fact introduced her mother as a "westerner (*seoyangin*; 서양인)" in school (from Fieldnotes on May 9, 2014). Third, instead of using the word "multicultural," Hayang strategically used "mixed (*honhyeol*; 혼혈)" when describing herself.

(5)

34 HAY: Compared to the word "multicultural," the word "mixed [*honhyeol*; 혼혈]" is
35 better. I feel like people use multicultural in a rather negative way. When mixed is
36 used, it feels a little fancier. It turns out that other people have different feelings
37 about multicultural and mixed. People think that mixed people look like the ones
38 in France or in other European countries whereas multicultural folks are from poor
39 countries. So I like the word mixed more than multicultural.

(Original utterance in Korean; from Fieldnotes on August 28, 2014)

Although the majority of Koreans would perceive the word “mixed” with biases (Yuh, 2002), as Hayang sensibly noted, the word “multicultural” would have added another layer of bias about one’s economic condition. Hayang’s distinction between these two words shows how the term “multicultural” pressured her and how she navigated semantic gaps between “multicultural” and “mixed” and positioned herself differently.

Hayang’s school life suffered more due to her peer relations. In March 2014, Hayang had a very pleasant beginning of the academic year. She reported that she made many new friends and expressed that she wanted to run for class vice president. Yet, after a few weeks, Hayang started becoming unpopular and at last identified herself as a “bullied [person]” (*wangdda*; 왕따).” From then on, more than the half of our weekly mentoring session was devoted to Hayang’s narratives about how her peers kept at a distance from her as well as how frustrated and lonely she was in school. For instance, a few of her classmates told Hayang, “Don’t glare at me like that” even though Hayang did not have any intention to make them feel bad (from Fieldnotes on May 19, 2014). Some others spread malicious gossip about Hayang’s family background (e.g., Filipina mother, divorced parents). Losing the friends she had made in her class, Hayang changed her status message on her social network service webpage in May and publicly advertised that she needed a friend in her school.⁹¹

Unfortunately, one day she spoke in a subdued tone that she thought of committing suicide due to her experience of being bullied. And Hayang wrote the following:

(6)
 40 HAY: When I was a primary school student, I was bullied. ... And I am bullied again in
 41 middle school. ... I was not “a total bullied [person] [*wangdda*; 왕따]” but “an
 42 ostracized [person] [*eundda*; 은따].” A child who is quite bullied. ... I have
 43 thought of committing suicide. But although I wanted to die, I didn’t have enough
 44 courage to kill myself.

(Originally written in Korean; from Fieldnotes on August 28, 2014)

Discussing her experience with peers, she considered the possibility that her peers might have an aversion to her own (too) active personality and behavior when interacting with them. While she was confident that the “multicultural” label did not provide an excuse for bullying, Hayang also gave vent to her innermost disappointment that her mother did not understand her experience because she was a “foreigner.” Indeed, Hayang’s mother did not take Hayang’s words seriously and said, “Why are you getting upset with trivial matters?” (from Fieldnotes on June 30, 2014). Her family members regarded Hayang’s idea of killing herself as mere grumbling.

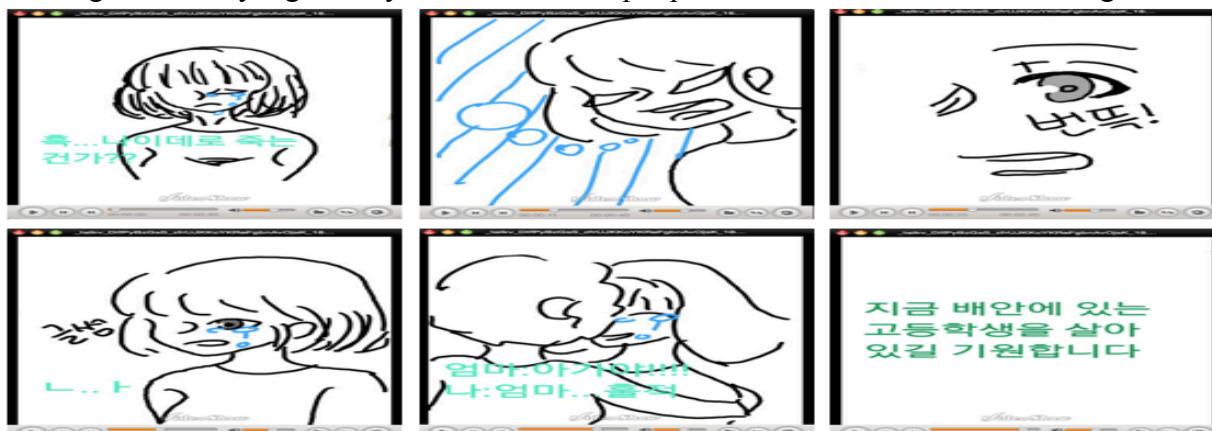
To a large extent, Hayang resembled a stereotypical “multicultural” child frequently presented in the media (see Chapter 4). Her family had issues with members, relations, and finance; she was not fully proficient in languages spoken at home; she lagged behind in school; and she was bullied. However, the stereotypical discourses could not capture a more complex picture of Hayang’s life; thus, I would argue in the following section that she was mature and creative enough to find her own ways to survive in Korea.

Constructing an Alternative Self through Drawing

⁹¹ She wrote, “I’m looking for a friend in Ohryu Middle School! (7th graders only).”

While her experience at home and in school made her lonely, it also allowed her to spend most of her time focusing on what she was interested in and what she wanted to develop further. So she drew, wrote, and explored handheld technological devices in and out of school—activities that she could do alone. Specifically, she drew cartoon characters she saw on the Internet, wrote a short story and produced a webtoon⁹² based on the story, and practicing drawing through her cell phone and tablet PC. For instance, Hayang wrote a story titled “Bullied (*wangdda*; 왕따).” Seasoned with romance (e.g., one-sided love and jealousy), academic stress, and physical violence, this story included some violent scenes (e.g., the main character was terribly beaten by those around her and bullies either suffer from her delusion of grandeur or hurt/kill themselves). In explaining her desire to publish this story as a webtoon, Hayang said, “I will present this on my webtoon so that everybody can know the peers who bullied me did such crappy thing. I am the main character and they are the bad guys. I want them to be criticized.” (from Fieldnotes on August 10, 2014). Likewise, Hayang also created a video clip that prayed for a safe return of high school students on Ferry Sewol⁹³ (see Figure 8.1).

Figure 8.1 Hayang’s Ferry Sewol Video Clip Uploaded on Her Social Networking Site



Note 1: These six scenes were selected from others. The length of the video clip was approximately a minute.

Note 2: Hayang also added a music file to the clip.

In the same manner, the margin of her textbooks was always filled with her drawings; the number of her drawing/writing notebooks was consistently increasing; and the amount of the image files saved on her cell phone and tablet PC was growing.

Indeed, Hayang took advantage of resources and platforms offered by technology in (a) learning how to draw, (b) dreaming of becoming a professional artist, (c) sharing her works with virtual friends. To begin with, Hayang taught herself how to draw because she could not enroll in an art institute⁹⁴ and because her middle school did not yet provide any art curriculum for seventh graders. So the Internet functioned as the major source for her to collect information

⁹² A newly coined-word in Korea that combines the word “web” and “cartoon.”

⁹³ The Ferry Sewol tragedy occurred on April 16, 2014 en route from Incheon to Jeju Island. Due to the tragedy, more than 300 people including high school students died.

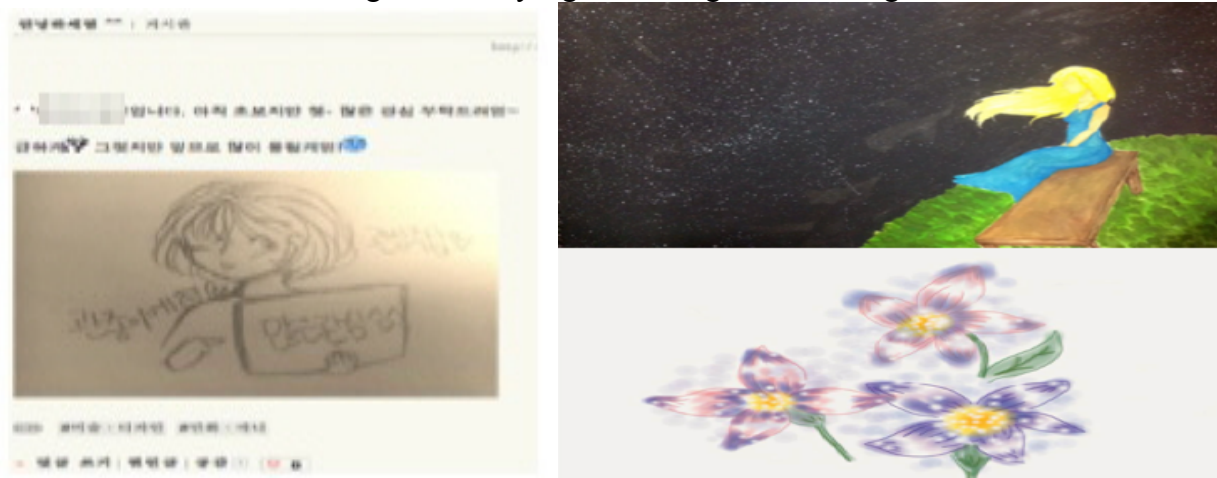
⁹⁴ On the very first day I met Hayang, she asked me if I could help convey her fervent desire to join private art classes to her mother. But Hayang’s desire was repeatedly unfulfilled because her family could not afford to send Hayang to an art institute. Hayang’s mother complained that Hayang’s biological father did not give her enough money to support Hayang’s education. She contended that it was not possible to spend \$100 per month to send Hayang to a local art institute.

about drawing techniques, learn about various software programs related to drawing, and refine her interests. For instance, she watched video clips available on YouTube and visited some artists' websites to get some advice (e.g., what drawing book to study). Due to her devotion to art and her use of technology, Hayang introduced me to new drawing tools she found almost every week.

