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UNIVERSITY OF CALIFORNIA, SAN DIEGO

**Presentation of Social Identity and Language Use
among Bilingual Korean English Speakers**

A dissertation submitted in partial satisfaction of the
requirements for the degree Doctor of Education

in

Teaching and Learning

By

Yoon Joo Park

Committee in Charge:

Paula Levin, Chair
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2011

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The Dissertation of Yoon Joo Park is approved, and it is acceptable in quality and form for publication on microfilm and electronically:

Chair

University of California, San Diego

2011

DEDICATION

To my husband, Jimyong Moon, who has always
supported my academic journey.

To my colleagues and faculty supervisor in Korean Language Department
for their encouragement and excitement about this research.

To my cohort, Andrea Barraugh, Carmen Restrepo, and Orletta Nguyen
for your wisdom, insights, and humor.

To Barbara Edwards,
for your excellent editing work and encouragement.

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Alison Wishard Guerra, and Claire Ramsey.
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I would not have completed this research.

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ABSTRACT OF THE DISSERTATION

Presentation of Social Identity and Language Use
among Bilingual Korean English Speakers

by

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Doctor of Education in Teaching and Learning

University of California, San Diego, 2011

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The aim of this research study was to better understand how bilingual Korean English speakers use language in face-to-face interaction as well as in online social networks relates to their social identities.

The study was grounded in social theory of language and social identity theory. The social theory of language views language as a form of social practice and suggests that language is meaningful within social contexts. Social identity theory defines social identity as an individual's self-definition or perception in relation to other associates in the social group to which one belongs. The existing research on language use among

bilingual Korean English speakers and a review of literature regarding online social networks and Korean immigrants' online literacy practice also served as a larger context for this study.

The research was conducted using a mixed-method approach. An online questionnaire collected demographic data as well as information about the bilingual Korean English speakers' self-assessed language proficiencies, language uses, and their social identities. The survey participants included 78 bilingual Korean English speakers in southern California. Additionally, semi-structured interviews were conducted to gather in-depth explanation from the bilingual participants in terms of their use of languages and their presentation of social identities. Among the 78 survey participants, 16 were chosen to participate in the interviews.

There were six major findings about bilingual Korean English speakers. First, bilingual Korean English speakers with different levels of self-assessed language proficiency use the languages differently based on their conversational partners or the social contexts of the conversation. Secondly, their self-assessed language proficiency does not relate to their social identity construction. Third, they select a specific language based on the language skills of their conversational partners. Fourth, they intentionally use Korean when talking about topics specifically related to Korean life or addressing others in ways that reflect cultural norms. Fifth, their social identities are shaped by the shared idea about typical Korean-American. Lastly, they use both Korean and English differently online depending on their social identities.

These findings have implications both for research on language use and identity formation and for language teaching and learning.

I. INTRODUCTION

Language has been a major topic of study among educational researchers. Terms such as “second language” and “foreign language” have become very familiar and are frequently used throughout the world. As well, there has been an increasing number of bilingual language speakers in the United States. The 2000 U.S. Census reported that between 1980 and 2000 the number of people who spoke a language other than English at home more than doubled, and total population of people age 5 and over who spoke a language other than English at home increased from 14% in 1990 to 18% in 2000 (Shin & Bruno, 2003). According to the census, approximately 55% of bilingual speakers in 2000 reported that they spoke English “very well.” Indeed, it is not difficult to hear people talking in two languages. They may use one language, either English or their heritage language, or they may use both, switching back and forth based on who they are talking to or what they are talking about. Many K-12 teachers recognize that the children of immigrants have acquired a high level of English proficiency and have had special access to the language of their parents. This recognition has grabbed the attention of many language teachers and practitioner-researchers like me who want to understand who bilingual speakers are and how they differ from monolingual speakers. For this reason, it is important to examine the research on and practice of bilingual speakers in terms of their use of languages and their identities.

Researchers generally agree that bilingual Korean English speakers are most likely to be Korean heritage speakers, fluent English speakers with a Korean heritage background and a broad range of Korean language proficiency (Cho, 2000; Chung, 2006; Jo, 2001; Lee, 2002; Lee & Shin, 2008; Min, 2000; Shin, 2005). While the cultural

identity issue of bilingual Korean English speakers has also been widely studied (Jo, 2001; Kim, 2003; Shin, 2005; Yi, 2009; You, 2001; You, 2005), bilingual Korean English speakers' behaviors, attitudes toward use of languages, and presentation of themselves to social communities have not been fully explored.

As a university level teacher of Korean language, I have taught mostly bilingual Korean English speakers with Korean language proficiency ranging from beginner level to intermediate level. Typically these students have a Korean family background and have grown up within a Korean community. They are likely to have had an in-depth exposure to Korean culture which has a strong effect on their identity formation. They actively participate not only in direct interpersonal activities such as talking to their peers or being involved in Korean church events, but also in online social activities such as downloading Korean movies, plays, and music, or being active in internet communities that connect them to diverse groups of peers around the world. Some students, however, did not have a strong Korean identity. These students identified themselves as Korean even though they had a limited experience of Korean culture and a relatively low level of proficiency in Korean. This particular group of students made me curious about the interplay between the use of languages, the formation of cultural or social identities, and the presentation of the identities in face-to-face interactions as well as in online social world.