Moreover, through resources available online, Hayang accumulated more knowledge about the cartoon industry and sought some specific ways to become a cartoonist. For instance, amazed by Korean artists who contributed to the Disney's film, "Frozen," she explained how they created characters and worked on backdrop and visual effects (e.g., how they made ice or the castle in the film). In the process, she revealed her hope to work for a global animation company like Walt Disney Studios (from Fieldnotes on April 14, 2014). Then she listed some ways to become a professional cartoonist including: applying for various competitions and winning a prize; sending her works to cartoon companies; uploading her works regularly to the website called "Cartoon Challenge" for a couple of years to gain popularity; and/or working as an artist's assistant and learning how to generate quality work. In this situation where neither the educational system nor her family valued her artistic interests, resources offered by technology helped Hayang to move forward to become a professional artist.

Even more noteworthy was her use of cyberspace to reinforce her cartoonist identity by sharing her work with others and interacting with them. Hayang posted her sketches to social networking sites (see Figure 8.2) and also shared some of the information she collected on the Internet (e.g., drawing reference books).

Figure 8.2 Hayang's Drawings on Her Blog



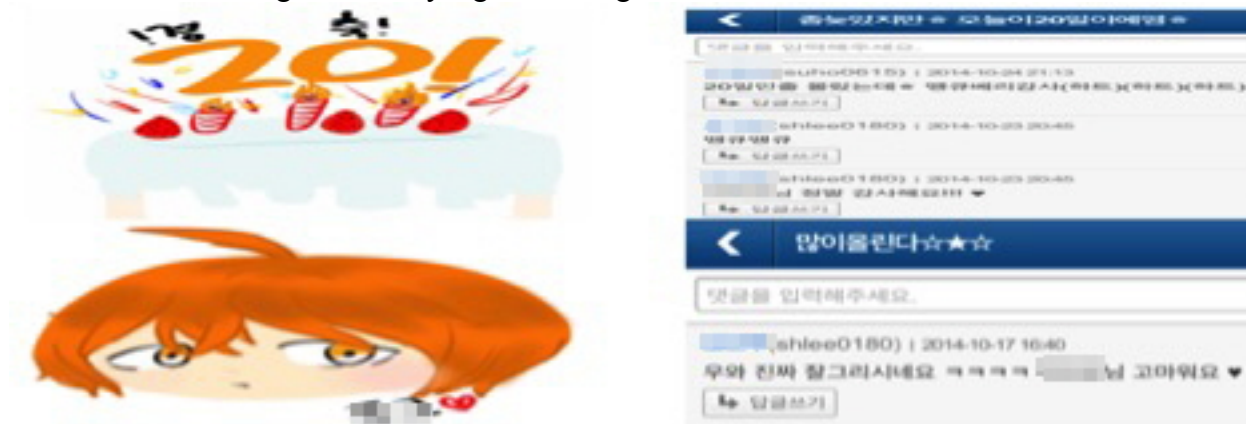
Note 1: Hayang wrote on the very first posting on her blog, "This is [Hayang's nickname on the blog]. I'm a beginner [at blogging] but hope that all of you pay attention to this blog. Although I drew this quickly, I will upload many drawings here in the future."

Note 2: According to Hayang, she decided to draw the picture with dark sky and stars because she was inspired by the game called "To the Moon."

In the process of uploading her drawings on various Internet sites, Hayang made new friends. Her blog attracted visitors, and they left some positive comments about her posts and drawings. She reported that more than 100 people visited her blog within a month after she made it public. Indeed, several bloggers added Hayang as their contact and kept track of her postings. Similarly, when she posted her drawings (e.g., illustrations, one-cut cartoons, and word art based on a few

close members' user IDs) to the webpage of her favorite broadcasting jockey,⁹⁵ several people repeatedly made positive, encouraging comments to Hayang.

Figure 8.3 Hayang's Drawings and Interactions with Others



As Figure 8.3 shows, the broadcasting jockey left a comment, “Wow you’re drawing really well kkkk [Hayang’s nickname] Thank you ♥.” Other members also replied to Hayang’s postings and wrote, “Thank you always (moved emoji),” “Wow thank you so much! love ya!,” and “Thank you! I will use well~.” As such, by using her drawing ability and benefitting from the technology that made her competence stand out, Hayang was building a sense of community that she had never had in the physical world.

In sum, resources and platforms offered by technology seemed to fulfill Hayang’s yearning for developing her artistic interests, heal her hurtful memories from home and school, and acknowledge her drawing ability. This implies that without being judged as a low-achieving bullied “multicultural” child, Hayang was able to construct an alternative self (i.e., a youth who had talent in art).

(7)

45 RES: What does drawing mean to you? What is drawing to you?

46 HAY: A different self of me?

47 RES: A different self of you?

48 HAY: Yes.

49 RES: What do you mean?

50 HAY: Um.. A friend who listens to my anguish?

51 RES: Drawing? Um so is that why drawing is your different self?

52 HAY: Yes.

53 RES: Can you resolve all your stress through drawing?

54 HAY: Yes. It consoles me [through challenges].

(Original utterances in Korean; from Interview on December 22, 2014)

In overcoming her personal and social difficulties through drawing, she ultimately expressed her hope to become a webtoon artist so that she could give hope to students who were bullied and soothe their pain (from Fieldnotes, on August 28, 2014).

⁹⁵ In fact, one of Hayang’s drawings was used on the introduction page of the broadcasting jockey for months.

Overall, even though she appeared to exemplify a stereotypical “multicultural” child in Korea, Hayang was constructing her identity as a cartoonist and working hard to reach her dream. Through the semiotic means of drawing and the practice of sharing supported by technology, she was able to live in the world with imaginary but realistic characters, express herself, heal her hurt feelings, and interact with others. In this sense, she found a creative way to benefit from drawing and to be a “multilingual” subject.

Artanis’ Story: Living in Both Physical and Virtual Realities

The Weight of the “Multicultural” Label

Like other study participants in this dissertation, Artanis was indistinguishable from “non-multicultural” others. Throughout his entire life, no one wondered about his “multicultural” background, unless he himself disclosed the information. His homeroom teacher in middle school rather asked me if Artanis had “the air of multicultural” (from Interview on September 1, 2014). Similarly, another teacher did not recall who Artanis was, and said his face was not familiar even after she accessed his school records. This implies that Artanis’ appearance, language, and behavior did not signal that he was a “multicultural” child.

Despite the invisibility of Artanis’ “multicultural” identity, his peers were aware of his family background. In the beginning of the academic year, his homeroom teacher mistakenly distributed the student list with three students’ classification to the class. For instance, the word, “multicultural,” was added next to Artanis’ name and the word, “special needs,” was attached to a student’s name. Although Artanis reported that few insulted his “multicultural” background, the impact of the revelation had considerable repercussions. Representatively, Artanis became the target of inquiries in his class. Several of his classmates publicly asked their homeroom teacher if Artanis was a “multicultural” student. Others approached him and asked about the label. One student envied Artanis for having opportunities to travel abroad; some students asked him to say some Chinese words; still others slipped away without asking Artanis further questions. Even after eight months since this event happened, Artanis recalled it vividly.

(8)

55 ART: [Teachers’ comments about my mother’s country of origin happen] Maybe once or
56 twice this year. One time she just said, “Yes, he [Artanis] is multicultural.” She
57 said that Sungho and I are multicultural. That was all.

58 RES: Are you saying that your teacher uttered the word to your classmates?

59 ART: Yes.

60 RES: When? Wasn’t that information just written on the student list?

61 ART: Yes. So my classmates asked her.

62 RES: Ah so did your classmates directly ask her?

63 ART: Yes.

64 RES: When you were there? Or did they ask you directly?

65 ART: They also asked me.

66 RES: They asked you and asked your teacher?

67 ART: Yes.

(Original interaction in Korean; from Interview on December 20, 2014)

As the label of “multicultural” tagged along after Artanis, it always followed Artanis’ mother. For example, when she went to her son’s school to attend a parent conference in March

2014, she learned that Artanis' classroom was referred to as the "inclusive classroom (*tonghaphakgeup*; 통합학급)." This was because the class, different from other classes, served both "multicultural" students and students with special needs. Likewise, when she joined a dinner gathering with other mothers in April, she had to endure them gossiping about "multicultural" families. This compelled Artanis' mother to introduce herself as the Chinese mother of the "multicultural" student. Although she earned Korean citizenship more than ten years ago, the "multicultural" label positioned her in a rather fixed way.

Artanis' direct and indirect experience of being categorized as "multicultural" seemed to make him identify himself with the term. By saying, "I am multicultural," Artanis devised a formula that he was equal to "multicultural."