According to the Modern Language Association's 2006 survey of enrollments in languages other than English in undergraduate courses, there was a significant growth between 2002 and 2006. Approximately 40 percent more second generation Korean American college students who are most likely to be bilingual Korean English speakers

enrolled in Korean language courses in 2006 than had enrolled four years before. But there is a limited research base about the characteristics of bilingual Korean English speakers. Therefore, it is useful to study more about bilingual Korean English speakers, especially in the way they use Korean and English, how they present themselves to others, and how they account for their language practice.

The overarching research is the area of Korean as second or heritage language acquisition. Since I have taught Korean as a heritage language or a foreign language to students who have some proficiency in both Korean and English, I have been academically focused on bilingual Korean English speakers, especially in the college level classroom. I am curious to understand bilingual Korean English speakers in terms of research and practice. I have been particularly interested in social or cultural identity formation as it relates to the use of languages in varying contexts and for various purposes.

Within this context, the present study considers ways of understanding the relationships between language use of bilingual Korean English speakers and their social identities. Specifically, this study explores how bilingual Korean English speakers present their social identities in online social worlds, what languages they use and how they make sense of their language choices. By using identity as an analytic lens, I examined when and why language switch occurs in face-to-face interaction as well as in online activities by bilingual Korean English speakers. I found that bilingual Korean English speakers use language differently not only based on the social contexts of conversations but also on their conversational partners. Especially in online social worlds these bilingual speakers believe that the way they use language relates to the presentation

of their social identities. In short, the study explored the language use of bilingual Korean English speakers and their social identities, focusing on how they relate to each other and how these speakers make sense of the languages they use.

II. LITERATURE REVIEW

Through this study I wanted to understand how the use of language in face-to-face interaction and in online social networks as well by bilingual Korean English speakers relates to their social identities. This chapter sets the stage for the study by reviewing two major conceptual frameworks: 1) social theory of language and 2) social identity. The study is also situated in two broad areas of research: 1) bilingual Korean English speakers and 2) internet communities as social networks in Korean community.

Social Theory of Language

The present study is grounded in a social theory of language which views language as a form of social practice. Language is understood as a part of the social system, language is a socialization process, and language is constrained by the socialization process (Fairclough, 1989, p.22). From this perspective, language functions within a social system and cannot be separated from the social functions that it creates (Bakhtin, 1981; Fairclough, 1989; Halliday, 1978; Lemke, 1995; Lindholm, 1992). Language cannot exist outside of a society, rather it can only have meaning when placed within its social context. This theory recognizes that meaning cannot happen in isolation but can only occur within the social system, and that meanings are constrained by social context. A study about language becomes, therefore, a study about the role that language occupies within the social system.

A social theory of language is concerned with how language functions within the social situation. In other words, the theory describes how language at an interpersonal

level of meaning is reflected at a higher level of social meaning and vice versa. Halliday (1978) explained that “a social theory of language looks at language in terms of how it functions within a set of relational contexts. When people learn language they are learning not only the structural or linguistic system, but also how much meaning is relational to the social order and social situation” (p.18). Lemke (1995) also states “a social theory of language must show us how to connect each individual social event with the larger patterns of social relationships” (p.20). Lemke furthers Halliday’s notion of the social theory of language model and makes a statement that “our uses of language are inseparable from the social function, the social contexts of actions and relationships in which language plays its part,” and in this sense language is a semiotic resource to be deployed for social purposes (1995, p.19).

Bakhtin (1981) also talks about semiotic mediation by language between individuals by stating as follow:

The word in language is half someone else’s. It becomes one’s own only when the speaker populates it with his own intention, his own accent, when he appropriate the word, adapting it to his own semantic and expressive intention...the word...exists in other people’s mouths, in other people’s concrete context, serving other people’s intentions: it is from there that one must take the word and make it one’s own (pp. 293-294).

According to Bakhtin, the meaning of a certain utterance cannot be derived from a single interaction during one social event because a verbal act has a larger context of previous acts in the same sphere, both those by the same speaker and those by other speakers. Bakhtin’s view is echoed by Lemke (1995) who claims that meaning is created when a social activity of making meaning with language and other symbolic systems in a particular situation or setting is placed within the discourses of the larger community as a

whole. Marková (1990) further clarified this social nature of language use, stating that speech becomes internalized to individuals only when it has been externally established for others.

Language is also constrained by social conditions which are socially and culturally relative. Schiffrin (1994) argued that “the meaning of people’s utterances are relative to the social situation: at the same time, the social situation is socially and culturally determined” (p.106). People’s choices in what they say and do depend not only on the role or activity in which they find themselves, but also on the rights and responsibilities that exist in the social community (Duranti & Goodwin, 1992; Fairclough, 1989; Lindholm, 1992 Schiffrin, 1994). Thus, language or discourse can never be neutral. Lindholm (1992) explained “when people come together and talk, they arrive endowed with different conversational rights or resources” (p.102). Freeman (1996) further suggested that the ways in which people act and behave is to some degree influenced by the larger socio-cultural climate.