(9)

68 RES: What does the word "multicultural" mean to you?

69 ART: Multicultural multicultural is just.. I am included in it.. Um Multicultural to me?

70 First, I am multicultural. Next, Sungho is multicultural. Byungjoon is

71 multicultural.

72 RES: I see.

(Original interaction in Korean; from Interview on December 20, 2014)

The way he positioned himself was notable, for he was aware of negative stereotypes associated with "multicultural." Conceptualizing his family as "a family that has a foreigner" (from Interview on May 3, 2014), Artanis listed some negative stereotypes about "multicultural" families that he learned from his social studies textbook. For instance, he articulated that "multicultural" children were believed to "speak awkwardly," "have a different skin color," "be teased or bullied," and "be poor" (from Interview on December 20, 2014).

Simultaneously, Artanis strongly expressed his identity as "Korean" because he was born in Korea, irrespective of his mother's country of origin or her current citizenship.

(10)

73 RES: Is your mother a foreigner to you?

74 ART: My mother.. I guess she is a foreigner. She may be a foreigner. Right. Foreigner?

75 RES: But your mother has the Korean resident card,⁹⁶ right?

76 ART: Ah yes.

77 RES: Isn't your mother Korean then?

78 ART: I don't know about that. I haven't thought about that.

79 RES: Then Artanis, your father is Korean and your mother was born in China.

80 ART: Right.

81 RES: Of course she has the Korean resident card.. Then are you Korean or half-Korean
82 and half-Chinese?

83 ART: I don't know. I'm Korean.

84 RES: Are you Korean?

85 ART: Yes.

86 RES: Why?

87 ART: I guess because I was born in Korea.

⁹⁶ If a person has his/her Korean resident card, it means that he/she is a Korean citizen. In terms of Artanis' mother, she was naturalized as a Korean citizen.

- 88 RES: Okay.
 89 ART: My mother was born in China, not in Korea.
 90 RES: I see.

(Original interaction in Korean; from Interview on May 3, 2014)

At a superficial level, Artanis' positioning seemed paradoxical because on the one hand, he identified himself as "multicultural" and on the other hand, he promoted his Koreanness by stressing his country of birth. More specifically, children of mixed parentage who were born in Korea are characterized not simply as "Korean" but as "multicultural." This is to differentiate them from other "non-multicultural" Koreans because the "multicultural" label denotes a less homogeneous aspect of one's Koreanness. In this sense, Artanis' attachment to his Korean national identity could be in conflict with his identification with "multicultural."

At a deeper level, however, Artanis would consistently construct his Koreanness through his "multicultural" label and his "Korean" nationality. Despite the connotative meaning of the word "multicultural," it also suggests that "multicultural" children are still "Korean" because one of their parents is Korean, because they were born and are raised in Korea, and because they hold Korean citizenship. In the situation that his father—the fundamental reason as well as the proof for Artanis' "multicultural" identity—suddenly passed away in February 2014, Artanis might have had to reinforce his social position as "multicultural." Subsequently, this would make him more defensive when his "Korean" identity was questioned.

Artanis' construction and promotion of his Koreanness were reflected on his avoidance of being associated with China or the Chinese language. For instance, throughout 2014, he repeatedly and decisively confirmed that he did not have any intention to go to China to study, work, and/or live. Artanis not only asserted that he would live in Korea as Korean, but also described China as "boring," "dirty," and "outdated." Similarly, even though he recognized the personal and social benefits of learning Chinese, he said that he did not want/like to learn the language. And as the Excerpt 11 suggests, although he could not yet put in words, Artanis had some aversion to the Chinese language.

(11)

- 91 RES: Do you think the Chinese language will be useful?
 92 ART: Yes.
 93 RES: But you don't feel the need for learning it?
 94 ART: I don't like to learn it.
 95 RES: You just don't like to learn it?
 96 ART: Right.
 ...
 97 RES: Then what will you do when your mother wants you to learn Chinese?⁹⁷
 98 ART: I will say no.
 99 RES: Say no? Your mother told me that you went to a Chinese language institute in

⁹⁷ Artanis' mother hoped Artanis would learn Chinese and taught him Chinese by using the language in their daily life and by creating Chinese-Korean vocabulary cards. Every two or three years, she also brought Artanis to China to meet her families and to teach him the Chinese language. In fact, Artanis was enrolled in some Chinese language programs and were immersed into the language and culture. However, his mother reported that Artanis became very irritable when she attempted to use Chinese or send him the language programs. When I met them in 2014, the Korean language was the major means of communication between Artanis and his mother, except some instances of code-switching between Chinese and Korean on the part of Artanis' mother.

- 100 China. How was that? Was it fun?
 101 ART: No.
 102 RES: It wasn't fun?
 103 ART: It wasn't fun.
 ...
 104 RES: When your peers get to know that your mother was born in China, don't they think
 105 that you are automatically good at the Chinese language?
 106 ART: No, no one thinks like that.
 107 RES: No one?
 108 ART: Some friends ask me to speak some Chinese.
 109 RES: When they ask you to speak some Chinese, isn't that they think you will be good
 110 at it?
 111 ART: Not sure if they think I am good at it, but they seem to think I can speak Chinese.
 112 RES: I see. But you know the language.
 113 ART: Yes.
 114 RES: So did you speak some Chinese to them?
 115 ART: No, I told them I don't want to speak it.
 116 RES: Ah so you told them you don't want to do it?
 117 ART: Yes.
 118 RES: Why didn't you say some Chinese words to them?
 119 ART: I don't want to. I just don't want to. ... I don't know why but I just don't want to.
 (Original interaction in Korean; from Interview on May 3, 2014)

Artanis' perspective on the Chinese language did not change even after he experienced a communication breakdown with his uncle and cousins who visited his family from China in November 2014. To Artanis, instead of investing his energy in learning the Chinese language, being Korean, speaking Korean, and living in Korea seemed to be more important to pursue.

Distressing Schooling Experience

In addition to his struggle between the "multicultural" label and Koreanness, Artanis had distressing memories in school because he was marked as a maladjusted, slow learner. The prelude of his hurtful schooling experience began when he was a second grader. Even after he became a middle school student, the recollection of the experience made the tears well in his eyes, for the time was "hell" to him (from Fieldnotes on November 23, 2014).

(12)

- 120 MOT: The teacher asked her students to work out some questions on the textbook, but
 121 because Artanis was too slow, he was the only one who couldn't resolve all of
 122 them. Then other students looked at their teacher brightly, but Artanis was still
 123 working out those questions. So the teacher passed a remark. "Artanis! You
 124 should be more prompt!" That was not scolding in fact. But Artanis received
 125 similar remarks once, twice, three times, four times, and again and again. Then he
 126 totally became a REAL slow person. ... When I went to his school for a parent
 127 conference or other occasions, the teacher told me about Artanis. "He is TOO
 128 slow. He shouldn't be THAT slow. How can he survive after launching into the
 129 world?" He was ONLY a second grader. I know being slow can also be a problem.

130

BUT he was JUST a second grader.

(Original interaction in Korean; from Interview on April 17, 2014)

Artanis became a more passive, reluctant person, as hinted in Figure 8.4.⁹⁸

Figure 8.4 Artanis' Self-Portrait Drawn in School in 2009



In the portrait, Artanis' lips were tightly sealed and eyes looked clouded. According to his mother, from then on, he began to spend most of his free time alone drawing or playing computer games. While she assessed that his condition was improved, Artanis' mother believed that he seemed to be still in the process of overcoming the traumatic experience.

Relatedly, Artanis also earned another label, namely, "unique" in his elementary school. He tended not to care much about what happened around him; he did not want to do any demanding task; he did not talk about himself and laugh aloud; and being asked to do something uninteresting made him irritable. For example, Artanis' mother shared a story that Artanis usually sat down on a drill platform alone during his physical education class while other students played soccer or dodge ball. Although his six-grade homeroom teacher attributed Artanis' behavioral patterns to his personality, it seemed apparent that his schooling experience was not pleasant or fun.

In middle school, while neither his teachers nor his peers pointed out Artanis as a slow learner or as a unique person, he was involved in small and big fights with his classmates. His mother was summoned to school and expressed that Artanis' somewhat aggressive behavior might be the tip of the larger problem, i.e., the remaining negative impact of his traumatic schooling experience in 2008.

Possibly because of his challenging schooling experience, Artanis did not consider school exciting. And this led him to neglect his studies. Whenever he came back home from school, he turned his computer on and played games or surfed the Internet through his cell phone. He seldom did his homework, and he stored his textbooks in school and did not preview or review what he learned. In addition, he hardly knew when his exam periods began and thus rarely prepared for exams, either. Not prioritizing studying, Artanis usually ranked 10th in his class and 120th in school.

⁹⁸ Artanis' self-portrait made his mother bring him to psychological counselors. After interpreting the result of Artanis' psychological tests, two counselors uniformly warned Artanis' mother that he was in a serious situation. Turning down his mother's urging to receive counseling, Artanis argued that he was not "crazy."

Table 8.2 Artanis' Academic Achievement in 2014

	Average Scores	Class Rank (n=37)	School-wide Rank (n=366)
1 st Midterm	78.30	10	138
1 st Final	68.20	14	166
2 nd Midterm	84.50	9	80
2 nd Final	78.90	10	96

Note: The maximum average score was 100 points.

Yet, Artanis was generally satisfied with his exam results because he did not put any effort in studying for exams but was not ranked in the bottom tier. Hearing this comment, Artanis' homeroom teacher expressed her regret that Artanis' rank would not mean much due to the limited academic performance of the school at large. She added that from the national standard, Artanis would be far below 50%.