Lemke (2000) claims that language in use is always language-within-activity. In other words, he viewed language use as a socially and culturally meaningful, observable behavior which is equally social in its meanings whether interactional or solo in its production. He pointed out that when people use language, they employ some recognizable social stance or identifiable social role within the social community.

In this sense the use of language is a group phenomenon involving social interaction and social participation. Moreover, the level of social interaction and participation of individuals is related to their language knowledge and use. Bilingual speakers such as second or third generation Korean English speakers, for example, have

the choice whether or not to participate in the social group, whether or not to interact in what language, and to what degree or level to participate. For bilingual speakers to become proficient using languages, they must develop awareness, sensitivity, and skills in using the languages since the interactions mediated by languages are culturally defined and socially shared.

In keeping with this social theory of language, this study considers language uses that go beyond the classroom context, especially in the setting of online social networks. This study investigates how bilingual Korean English speakers' language practices are connected to their perception of 'self' within others, that is, their social identities. This study is, therefore, also guided by theories of social identity. I turn to that research in the next section.

Social Identity Theory

Social identity, how we perceive and make sense of each other, is fundamental to all social interaction and to the construction of our society and culture. In social psychology, social identity refers to one's self-definition in relation to others and one's group memberships.

According to Hogg and Abrams (1988), social identity is defined as an individual's knowledge that he or she belongs to certain social groups which are particularly significant to him or her. Turner (1982) agrees to this definition and describes a social group as "two or more individuals who share a common social identification of themselves or, which is nearly the same thing, perceive themselves to be members of the same social category" (p.15). Social identity and the feeling of belonging to a group are

inextricably linked in the sense that one's conception or definition of one's identity is largely composed of self-descriptions in terms of the defining characteristics of social groups to which one belongs. This belonging is not merely knowledge of a group's attributes, but is likely to include an emotional connection to the group as well. As Wenger (1998) notes, identification with a social group is very different from merely being designated as falling into one social category or another. It has important self-evaluative consequences.

Hogg and Vaughan (2002) claim that social identity is the individual's self-concept derived from perceived membership in social groups. In other words, social identity is an individual's perception of what defines who the individual is within the groups with which he or she is associated. As a result, a person has not one personal self, but rather several selves that correspond to widening circles of group membership. Different social contexts may trigger an individual to think, feel, and act on the basis of his or her personal, family or national "level of self" (Turner, Hogg, Oakes, & Wetherell, 1987, p. 44), and so an individual has multiple social identities. Social identity can be distinguished from the notion of personal identity which refers to self-knowledge that derives from the individual's unique attributes.

Recently, several researchers have discussed self-categorization in relation to the construction of social identity. Turner and Onorato (1999) assert that people categorize themselves just as they categorize objects, experiences, and other people which eventually shape their social identity. They argue that group membership is the act of individuals identifying themselves as group members, and that act is a type of self-categorization. Turner and Onorato's concept of self-categorization is elaborated on by

some of the more recent studies in social identity theory.

Feuer (2008) pointed out that individuals “abstractly imagine others in the particular membership group sharing the same characteristics as themselves, such as language use, and this awareness creates a sense of fellowship and belonging” (p.15). In this sense, self-categorization reflects the individual’s understanding of the defining characteristics of the group.

According to Hornsey (2008), self-categorization accomplishes two things. First, it causes one to perceive oneself as having the same social identity or being “identical” to other members of the category. In other words, it places oneself in the relevant social category, or it places the group in one’s mind as real. Secondly, it generates behaviors similar to other members of the group, behaviors that may be considered common or stereotypical. In brief, self-categorization is the process which transforms individuals into groups, and which places the group in the individual. After being categorized as a member of a group, individuals seek to achieve positive self-esteem by comparing their in-group to an out-group on some valued dimension.

Given that social identity is inseparable from individuals’ group membership, Gee’s conception of identity portrays social identity in detail. Gee (2000) defines identity as “being recognized as a certain kind of person” (p. 99). He profiled four different identities which are simultaneous and interactional within a social system. These identities are: 1) nature identity, 2) institutional identity, 3) discourse identity, and 4) affinity identity. From Gee’s perspective on identities, a single identity is an interconnection of all four identity types, although any particular one can dominate in specific circumstances. In particular, Gee’s idea of affinity identity is based on an

individuals' membership in an "affinity group," a group of people who may be dispersed across a large space but still share similar interests and participate in a set of distinctive practices, giving each of its members the requisite experiences (p.105). According to Gee, members of an affinity group display common behaviors or practices in terms of shared culture or traits. For instance, a group of Star Trek fans watch shows, meet actors from the shows, chat on the Internet, collect or trade memorabilia, or read certain materials related to the shows. Gee argued that through these distinctive social practices, members of an affinity group gain experiences that allow them to create and sustain their allegiance to the other members of the group.

The concept of social identity, therefore, can describe bilingual speakers' construction of self-perception as dual language users by understanding and playing social roles associated with the use of two different languages. As the speakers develop a sense of community in relation to their affinity group, self-categorization through social interaction is established.

Using languages and participating in social activities mediated by the languages operate jointly and simultaneously with the evolution of social identities as bilingual speakers. Key ideas of social theory of language and social identity theory provide the conceptual framework for understanding how bilingual Korean English speakers use language in their social activities, especially in online social networks.