Finding a Way Out: Creative Drawing Ideas

As described, Artanis' challenges emerged the most during the first half of 2014 and he appeared to be the stereotypical "multicultural" child. However, once he accepted my presence in his daily life as routine and after interacting with me more than several months (see Chapter 3), I began to see a more complex picture of his life. Although he seemed to be a slow and low-achieving student, he was a talented artist who was active and strategic in using various resources available to him.

At home, Artanis typically spent most of his time drawing or doing activities that would motivate him to draw (e.g., playing games and watching animations). According to his mother, he brought his pencil and eraser wherever he went, making his bookshelves and desk piled up with resource books about drawing and his own drawings. Some of his drawings were also hung on the walls of Artanis' room and the living room (see Figure 8.5).

Figure 8.5 Artanis' Drawings Hung on the Walls of His House



Note: Artanis drew these pictures when he was asked to draw at a local art institute.

In fact, Artanis even drew when he narrated stories or explained something to me. For instance, by drawing simple but intelligible pictures such as postures of head-height and turning kicks and leg splits, Artanis told stories which happened in his Taekwondo lesson. In explaining the plot of his favorite game, he also used drawing as a tool to describe what he wanted to tell.

Artanis' life in school was not too different. He seemed always ready to draw even during class periods. His pencil, eraser, and drawing notebook were always on his desk. Because Artanis drew a lot in school, the margins of his textbooks always had sketches and his drawing notebooks were frequently consumed. Indeed, Artanis' drawing ability and love of drawing was well known to his classmates because their art teacher publicly praised Artanis' cartoon project and his drawing competence.

(13)

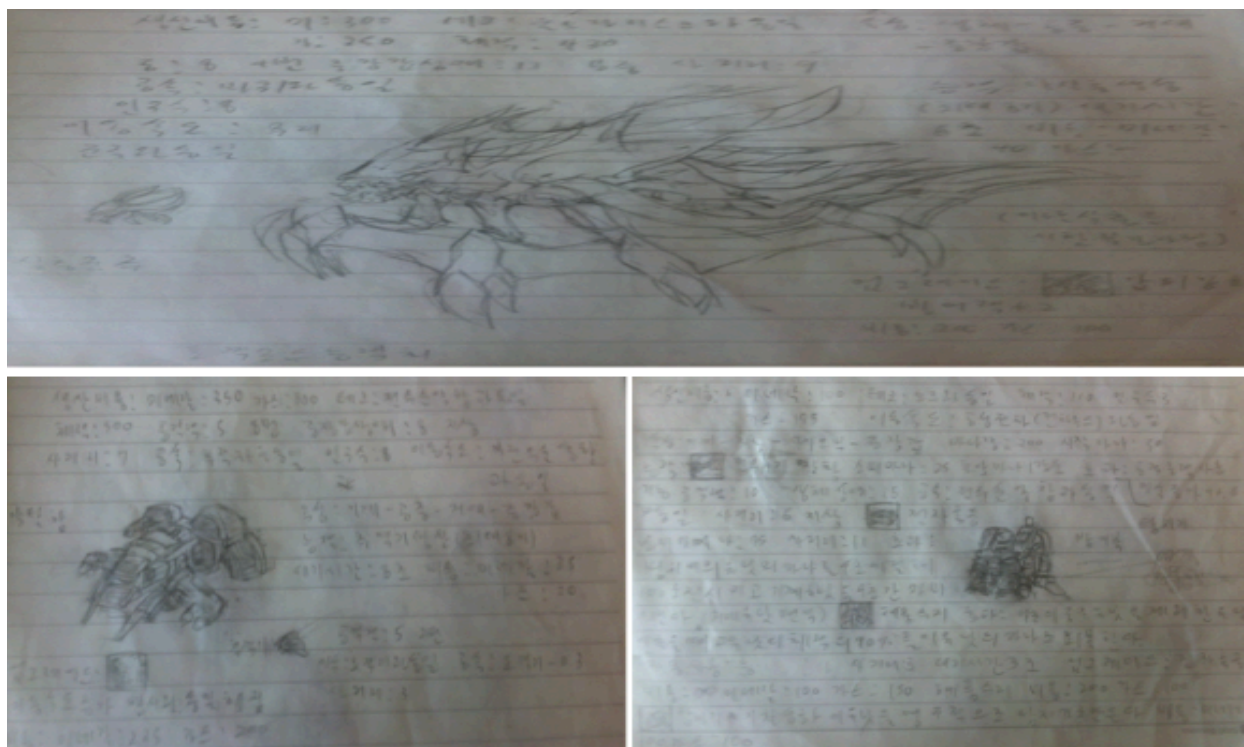
131 ART: I used to have an idea that I didn't want to show my drawings to others. But in the
 132 art class, as part of performance evaluations, there was a cartoon drawing project.
 133 So I drew hard with an animation style. Then the art teacher told my classmates to
 134 look at my project. They all looked at mine and said, "Wow. Wow. You draw very
 135 well." So these days I draw during break periods even though there were many
 136 people around me. I just draw.

(Original interaction in Korean; from Fieldnotes on September 14, 2014)

Since this occasion, some of his classmates approached Artanis to see his works and asked him to draw game/cartoon characters on their notebooks. One day, Artanis boasted about the school-wide popularity that his drawing gained. He noticed that some students whom he did not know whispered about his drawing on a corridor when he walked by. These experiences allowed Artanis to describe drawing as a "fun" activity that gave him "a sense of satisfaction" (from Fieldnotes on November 23, 2014).

What makes Artanis' case more intriguing was his artistic creativity. In addition to drawing characters from some popular games or animations (e.g., StarCraft, Pokémon, and My Little Pony), he generated new characters and produced next episodes. This means that he was not simply consuming these commercialized products; rather, he thought about alternative characters, plots, and designs of games and animations by building on what he noticed from these products and by imagining himself as a professional artist. For example, inspired by Jon Burton, a Canadian cartoonist who created StarCraft Episode and shared his animation clips on YouTube, Artanis drew StarCraft characters with various styles. Recently, spending a considerable time in playing StarCraft, Artanis created multiple weapons and characters that he hoped the game to add.

Figure 8.6 Artanis' Creation of StarCraft Weapons



Showing new weapons that Artanis created for StarCraft, Figure 8.6 illustrates how meticulously Artanis jotted down their features (e.g., how much mineral and gas a player needs to own a weapon and what strengths and weaknesses it has).

Moving one step further, Artanis also designed new games. Representatively, in April 2014, he was excited to share his flash game idea. The strategy game was to provide each player with various weapons so that he/she could choose what weapon to use in fighting against other players.

(14)

137 RES: What is that you wrote down here?

138 ART: That time, suddenly, when I walked on the street you know with water you know I
139 was thinking of making a battle game with that sort of thing. I was thinking about
140 the game. So I as you see here I calculated [each weapon's] power capacity.

141 RES: Wow. What is this? A spear. What did you write here? Vel.Att?

142 ART: Yes. The velocity of attack.

143 RES: Ah..

144 ART: (Pointing to a different drawing) That one is about the rate it takes to create a tem.

145 RES: Tem? Item?

146 ART: Yeah. This one is damage.

147 RES: I see. This one is about damage.

148 ART: This is a shooting distance.

149 RES: A shooting distance.. So this one is water. Then what is it? Spear, water, and

150 ART: Fire, water, wind, and soil, ice, grass, and then sword, iron, spear, bow

151 RES: How about these?

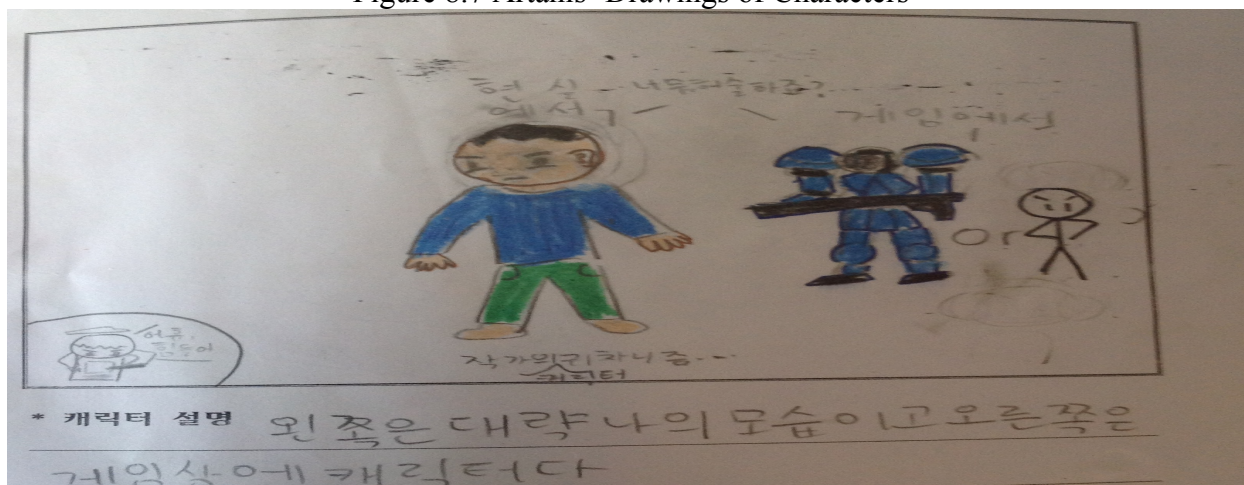
152 ART: They are shields.