Bilingual Korean English Speakers

Lee and Shin (2008) used a wide range of terms that refer to bilingual Korean English speakers such as "home-background speakers," "native speakers," "quasi-native

speaker,” “residual speakers,” or “heritage language speaker.” The various terms indicate that the proficiency and linguistic status of bilingual speakers are diverse. In other words, the term “bilingual speakers” can describe any person who speaks two languages and has proficiency in or a cultural connection to the languages.

Most bilingual Korean English speakers fall under the description of heritage language speakers who are raised in a home where a language other than English is used, understand and speak the language, and are bilingual to some degree in English and in the home language (Valdés, 2001). Most of them grow up with parents who are first-generation Korean immigrants, speaking and listening to Korean at home and in the community. According to Shin and Milroy (1999), young Korean children are often bilingual in Korean and English. Once they begin schooling, however, they are likely to speak less Korean and become English-dominant because the use of English is emphasized in American schools. Min (2000) and Shin (2005) also claim that second generation Korean Americans tend to speak and write primarily in English while their parents use Korean dominantly or solely. Min’s (2000) study showed that approximately 77% of second generation Korean Americans after the age of five speak only or mostly English to their parents. However, in some cases bilingual Korean American children switch languages from English to Korean and vice versa based on the language of their speaking partners. Their choice of language is triggered by factors such as their own language proficiency, their relationship to the other speaker(s), and the cultural setting (Chung, 2006).

Byun (1990) studied language maintenance and shift among Koreans in the United States. His primary data sources were the U.S. census and other studies that

examined Korean immigrants in America. According to Byun, Korean migration to the United States started in 1903 when Koreans were sent as laborers to Hawaiian sugar plantations. The second wave of Korean migration to the United States started after the Korean War and reached its peak in 1979. The number of Korean immigrants to the United States between 1970 and 1980 increased eight-fold. Byun explained that these new arrivals were different from the previous Korean immigrants because they were mostly highly educated, with about 60% of them having received a secondary education.

With these new arrivals, many old settlers who assimilated into American society and lost their Korean language proficiency were challenged by the new immigrants. But they also experienced the new immigrants as motivating and a resource to improve their Korean proficiency. During the 1970s and 1980s, the pattern of language use among Koreans in the United States changed from English monolingualism to Korean and English bilingualism. In addition, Korean churches, Korean weekend language schools, and Korean ethnic mass media contributed to Korean language maintenance in the United States. Byun (1990) concluded that this kind of changing attitude and group consciousness affected the second generation. Even the third or fourth generation, U.S. born Korean Americans, realized that in the long run they cannot be completely assimilated into American society mostly because they are perceived as Asian Americans who are assumed to have a strong heritage even if they did not. Therefore, the maintenance of language and ethnic identity became important to the descendents of Korean immigrants.

Byun's conclusion is supported by You's study in 2001. According to You (2001), the number of second or third generation Korean American students has rapidly

increased since the early 1980s. This increase has led to a marked expansion of Korean language programs in U.S. universities, reaching 85% of total enrollments by Korean American students. Typically in a foreign language class, one would expect to see more non-heritage learners, who do not have ethnic or cultural affiliation to the language but learn it mostly because of interest or personal need. Heritage learners who have a certain degree of proficiency and cultural background of the target language are usually a minority of the enrollees in a language class. However, unlike other common foreign language classes such as Spanish, it is common to have more heritage speakers than non-heritage learners in Korean language classes. There are, however, some regional variations. For example, in areas where there is a large Korean population, such as Hawaii, Los Angeles, or New York, Korean language classes are almost entirely composed of heritage learners who are bilingual Korean English speakers. According to Kim (2003), over 80% of the Korean language classes in the U.S. consist of heritage Korean speakers, in other words, learners with Korean ethnic backgrounds who are fluent in both Korean and English. In short, many Korean Americans enroll in Korean language courses upon entering colleges to learn it formally for the first time or to increase their language competency so they could engage in adult-like conversations with their parents, relatives or their friends.

Some studies discuss bilingual Korean English speakers in relationship to their cultural identity. Based on Jo's (2001) report, having learned Korean as a heritage language does not lead to forming a Korean identity, and not having Korean proficiency does not necessarily mean the loss of ethnic identity as a Korean. Jo (2001) observed and interviewed second generation Korean American college students in an intermediate level

Korean class. She reported that many Korean Americans learning Korean as their heritage language struggled with language authorities, English being the primary language used at school and between peers whereas Korean is dominantly used at home. She further argued that using two different languages in different cultural settings eventually affected their social identity. She concluded that for these bilingual Korean English speakers, becoming an English speaker does not necessarily mean the loss of ethnic identity as Korean. She further asserted that Korean as a heritage language does not necessarily lead to homogeneous ethnic identity formation.

By contrast, Lee (2002), who also studied forty second-generation Korean American university students, argued that cultural identity and language proficiency have a strong interrelationship. She reported that the students with higher proficiency in Korean language strongly identified themselves as Korean and American. You's (2005) findings resonate with Lee's report. After having an in-depth focus group interview with Korean American children, he suggests that preserving Korean as a heritage language not only helps children become fluent bilinguals, but also promotes the formation of a positive Korean identity.

Lee and Shin (2008) suggest that the definition of Korean heritage speakers should be broadened because an increasing number of Korean speakers have grown up in contexts where Korean is not used daily. For example, Korean children adopted into American families and third or fourth generation Korean Americans use English as a primary language at home where little or no direct Korean interactions take place. They learn and use Korean not only to join their heritage culture but to form their social identity within their cultural community. To this extent, bilingual Korean English

speakers can be described as “those who have an ethnolinguistic affiliation to the Korean heritage and American culture, but may have a broad range of proficiency in Korean oral or literacy skills” (p.2).

In brief, bilingual Korean English speakers have direct or sometimes indirect connections to a Korean heritage background, have affiliations to American culture, and have varying degrees of Korean language proficiency. Some may have strong Korean identity whereas others may be hesitant in identifying themselves as Korean. Korean language acquisition cannot be regarded as one of the determining factors of Korean identity among bilingual Korean English speakers.

According to Kim (2003), Korean language programs have gradually responded to the dramatic shift of the student population, proposing and instituting new curriculum especially designed for bilingual Korean English students’ needs. However, there has been little attention to the characteristics of bilingual Korean English speakers. Moreover, even though there has been a steady increase of Korean learners and Korean language programs, the status of Korean is not as significant as that of Spanish in the U.S. Consequently, until quite recently, there has been very little research on bilingual Korean English speakers who are heritage Korean speakers.

Within the last decade, researchers and educators studying language within social contexts have begun to study social identity in relation to language practice. In particular, some Korean researchers have examined the relationship between languages and cultural or social identities among Korean heritage speakers (Cho, 2000; Jo, 2001; Lee, 2002; You, 2005). They are part of a larger trend of scholars who are studying heritage speakers

in other ethnicities who also speak English (Feuerverger, 1991; Nieto, 1997; Noels, Pon, & Clément, 1996; Peltz, 1991; Tse, 1998).

Still, the debate about whether and how the use of language affects the formation of social identity continues. Currently language practice and social interactions occur not only in face-to-face situations, but also in cyberspace, in online social networks where social encounters transcend time and space. Language is the medium for most interactions on the Internet. The form of social interactions has expanded from direct face-to-face contact to indirect cyber communication in online communities. Yet, language is still the major vehicle that enables both types of interactions.

In this context, the next section reviews how online communities function as social networks among bilingual Korean English speakers.

Online Communities and Personal Web Pages as Social Networks in the Korean Community

The use of the Internet has significantly influenced our lives and the lives of immigrants overseas. Koreans, including Korean immigrants in the United States, are no exception. Internet World Stats (2008) surveyed Korean internet users in 2008, and found that approximately 71% of the total Korean population used the Internet. According to the report, approximately 30.7 million people in Korea use the Internet, making Korea the country with the fifth highest population of internet users in the world, behind only the United States, China, Japan and Germany. More than 45% of respondents said they are a member of at least one internet community and about 37% reported using instant messaging. The Internet is part of Koreans' lives, regardless of where they live.

Several studies indicated that people have started to use the term “community” to describe the activities or encounters on the Internet. More specifically, they are called the “cyber community,” “virtual community,” or “net community” (Blanchard & Horan, 2000; Foster, 1996; Wilbur, 1996). Miller (1996) even identified the “golden rule on the Internet” in the cyber community (p.323), which is similar to ‘community norms’ in sociolinguistic contexts (Myers-Scotton, 1997, p.232). It is now common to hear ‘netizen’, ‘netiquette’, ‘net-ethics’, ‘N generation’ in a ‘networked world’ (Miller, 1996; O’Connell, 2000), terms which have obvious meanings. “Netizens,” citizens of the internet, expand their worlds through the Internet without any formal education of the features of Internet communities. A study from Korea reported that some Korean students, especially the immigrants overseas, preferred their Internet friends – ‘virtual friends’ or ‘net-pals’ – more than their real human friends.

Larson (1997) showed that many of the activities on the Internet are interactive. These interactions are either in written forms such as emailing, chatting, or responding to message boards, or audio-visual forms using visual chatting or visual conferencing. Larson further stated that the types of activities on the Internet have expanded in their patterns and the amount of time users spend. Interacting with someone else on the Internet means that there is a social community regardless of its size or pattern. Some of the activities may be dense and complex whereas others may be sparse and simple. In this sense, Garner and Gillingham (1996) claimed that Internet conversation is a ‘social activity’ (p.3).

Kung’s (1997) claim well describes the impact of the Internet as follows:

The impact of the Internet on society lies in its extraordinary potential for being all things to all people. Using a Web browser one can read, listen to others, research, communicate, and pursue virtually any interest over the Net. The Web's consistent user interface, with its wide range of applications, represents a major advance in interface design (O'Reilly & Associates, Inc., 1997, p.vii).

Recently, several researchers have acknowledged that the major function of online networks is to foster relationships online as well as to maintain social networks (Holloway & Valentine, 2003; Leander & McKim, 2003; Valentine, Holloway, & Bingham, 2000). Such activities are regarded as social practices, which are mediated by language that has been shaped by digital technology (Kress, 2003; Lankshear & Knobel, 2002; Warschauer, 1999). To be more specific, languages used in Internet communication through online social networks have been modified by the people engaged in such activities. People shorten or abbreviate words, and create new expressions in cyberspace through a mutual meaning making process mediated by language.