(Original interaction in Korean; from Fieldnotes on April 23, 2014)

Throughout several weeks, he showed characters included in the game, different types of weapon that they could use, and rules of the game.

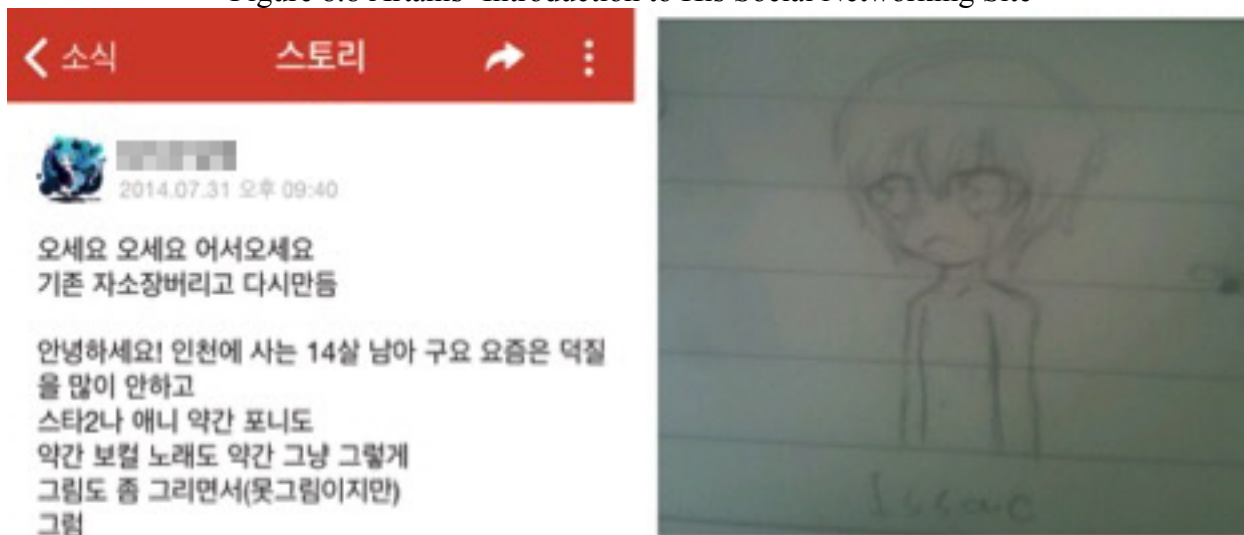
This way, Artanis exhibited the close relationship between himself, his drawing, and technology (e.g., animation and game). So when he was asked to draw “a character,”⁹⁹ he drew both Artanis “in reality” and Artanis “in games.”

Figure 8.7 Artanis’ Drawings of Characters



In explaining his characters, Artanis wrote, “The left is approximately my appearance, and the right is my characters on games.” This suggests that Artanis in the real world would not exist without Artanis in the virtual world. More recently, he changed the introductory page of his social networking site as follows:

Figure 8.8 Artanis’ Introduction to His Social Networking Site



⁹⁹ The instruction did not specify what character students should draw. When he read the direction, Artanis chose to draw three characters, one in reality and two in games.

Note: Artanis wrote, “Come come come quick. I threw away my existing introduction and recreated one. Hello! I am a 14-year-old boy living in Incheon, and these days I’m not doing too much of otaku stuff. I do StarCraft2 or animation and some Pony. Some vocal performance, some singing just like that. I draw too (not high quality). Okay, stopping for now.”

In Figure 8.8, Artanis listed the technological resources that were the major sources of his drawing and creativity (e.g., StarCraft and animations). In addition to revealing that he drew, he attached one of his drawings (i.e., a character that he used in one of the games he played). As he did on Figure 8.7, Artanis again signaled the tight connection between himself, his drawing, and technological affordances. This implies that his drawing ability, not a mere outcome of his talents, bloomed via technology—a tool to inspire and motivate him to draw. And because of his close association with drawing and technology, he believed that becoming a cartoonist or a game artist would be what he could target in the future.

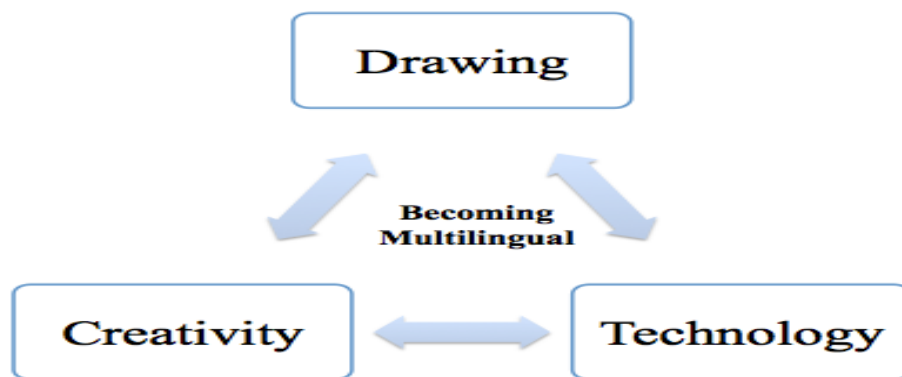
Overall, the case of Artanis, who was marked as “multicultural,” “slow,” and “unique,” seemed to give an example of stereotypical “multicultural” children in Korea. To some extent, he was struggling at home and in school due to his father’s death, unpleasant schooling experiences, and lack of interest in studying. However, Artanis’ case challenges the simplified stereotypical representation of “multicultural” children by showing how he navigated his own third space to discover what he liked, what he was good at, and what motivated him to draw. Ultimately, he was constructing his identity as a professional artist and in the process, he also demonstrated how drawing—a semiotic means—enabled him to interact with others, signal who he was, and constitute who he hoped to be.

The Triad of Drawing, Creativity, and Technology in Becoming “Multilingual” Subjects

The two adolescents introduced in this chapter, Hayang and Artanis, had profiles that easily presented them as typical, problematic “multicultural” students. Neither Hayang and Artanis were proficient in their mother’s language(s); they lagged behind in school and were not interested in their studies; they encountered familial challenges such as parents’ separation or father’s sudden death; and their families faced financial difficulties as well as the endemic discrimination against minority children in schools. While Hayang suffered from her experience of being bullied, Artanis was troubled with the “multicultural” label and with his peers in school. Their lives appeared to be despairing, and, on the face of it, they easily could be accused of being a burden on society (see Chapter 4).

Nevertheless, I would argue that my yearlong interactions with the two children unearthed different aspects of their lives: their potentialities as “multilingual” subjects who are equipped with diverse semiotic resources to express themselves, communicate with others, and construct their identities. Specifically, as Figure 8.9 suggests, through a means of drawing and by using a variety of technology around them, the two “multicultural” adolescents were becoming “multilingual” subjects. Although the triad is interrelated, for the purpose of clarity, I will discuss each branch respectively.

Figure 8.9 The Triad of Drawing, Creativity, and Technology



First, through a means of drawing, Hayang and Artanis were becoming “multilingual” subjects. They drew their previous experience, current concerns, and imagined future. For instance, drawing a webtoon that dealt with her traumatic experience of being bullied, Hayang believed that the readers of her work would criticize the bullies for her. Similarly, by drawing new game characters, Artanis also envisioned himself modifying/improving the existing games as an artist-to-be. This implies that drawing, as a semiotic system, allowed the two minority children to reflect on their past, handle their present, and envision their future. Furthermore, drawing also enabled them to make friends inside or outside school. In the case of Hayang, in spite of her isolation in the physical reality, her presence in the virtual reality was appreciated due to her drawing ability. Likewise, although Artanis was involved in some fights with his peers in school, it is his drawing that allowed him to build a closer relationship with them. As did individuals who are proficient in languages, Hayang and Artanis used the power of drawing in order to understand their experience, communicate with others, and construct their identities.

Second and relatedly, the creativity of Hayang and Artanis is actively engaged in their becoming “multilingual” subjects. Two attributes of creativity are largely found from the cases of Hayang and Artanis. One is their artistic creativity. Through drawing as a mode of meaning making, Hayang and Artanis consistently produced original, valuable works on their notebooks, margins of textbooks, handheld technological devices, and social networking sites (Sternberg, 2011). For instance, even though her parents and teachers did not pay attention to what she drew, Hayang reflected on issues such as bullying and the Ferry Sewol tragedy and attempted to find peace of mind through her artistic creativity (Torrance, 1966). In addition to drawing people or scenes in the physical reality (see Figures 8.4 and 8.5), Artanis—living in the imaginary world presented by games and animations—generated characters, story plots, and games that only existed in his mind. This implies that their works of drawing were not mere replications within a commercialized genre like webtoon and StarCraft but had novel meanings given by Hayang and Artanis. The other is their use of drawing as a way to communicate with themselves and with others. To both Hayang and Artanis, drawing was one of the most significant aspects of their lives because it helped them to understand their experience and represented what they imagined (e.g., Hayang’s webtoon about bullying and Artanis’ generation of new/modified game characters). And by uploading their drawings to the Internet, they opened up alternative ways to talk to themselves, revealed their understanding of the world, interacted with others, and dreamed of their futures.