In sum, the social activities on the Internet constitute "social networks." The Internet plays an important role for the users by providing language contacts as well as multilingual exposure (Parks, 1996). In the Korean community in the United States and probably in other countries, people learn language from Internet activities such as emailing and chatting. They learn that native English speakers among second generation Korean-Americans are less formal but more natural in colloquial language and expressions compared to Korean immigrants who are native Korean speakers. Internet users are exposed to excellent ways of using various languages including both Korean and English. Sometimes the interactions are in real time and sometimes they are time-

lagged but in either case, they are influential. In general, it is clear that many Koreans in Korea and elsewhere participate in online social activities through cyber interactions for various purposes, and language practice is one such purpose.

Being a Korean migrant to another country used to mean less contact with and less information about the mother country, and more chance to forget Korean expressions. Even for responsible adult immigrants, it was difficult to maintain Korean proficiency. But using those forgotten expressions is more likely on the Internet than in face-to-face interactions, and not only for Korean immigrants but other immigrant groups as well. The Internet provides Korean immigrants with a wide range of interesting resources including Korean dramas, movies, songs, newspaper articles, and even literary works. According to Yi (2009), who recently studied literacy practices of biliterate Asian students in North America, many 1.5 generation Koreans living in the United States and Canada who are mostly fluent both in Korean and English have their own personal web pages. The web pages such as “Facebook” or “Twitter” serve as the stations for them to interact either in Korean or in English not only with other Korean-American peers and people in the immediate vicinity but also with those in Korea. These kinds of activities could be understood as patterns of language practice at different levels, all of which influence their language competence, language behavior, and social identities.

Do these invisible, social networks have some influence or great influence on people’s lives and even their language behavior, especially multilingual speakers? How does the amount of time spent on social activities on the Internet compare to time spent in real life situations among bilingual Korean English speakers? Is the context of the interaction important for the choice of languages used? How do their online social

activities and use of languages relate to their presentation of their identities? These questions are the reasons I have examined social activities on the internet in relation to language use and social identities.

A Need for Further Research

Based on this review of the research, the integration of social theory of language and social identity theory provide a comprehensive framework for further investigation of language practices among bilingual Korean English speakers. Based on the concept of social identity described above, a group of bilingual Korean English speakers can be understood as an affinity group that may include native Koreans or even native English speakers who participate in socially constructed activities that are relevant to the construction of their social identities and language use. Their choice of language, whether it is Korean or English or both, relies heavily upon the social contexts that connect individuals to the larger society, allowing them to develop a shared meaning or understanding through the languages as a form of social practice. This aspect of bilingual Korean English speakers neatly aligns within social theory of language. For example, a group of bilingual Korean English speakers who are members of a Korean film society may watch specific movies, post their opinions on the online message board, or exchange movie related resources with each other. They may use Korean at some point, English in certain places, or both in situations where they do not see any obstacles to the use of either language.

Within this context, bilingual Korean English speakers may face issues of multiple social identities and multi-faceted self-presentation in the communities with

which they are affiliated. In other words, they may have to deal with certain issues related to participation in cultural communities through the use of languages and with issues of social identities in relation to the social activities within the communities. Unlike monolingual speakers who do not have a choice of language, bilingual speakers have to choose which language or languages to use for social interaction in the real world as well as in online social worlds. These choices involve issues such as self-presentation and reinforcement of socially constructed self-identities through interactions with the members of specific communities. Bilingual Korean English speakers may socially compare themselves with other people in their communities and make decisions, either consciously or subconsciously, about how to present themselves to others. These decisions include whether they should use Korean, or English, or both, and to what degree.

A deeper investigation on how language use of bilingual Korean English speakers relates to their social identities is necessary to enhance our understanding of their current state of language practice across different social settings. This relationship is the focus of this study. This study is meaningful for Korean language instructors who design and customize Korean instructions so they can encompass bilingual Korean English speakers' language practice outside the classroom. The study will also benefit other language teachers, language researchers, and sociologists who wish to better understand the relationship between language use and social identities.

III. RESEARCH DESIGN

Overview

This study investigated how the language use of bilingual Korean English speakers relates to their social identity and how these speakers make sense of the languages they use. This chapter presents the research design and methodological approaches for this study guided by the overarching research question: what is the relationship between language use of bilingual Korean English speakers and their social identity? I attempted to examine this question by answering the following:

1. How do bilingual Korean English speakers describe themselves in terms of their language proficiencies and social identities?
2. How do the bilingual participants in this study use their two languages in face-to-face interactions as well as in online social worlds, and how do they account for their language choices?
3. How do the bilingual participants in this study present their social identities in online social worlds as well as in face-to-face interactions?

Methods of Study

To investigate the relationship between language use and social identities based on social theory of language and social identity perspectives, I conducted a mixed method study, using interviews, a questionnaire, and interviewees' web pages. The interview and web pages data were primarily analyzed qualitatively, and the survey data were analyzed quantitatively.

In order to address the research questions, data collection was implemented in three phases. In the first phase of the study I administered a questionnaire about language use and identity. The quantitative measures from the questionnaire were used to describe

the demographic characteristics such as gender, age, language proficiency, language use, and self-identity of bilingual Korean English speakers. The first phase also generated a list of individuals who were interested in participating in subsequent phases of this research study. In the second phase, I conducted semi-structured interviews about the participants' involvement in online social activities using their web pages. The purpose of the second phase was to capture how bilingual Korean English speakers presented their social identity, what languages they used in online social worlds and how they made sense of their language choices. In the final phase, I examined the participants' web pages such as profile pages and the personal message boards in which they were involved. I analyzed the content of the web pages that showed online activities of bilingual Korean English speakers.

Table 1 shows how each research question was addressed by one or more data collection methods.

Table 1: Research design

	Questionnaire	Interviews	Web pages
Q1. Description of language proficiencies and social identities	X	X	
Q2. Language choices and rationale for the choices	X	X	X
Q3. Presentation of identity	X	X	X

Participants and Sampling

The participants involved in this study were chosen from the population of late adolescent bilingual Korean English speakers in southern California. All participants were of Korean heritage background and most were college students who had language

proficiency in both Korean and English. They regularly used online social networks such as “Facebook” or “Twitter.”

My initial goal was to have a sample of bilingual Korean English speakers to represent three groups based on their gender and social identity: 1) the participants who identified themselves as Korean, 2) those who viewed themselves as Korean-American, 3) those with self-identification as American. Each group was to have an equal portion of males and females. In order to satisfy six different cases of participants as described above, I conducted multistage sampling. The sampling took place ordered in three stages as follows.

The purpose of the first stage was to create a simple sampling pool of the population. I sent out an email inviting individuals to participate in the research project and the respondents to the email constituted my first sample pool. The email was sent out to organizations of undergraduate Korean American students at several universities in southern California. The email contained a brief description of the study and questions asking whether the respondents were fluent in both Korean and English. I purposefully limited the total sample of respondents to bilingual Korean English speakers in San Diego area who reported to have language skills in both Korean and English. Since I have taught Korean at a local university, I excluded any respondents who were taking a Korean course I taught during this research period. The reason for this exclusion was that those participants taking my Korean classes might be influenced by my relationship to them. I anticipated that, during the interview, they might intentionally avoid certain expressions or exclude specific web pages that they might regard as not socially desirable. Therefore, I did not include any participants from my own Korean language classes.

The second stage was a criterion sampling. After gathering 96 respondents who had identified themselves as having language skills in Korean and English, I sent a second email for the purpose of conducting an online questionnaire. The questionnaire, generated using Google Doc, contained questions related to demographic information, perception of self-identity, and their use of online social networks (see Appendix B). Based on the responses, I reduced the sampling pool to bilingual Korean English speakers who regularly used online social networks such as personal websites and online communities. Among the 96 survey participants, 80 respondents reported that they were regularly involved in online personal web pages.

The third stage of sampling was done as stratified sampling based on the result of the questionnaire. There were 39 males and 41 females. The survey respondents were divided into three separate groups based on their social identity: Korean, Korean-American, and American. Then they were divided by their gender. However, among the 80 survey participants there were two outliers – one male who identified himself as ‘multicultural’ for his social identity and one female who was born in Argentina. These two participants were excluded from the data analysis.

After excluding these two survey participants based on their survey response, 78 respondents were left. Among them, 32 respondents said that they wanted be identified as “Korean,” 43 respondents said they were “Korean-American,” and three respondents called themselves “American.” Fifty-five respondents out of the 78 survey participants wanted to participate in this study further. When separation of the participants based on their identity was completed, I first randomly selected an equal number of males and females for the “Korean” identity group and the “Korean-American” identity group for

the purpose of selecting the people to be interviewed. To be more specific, I randomly selected six male and six female participants for each case of “Korean” and “Korean-American.” Those who identified as “American” were two males and one female, and so I had no choice but to select them all since they were such a small number compared to other groups. A third email was sent to these 27 survey participants selected from the third stage for the purpose of conducting narrative interviews which were elicited by the personal web pages they selected to show their online social activities.

The third email to the 27 survey respondents yielded 16 participants. Even though I initially set the goal to have 12 participants, I decided to include all of the 16 respondents in the interview to have richer data. Table 2 shows the interview participants’ self-identification, not the social identity perceived by others. Sixteen participants included an equal number of males and females.

Table 2: Self-identification of 16 interview participants

	“Korean”	“Korean-American”	“American”	Total (n)
Male	2	3	3	8
Female	2	5	1	8
Total (n)	4	8	4	16

Data Collection and Analysis

In order to answer the research questions of this study, both quantitative measures from the questionnaire and qualitative measures from interviews and Internet web pages were used. The following section elaborates each method used for this study.

Questionnaire about language use and self-identity

The questionnaire was used to capture demographic information and cultural backgrounds of bilingual Korean English speakers. It contained questions about language use and self-identity based on a questionnaire used by Lee (2002) in her study of Korean heritage language speakers in the United States. Lee's questionnaire was itself adapted from Suinn-Lew's self-identity acculturation scale. Lee customized the questionnaire for the sample population of bilingual Korean Americans in her study, reflecting their cultural backgrounds. I simplified the questions, changed the order of questions, and eliminated the questions not relevant to my study.