Lastly, technology encourages Hayang and Artanis to draw and develop creativity, and ultimately contributes to their becoming of “multilingual” subjects. Technology plays mainly three roles in the lives of the two “multicultural” teenagers. First, technology works as a platform

that inspires Hayang and Artanis to draw. Via technology like computers, cell phones, other software programs, and the Internet, both Hayang and Artanis played games, watched video clips, took advantage of infinite resources, drew with different tools (e.g., mobile application), and shared their works with others easily. This not only taught them how to draw (e.g., learning about works of professional cartoon artists), but also fostered their creativity (e.g., observing other people's secondary creations and learning what tool to use to convey their intentions). Second, technology serves as a stage that allows Hayang and Artanis to share their works and communicate with others. By uploading their works to their own social networking sites and others' webpages, the two "multilingual" subjects constructed their identity as drawing artists. Moreover, they became aware of other people who were working on what they were interested in and interacted with them through their drawings. Third, technology operates as a site that builds a sense of community. Hayang and Artanis tried to search for other people who had similar interests and made friends who did not (a) force them to reveal their personal and familial background and therefore (b) stigmatize them. Different from school where their talents were not always acknowledged or valued, the virtual community appreciated talents, creativity, and use of technology as demonstrated by Hayang and Artanis.

Overall, the interconnected triad of drawing, creativity, and technology contributes to the lives of the two minority children in Korea. Instead of the identities given by society (e.g., "Korean" or "multicultural"), their practices of drawing—facilitated by their creativity and technology—enables Hayang and Artanis to reclaim their social positions as "multilingual" subjects who are equipped with different semiotic repertoires to express themselves, interact with others, and constitute their identities.

Conclusion

This chapter demonstrated how Hayang and Artanis found their own ways to overcome the challenges before them and ultimately resist the negative discourses about "multicultural" children (see Chapter 4). The cases of Hayang and Artanis urge the fields of applied linguistics and education to push boundaries of what multilingual means in the context of globalization. At the same time, the two cases also uncover the lack of flexibility in the Korean education system. While purportedly democratic and certainly public, schools tended not to see their role as awakening children's potentialities, but instead as transmitting to them the basics of Korean, English, and math. Rather than guiding them to develop their talents, for example, in drawing, music, and the arts, the school system seemed to rely on private initiatives (which required parents' financial resources to develop children's talents and interests) to promote children's special artistic talents. Thus, the findings of this chapter sound alarm for educators as well as policy makers in Korea to come up with supportive ways for children to become fully contributing citizens of Korea and of the world.

Chapter 9. Conclusions

Summary of the Dissertation

This mixed-methods study examined how “multicultural” teenagers, in the face of prevailing social stigma, used their linguistic and cultural resources and envisioned themselves in various parts of the world. In particular, as a way to fill the gap in the literature on how minority youth learn linguistic and cultural practices as they construct personal, cultural, and academic identities, this study drew on an ecological theoretical framework. Through multiple methods—namely, critical discourse analysis, hierarchical linear statistical modeling, and ethnographic analysis of embedded case studies, three major findings emerge, one for each stage of data collection.

Critical discourse analysis of the newspaper articles revealed that “multicultural” families attracted varying characterizations from a marginalized group, to a threat, and to global human resources. The most widespread discourse described “multicultural” families as the socially, economically marginalized group; when this discourse was understood more as possibly hazardously, “multicultural” families were depicted as a potential threat to Korean society; at the other extreme, a global human resources discourse capitalized “multicultural” children’s bilingual and bicultural potentialities. These conflicting but simplified discourses—supported by Korea’s foundational ideologies of democracy, nationalism, and neoliberalism, respectively—reflected a particular mode of discrimination for “multicultural” children who were somehow not “Korean enough.”

The linear growth curve models in Stage 2 showed no Korean and English proficiency difference between “multicultural” teenagers and their “non-multicultural” peers. This finding refuted the fundamental assumption of the discourses about “multicultural” youth, namely that their deficiency in Korean is responsible for numerous issues in society. In fact, the tight relationship between children’s socioeconomic status and their language proficiency in both Korean and English indicated that the “multicultural” label has been used to manage the growing economic inequality that has been intensified by globalization in Korea.

The ethnographic component of this dissertation illustrated how six focal teenagers were constructing their identities by skillfully using their linguistic, cultural, and semiotic resources. Through their outstanding academic achievements, Tayo and Sungho were positioned and positioned themselves as model students in school; furthermore, Tayo exhibited the possibility of capitalizing her multilingual/multicultural resources and global networks while Sungho sowed the seeds of becoming a more critical member of Korean society. Similarly, by taking advantage of their linguistic and cultural competence, Jinsoo and Heedong visualized alternative places to live, study, and/or work. In addition to negotiating their “multicultural” identities in Korea, these two teenagers developed their identities as cosmopolitan citizens who would cross national boundaries freely and value solidarity as well as dialogues. Lastly, despite personal circumstances that predisposed them to the social stigma of “multicultural” children, Hayang and Artanis found their own creative ways to overcome academic challenges through their art—both were committed if not obsessive illustrators. In fact, by navigating alternative channels to communicate with others (e.g., through the Internet and smart phone applications), these children were growing up to be “multilingual” subjects who would strategically use various semiotic and artistic resources to make meaning. Overall, these focal “multicultural” teenagers, regardless of their situations and interests, were carving out their own third places for themselves (Kramsch, 1993) and becoming productive local and global citizens.

Discussion and Implications

Re-Examining Labels

The findings of the study lead me to reflect on the two key labels in this dissertation—namely, minority and “multicultural.” To begin with, the problems of Korean teenagers of mixed parentage parallel those revealed in the U.S. literature on minority youth. They suffer many forms of prejudice: discrimination against their family background (e.g., immigrant mothers who are outsiders to Korean society, lower SES, and/or diverse languages and cultures at home) and stereotypes associated with their families. However, as discussed in Chapter 1, the definition of “minority” is ambiguous and therefore can be problematic. Different scholars apply different criteria for determining who is labeled as a minority learner. It can be narrowly construed to include, for example, a particular racial minority or broadly defined to include all immigrants, locally born children of immigrants, children from low-income families, and children discriminated against because of their race/ethnicity, gender and sexuality, class, religion, body and mind, language, and culture. This means that although not all non-native speakers of English are “minority,” for example, a variety of categories of people are included in one denomination, i.e., “minority.”

This, in fact, creates a problem for conflating many research discourses that seem not to focus on the same phenomenon. For instance, literacy education focuses on educational inequalities, SLA on non-nativeness, Office of Management and Budget on race/ethnicity, and National Institutes of Health on family’s income level. Furthermore, although the SLA research tended not to claim to study “minorities,” some of studies in the tradition could be integrated into the literature on minority youth.

Indeed, the term “minority” in the Korean case has shown a different aspect of a similar, but not the same problem. Representatively, “minorities” in the United States would be discriminated against for their SES, race/ethnicity, and language, but not necessarily for their mixed parentage. However, together with other factors such as SES and immigrant mothers, it is the blood purity ideology that fundamentally stigmatizes “multicultural” children in Korea. Specifically, they are described as if they do not speak Korean like other “non-multicultural” Koreans, for they are the children of mixed parentage; their skin color and appearance are presented as a powerful source of bullying, for they are mixed; they are characterized as a potential threat to Korean society, for they are not “Korean enough.” As such, the existing “minority” research literature would not fully illuminate the case of “multicultural” children in Korea. Because the term “minority” is a marked one, I will henceforth put it in quotes.

Relatedly, what does it mean to be “multicultural” anyway? Or putting it another way, as Jinsoo’s homeroom teacher questioned, “Isn’t everybody multicultural?” (from Interview on August 25, 2014). Indeed, the existence of the term “multicultural family” presupposes “monocultural,” entails the assumption that a “multicultural” family is abnormal and deviant, and thus needs a label. The category of “multicultural,” which reflects a nationalistic, xenophobic, and even racist social reality in Korea, is then used to stigmatize a couple’s marriage and to identify their children, even though they are all native-born Koreans, as outcasts.

In sum, through this study, I would ultimately argue that “multicultural” children are neither “minority” nor “multicultural”; but they are—or can be—elites, cosmopolitan citizens, and artistic multilingual subjects who can become contributing citizens in Korea and in the world. In this sense, to create an environment where “multicultural” youth are free from any sort of discrimination, more attempts to resignify the myth of “minority” and “multicultural” are needed.

Rethinking Deficit Perspectives on “Minority” Youth

Traditionally, especially if one gives credence to particular popular discourses, “minority” youth are believed to be a great source of distress to societies (Giroux, 2009). Blamed for their laziness, deficiency, lack of educability, and unworthiness (Apple, 2006; Giroux, 2009), “minority” youth are led eventually to prison (Wald & Losen, 2003). Many children born into transnational families have become one of the representative “minority” groups in Korea and are suffering from social stigma. They are assumed to speak Korean like foreigners due to their foreign mothers and low socioeconomic status; they are presented as if they lag behind in school and are bullied by other “non-multicultural” children (see Chapter 4). These negative stereotypes inevitably lower educators’ expectations for “multicultural” youth and prevent them from searching for children’s potentialities. For example, although Hayang and Artanis always showed their love of drawing and artistic talents in school, their teachers hardly realized the two teenagers’ potentialities and constantly expressed their concerns over their lack of academic progress. These biased gazes at “minority” youth then lead researchers to further reproduce stereotypes about “multicultural” children and to dismiss their agency in cultivating their interests and talents. Indeed, there has been lack of discussion about how “multicultural” children live through stereotypes associated with them and whether the argument that their presence is detrimental to Korean society is valid.

This dissertation strives to shift the focus from “minority” youth’s deficiencies to their resources, potentialities, creativity, and agency. It found that despite the prevalence of social stigma, little evidence supported the negative stereotypes about “multicultural” children. For instance, “multicultural” and “non-multicultural” teenagers had comparable Korean and English proficiency throughout their middle school years (see Chapter 5). In addition, the six focal students demonstrated that while the “multicultural” label was imposed on them all, they were constructing their identities as elite Koreans, as cosmopolitan citizens, or as artistic multilingual subjects. In particular, although Hayang’s and Artanis’ drawing activities were neither acknowledged nor valued in the educational system, they were productive in what they felt passionate about and active in developing their talents throughout 2014. In sum, these “multicultural” youth were resisting the prevailing social stigma identified with them.

As I have demonstrated in this dissertation, if we are willing to “dig a little deeper” into the lives of these remarkable youth, we can overwrite the unwarranted stereotypes from which they suffer, redefine constructs like “multicultural,” and deconstruct ideologies of oppression that continue to haunt “minority” youth to this very day.

Reconsidering Language Learning of “Minority” Youth

The six focal “multicultural” teenagers in this study had distinctive language proficiency profiles. For example, due to their familial circumstances (e.g., living experiences in Vietnam and a half-Korean and half-Vietnamese father), Tayo and Heedong were proficient Korean-Vietnamese speakers who were additionally learning English in school. In contrast, their mothers’ proficiency in Korean allowed Sungho and Artanis to believe that learning Chinese was unnecessary; similarly, mother’s proficiency in English led Jinsoo to argue that proficiency in Korean and English would be enough. Although Hayang was exposed to a variety of languages at home (i.e., Tagalog, Kapampangan, English, and Korean), she did not feel comfortable using any of them except Korean.

Regardless of their proficiency in Korean, Vietnamese, Chinese, and/or English, however, these children tended to show affinity for particular languages. Tayo and Heedong claimed that

separating Vietnamese from them would be impossible, for the language was a significant part of them. Their experiences of learning Vietnamese, of observing their mothers and family members interacting in Vietnamese, and of living/staying in Vietnam led them to see the inextricable relationship between Vietnamese and their sense of self. Interestingly, a similar sense of affinity was observable from the other students. For example, in the absence of Chinese proficiency and of active interaction with Chinese-speaking others, Sungho believed that he would master the language rapidly if he decided to learn Chinese. Likewise, Jinsoo argued that he would be able to learn English with ease because he inherently “had” the language from birth. In other words, their emotional investment in their mothers’ language may well enable “multicultural” children to believe that they are in a more advantageous position to learn a particular language, such as Chinese or English, as if their proficiency (or even ownership) of languages is somehow inherited from their Chinese or Filipina mothers.

This relationship that “multicultural” children made between language proficiency and affinity for language raises the question of what it means to learn language and more importantly, what language is. Although their closeness to mother’s language(s) would motivate them to learn those languages (Noels, 2001), they seem to assume that language learning is “easy,” perhaps because they believe that it requires them simply to memorize a static set of prescribed rules and a list of vocabulary. And such an understanding of language learning is based on the assumption that language is the fixed, autonomous, discrete, and thus enumerable system (e.g., “I speak two languages but will learn one more language”). Critiquing this conceptualization of language learning and language, Makoni and Pennycook (2005) analyzed the colonial history that languages were invented and constructed by European nation-states. They then called our attention to the strategies to “disinvent” languages by exploring how languages are used in multiple (colonial) contexts and what ideologies are travelling across contexts, for example. Inspired by such a provocative stance, some argue that we need to help language learners operate between languages/dialects (Modern Language Association, 2007) so that multilingualism does not simply mean “pluralization of monolingualism” (Makoni & Pennycook, 2005, p. 147).

However, would this be enough? Don’t we still limit our discussion of “multilingualism” to linguistic signs that are not contaminated with other signs? How about students like Hayang and Artanis? Aren’t they “disinventing” languages by using multiplied media such as technology and drawing? Aren’t they making meaning and communicating with others through such media? I argue that their strategic and skillful uses of multisemiotic resources encourage us to expand the notion of a multilingual subject. Namely, instead of referring to individuals who have the ability to speak two or more languages/dialects, the term “multilingual” should encompass their competence to pick up linguistic, cultural, and other semiotic affordances in making meaning. This way, we would be able to indeed disinvent what language is and rethink who is multilingual.

Reconsidering Cultural Learning of “Minority” Youth

This dissertation provides empirical representations of how culture is inscribed in “multicultural” children’s words and bodies. They did not learn “Korean,” “Chinese,” “Vietnamese,” or “Filipino” cultures that are countable and discrete entities transmittable from a generation to another; instead, “multicultural” children’s expressions of their beliefs and positionings captured the structuring and structured relationship between macro discourses and micro interactions in their experiences. And this is how they learned culture, i.e., beliefs and practices that members of a social group possess in a particular space and time (Halliday, 1978).

Specifically, as the label “multicultural” gained its popularity in the mid 2000s, Korean society has produced and circulated stereotypical discourses about “multicultural” families and children. These discourses have reflected and constructed the collective ways of thinking about this new group of individuals in Korea. Simultaneously, the forces of globalization and the overwhelming power of the United States have introduced other discourses to Korea (e.g., cosmopolitanism and multiculturalism).

Growing up hearing these conflicting but interrelated discourses, “multicultural” youth embodied these ideological tensions in their conversations with me (Bakhtin, 1981; Crawford & McLaren, 2003; Kramsch, 1993; Weedon, 1987). For instance, while Tayo and Sungho were trying hard to fit into Korean society by using the elite, multilingual, and multicultural discourses, the conditions they benefitted from complicated their achievements by bringing classism and neoliberalism into the picture. Similarly, Jinsoo and Heedong were serving and served by discourses about globalization and cosmopolitanism but at the same time, the presence of the United States in their imagination could not save them from reproducing the discourse of the American dream (e.g., the U.S. as the land of opportunity). And there were Hayang and Artanis, who suffered from the nationalist discourse but who questioned the discourse of multilingualism.

Indeed, these six “multicultural” teenagers showed how hard they strived to make sense of their own situations and experiences via these competing discourses familiar to them. In fact, this would be exactly the expectation that was required to them as members of Korean society (Ochs, 2002): reproducing/reconstructing the dominant discourses through their mouths and performing in ways that comply with the discourses. In this sense, each “multicultural” child demonstrated different but similar manifestations of culture by embodying discourses that better explained their historical trajectories, interactions with contexts as well as others, and imagination.

Reconsidering Identity Construction of “Minority” Youth

Korean society’s heavy use of the “multicultural” label was the process of assigning meaning to this new group of individuals. They were named as “multicultural” and felt the imposition of the “multicultural” identity. And the six focal students in this study had to grapple with the stereotypes associated with the term; they expressed the burden of being labeled as “multicultural” and sometimes tried to hide their family backgrounds. Nevertheless, these “multicultural” teenagers with whom I interacted over a year did not passively accept the identity served up to them by the broader Korean society. Tayo and Sungho crafted their identities as multilingual, multicultural, and/or critical elites in Korea. Furthermore, through the understanding of their parents’ countries of origin, Jinsoo and Heedong formed their cosmopolitan citizen identities in the context of globalization. In the cases of Hayang and Artanis, despite their challenges, they continued to develop their artistic talents and interests more than anyone else. By making meaning through the means of language, drawing, and technology, they presented themselves as complex multilingual subjects.

As such, these six “multicultural” children demonstrated how they negotiated their identities by exploiting affordances in their circumstances, as researchers such as Kramsch (2009) and McKay and Wong (1996) found in their studies. This in fact suggests their own ways of resisting social stigma and the imposed “multicultural” identity. To sum up, in their lives, these “minority” youth highlight their respective potentialities and ultimately contribute to the process of resignifying the meaning of the “multicultural” label.

Revisiting the Ecological Theoretical Framework

Owing to the ecological theoretical framework's focus on the reciprocal and relational interaction between individuals and environments (Kramsch, 2002; Pennycook, 2004), this study not only described "multicultural" teenagers' experiences, but also documented the process of their becoming rather than the state of their being (Gleick, 1987). In particular, the framework enabled me to interact with the focal students in varying contexts (e.g., home, classroom/school, and neighborhood), capturing the holistic system of their lives (Kramsch & Steffensen, 2008). For example, Hayang's passion for drawing was better understood by knowing about her isolated home environment, where she had no one with whom to communicate or her hostile school environment, where she endured bullying. Similarly, in the middle of 2014, Heedong unexpectedly raised the possibility of going to Vietnam to work; if I had not known his father's background and parents' decisions, I would have missed an important insight that explained why he began to conceptualize Vietnam as a possible place to obtain a stable job. Therefore, in order to more fully understand "minority" youth's lives, researchers need to account for how the changes in their environments—big or small—influence their perceptions about their lives and the world (Larsen-Freeman, 1997).

Second, as a way to contextualize "multicultural" children's lives, their historical trajectories, experiences, and imagination were investigated, and in the process, the framework unearthed affordances, tensions, and paradoxes found in their interactions with environments and others (Kramsch, 2002; Kramsch & Steffensen, 2008; van Lier, 2004). For instance, Sungho had ethnic Korean parents, looked Korean, used Korean at home, enjoyed social and economic supports from his parents, and positioned himself as a high-achieving student. Yet, the "multicultural" label wounded him and led him to suffer from xenophobic comments such as "Chinese brat" in school. Likewise, while Jinsoo was pressured by the "multicultural" category and identified it as an encumbrance to his life, he still strategically benefited from the label to grasp more opportunities to learn and visit the Philippines. This way, the current study presents more nuanced and complicated pictures of Korean "minority" youth's lives and provides the value of addressing affordances as well as contradictions in "minority" youth's experiences.

Third, the findings of this dissertation highlighted the agency of "minority" youth. Some applied linguists raised concerns about limited attention to human agency within the ecological perspectives (e.g., if the system self-organizes, where does human volition come into play?). Larsen-Freeman and Cameron (2008) and Larsen-Freeman (2011) theoretically responded to this critique by arguing that within the system, humans exercise their agency by making choices (e.g., how to conduct interpersonal interaction and what word/grammar to use). Building on their responses, this study offered empirical evidence of how "multicultural" children exercised their agency and intentions with and within their systems. Specifically, as Hayang picked up varying semiotic affordances around her environments and ultimately constituted her artist identity, "multicultural" children in this study were not passive or solely structured by their environments; they were actively structuring their lives as well. Instead of remaining marginalized due to their "multicultural" family backgrounds, they navigated what were available to them, exercised their agency in using resources around them, and re-imagined who they were and who they hoped to be in various contexts. Ultimately, the theoretical framework contributes to the deconstruction of deficit perspectives on "minority" youth.

While this dissertation project proved the power of ecological perspectives in describing "minority" youth's lives, it also revealed some weaknesses of the framework. As Pennycook (2004) and Steffensen (2007) pointed out, it is not inherently critical and therefore risks losing

sight of power struggles in social reality. For instance, the ecological theoretical framework successfully captured some of the desires of my study participants to go to the United States and their tendency to prioritize learning English over learning the languages of their mothers. However, the ecological perspective has not been able to offer deep and critical explanations about key phenomena, such as what motivates “multicultural” teenagers to bring the U.S. up in their imaginations; what symbolic power the English language has in Korea and in other countries; and how/why “multicultural” teenagers attempt to capitalize upon the hierarchy of the prestige. While Larsen-Freeman and Cameron (2008) noted that it would be researchers’ responsibility to be more critical in analyzing their data, these questions call for more lenses that can complement the ecological theoretical framework.

Among many conceptual tools, the notion of symbolic power (Bourdieu, 1989, 1991) would provide an alternative way to critically investigate the symbolic dimension of language, culture, and identity (Kramsch & Whiteside, 2008). Defined as the power to construct social reality and make individuals believe that the established reality is legitimate (Bourdieu, 1989, 1991), symbolic power is routinely employed in different aspects of social life. This is because individuals are invited to play a symbolic game in social interaction by signaling the indexical meanings of their age, gender, race/ethnicity, social class, linguistic repertoires, country of origin, citizenship, and so forth. Thus, adding the concept of symbolic power to the ecological theoretical framework would help researchers (a) better situate “minority” youth in historical and ideological conditions and (b) ultimately offer a finer explanation of “minority” youth’s perceptions about different hierarchies (e.g., language, culture, and nation-states) and their power struggles.

Policy Implications

One of the salient themes that emerged from this dissertation is the burden of the “multicultural” label. As hard as these students worked, each in his or her own way, to carve out a stigma-free identity, the prevailing social stigma associated with “multicultural” and the weight of the label imposed upon them meant they had to struggle to escape these stigma. Their teachers and parents also shared numerous stories about the destructive impact of the “multicultural” label on their students and children. For instance, Heedong’s homeroom teacher was aware that with the fear of being recognized and stigmatized as “multicultural,” some “multicultural” students were not willing to participate in afterschool programs (solely) for them. These findings indicate the need for reconsidering our use of the term “multicultural.” One way to call the attention of the people to this issue, for example, would be asking teachers as well as students to critically reflect on their own stereotypes about “multicultural” families and children. In addition, by providing them with opportunities to deconstruct the meaning of “multicultural,” it would be possible to re-interpret what “multicultural” means and who “multicultural” individuals are.

This dissertation also emphasizes the power of socioeconomic status on students’ academic achievement. In general, it is poverty that motivates this particular kind of marriage practice to occur in Korea and in neighboring nation-states; in addition, macro discourses about “multicultural” families appear to use their poverty as a fundamental source of their children’s deficiencies. Although students like Jinsoo exemplified how “multicultural” children with low socioeconomic status could obtain remarkable academic achievement, it is distressing that the two most academically outstanding students in this study were the two students who received most learning support (via economic resources) from their parents. Perhaps there should be more tailored educational programs that aim to mitigate the impact of family’s socioeconomic status

on children's schooling. This means that the "multicultural" label itself should not be the only determining factor in deciding who would benefit from educational programs. Instead, there needs programs that can indeed help children in need (e.g., both "multicultural" and "non-multicultural" children from low-income families) to survive and do well in school.

Last but not least, the concept of success must be re-imagined. Giroux (2009) argued that children in today's world were encouraged to adopt the values of a society that "measures its success and failure solely through the economic lens of the Gross National Product (GNP)" (p. 40). This in turn grants society the right to categorize children by the profits that they would make; so in the school setting, children's test scores are likely to be used as the standard of their success because high achievers are the students most likely to secure sustainable and well-paid jobs (i.e., paying tax) and the least likely to rely on social welfare programs. Such a mentality pushes students like Hayang and Artanis to be identified as maladjusted, low-achieving "multicultural" students. However, were they indeed unsuccessful? Although they might have been less successful from the perspective of academic achievement, it is difficult to argue that they failed. Despite the educational system's lack of acknowledgement of their talents, they were active, productive, and even creative in further developing their artistic potential and interests. What if their drawing abilities were more appreciated or rewarded by the educational system? What if they had enough material resources and instructional scaffoldings in school that allowed them to make further progress in drawing? The focal teenagers' stories in this study raise the urgent necessity of having multiple definitions of as well as standards for success in Korean schools so that children can find and develop their talents and interest and ultimately become "successful" in their chosen fields.

Avenues for Future Research

The findings of this dissertation suggest several directions for future research. First, more longitudinal research studies can be launched. The ethnographic data analyzed/presented in this dissertation were collected from February to December 2014. With this short data collection period, I demonstrated how my study participants lived through social stigma associated with them and how they were positioned and positioned themselves throughout the year. However, my arguments and illustrations of these children (and their families and teachers) would not be replicable in their lives of 2016 due to the constant, multiple, and fluid interaction of language, culture, and identity in their environments. In addition, it is difficult to predict how "multicultural" children's experiences occurred in multiple timescales lead changes in their lives over time (Lemke, 2002). Thus, one future research direction would be continuing to work with "minority" youth after an intensive ethnographic work; although sporadically, following them for a longer period of time would allow researchers to better understand their challenges as well as progress.

Second, the impact of family's socioeconomic status can be more thoroughly studied. As discussed in Chapter 5, the longitudinal effect of socioeconomic status on both "multicultural" and "non-multicultural" children's schooling experiences is powerful. Thus, more quantitative, qualitative, or mixed-methods studies can seek to identify the kinds of institutional supports necessary for children from low socioeconomic backgrounds. This way, we would learn how to help children cultivating other forms of capital that permit them to get a "feel for the game" (Bourdieu, 1991, p. 13) in varying fields.

Third, the experiences of other groups of "minority" youth in Korea—especially those who tend to receive little attention by society—can be researched. The number of news articles

about the “multicultural” keyword has explosively increased in the late 2000s. This implies that due to the public attention, “multicultural” families and children have been more likely to voice their concerns and situations to the larger society. However, as I hinted at in Chapter 4, there are other groups of “minority” youth in Korea. To name a few in relation to migration, North Korean refugee children, ethnic Korean children who used to live in Russia (*Koryo-saram*) and in China (*Josenjok*), and children of foreign workers can be included. Because they are exposed to different challenges in living in Korea, there needs to be more empirical studies that explore how they live through stereotypes associated with them. For example, although North Korean refugee children speak Korean, their North Korean accent may prevent them from mingling with South Korean children. And we do not know yet how their traumatic border crossing experiences and the sudden environmental changes they experience in South Korea (e.g., unfamiliar discourses) influence their perceptions about the two Koreas, their living and schooling experiences in South Korea, and their identity formation in the nation-state. Will they, as did the minority students in this study, learn how to make hold the social stigma about them at bay as they try to negotiate their identities and carve out their third places by capitalizing affordances in their environments?

The last issue that merits further investigation focuses on theoretical possibilities, in particular about how one might best complement an ecological perspective. As discussed in this chapter, ecological perspectives are in need of a critical lens that allows us to further investigate the symbolic dimension of language, culture, and identity. For instance, future research—by adding Bourdieu’s notion of symbolic power (Bourdieu, 1991, 1989; Kramsch, 2006)—could examine how the hegemonic power of the United States and the global status of English are reproduced in the mouths of “minority” youth in the United States when they narrate their immigration to the U.S. and share their living experiences in their neighborhoods. In the process, researchers can look into how “minority” immigrant youth who are already in the United States legitimize their resources to (re)construct their identities and how they perceive their futures in their home country, in the United States, and in the world.

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