To administer the questionnaire, I emailed the participants an introductory message that included a willingness to consent as well as directions for the questionnaire (see Appendix A). The email also had an electronic link to an online questionnaire generated by Google Form which enabled them to submit the questionnaire electronically.

The questionnaire was composed of three parts (see Appendix B). Part A was to collect demographic characteristics such as gender, age, ethnicity, birthplace, education level, and experience of learning Korean formally. This section was composed of multiple-choice questions and short open-ended questions. Part B contained questions regarding language proficiency and language use. There were ten questions for language proficiency in reading, speaking, writing, listening, and practical skills. These questions were in a five-point Likert scale in terms of how strongly the individual agreed or disagreed with each statement. Also, there were nine questions for language use in multiple-choice format. Part C dealt with a bicultural scale, asking participants to evaluate their cultural preference, cultural behaviors, and social identities. Similar to part

B, the questions in part C were composed of multiple-choice questions and Likert scale questions. The survey respondents rated each item for cultural preference in five-point Likert scale, 1 as strongly disagreeing and 5 as strongly agreeing to given statements. The questions for cultural behavior and social identities were in multiple-choice format.

Anonymity of the questionnaire was established by having a unique identifier code to replace participants' names. Once the questionnaire was completed, the answers were coded and analyzed with SPSS, a statistical analysis tool. Multiple-choice questions from part A were coded numerically. The coded data from the questionnaire were analyzed quantitatively using such measures as frequency count of the participants to describe demographics. The analysis of part B regarding language proficiency and language use was done in two stages. First, in order to see how the participants evaluated themselves in terms of their Korean language proficiency, I added up the Likert scale scores of each item in this category and calculated the total score for each individual. Then, in order to identify patterns in the survey participants' language use, I coded the multiple choices numerically with gradual increment, from 1 being "only Korean" to 5 being "only English" and different degrees of mixture in between. In part C, I used frequency count as a main analytic method for numerically coded multiple-choice answers in order to identify patterns in cultural behaviors and social identities of the survey participants. SPSS was key to performing a demographic analysis of the participants' cultural background, to identify the pattern of language use, and to determine any relationship between self-reported language proficiency and ethnic self-identification.

Interviews about online social activities and language use

Interviews were conducted in order to investigate how the bilingual Korean English speakers made sense of their language use and how they perceived themselves in terms of social identities in both face-to-face interactions and in online social worlds.

During the interview, the participants were asked to show specific web pages from their personal websites or online community websites which exemplified online social activities in which they participated. The web pages chosen by the participants were used to prompt further responses from the participants during the interview. The interviews were semi-structured and focused on the participants' reflection on their language use, explanations of their choice of language(s), and their self-presentation of social identities exhibited through the web pages they had chosen.

The interviews were conducted individually and face-to-face. In order to capture the web pages the participants described, I attempted to screen-record the interviews. Before the actual interviews, I tried installing a camcorder right in front of the computer screen so that the camera could be focused on the computer screen and record the participants' voice to keep track of the web pages to which the participants were referring. However, the text from the web pages in the recorded screens was not clear enough for me to see what languages were used by whom. Therefore, I searched for a specific computer program that could capture both the computer screen and voice and found a program called "My Screen Recorder." The program allows one to successfully record everything seen on the screen and record sounds at the same time by connecting a microphone into the computer. So, I used the program "My Screen Recorder" during the interview. Additionally, audio-recording was synchronized with screen-recording. I used

the audio-recording to transcribe the interviews. The screen-recording itself was analyzed; only the web pages recorded on the computer were used as data for analysis.

All participants were asked a series of open-ended questions regarding their general language practice (see Appendix C). Also, there were a set of interview prompts generated before the interview, which were related to the participants' perception on Korean-Americans, in other words, how they perceived who the Korean-Americans were. Particularly, the interviews included sentence starters (Quinn, 2005) that guided the participants to specifically give an account of their behaviors related to language use and identity presentation in the online interactions.

Interviews were conducted in English. However, some participants used certain Korean words as examples of their use of Korean language in their online interactions. After all the interviews were done, I transcribed the interview responses. I coded and analyzed the transcripts using the software program HyperRESEARCH. When an interviewee used a Korean word, I included it in Korean with the English translation. Also, each participant's name was replaced with a pseudonym, chosen from among American names.

When coding the transcripts, I looked for specific terms or expressions used by the participants when they explained their language choices in particular web pages and their rationale for switching languages, that is, why they switched languages and what made them choose one language over the other. I also examined the participants' presentation of social identities based on James Gee (2000)'s notion of affinity identity as an analytic lens. This analytic lens helped connect the patterns of language use to the construction of their social identities.

Participants' personal web pages

Participants' personal web pages were a part of the data for this study. An email was sent out to the participants selected from the third stage of stratified sampling. The email briefly explained how their privacy would be protected and asked them to provide their personal web pages or any websites they visited and were willing to discuss during the interviews.

During the interviews with the participants, I asked them to show me their web pages and any online websites as examples of their online social activities. These web pages were the basis for the interview. Personal web pages included the pages created by the participants such as profile pages, message boards, and online diaries. Also, I asked them to pull up any websites of online communities containing their online interactions with the community members.

The participants' personal web pages and other websites mentioned by the participants were qualitatively analyzed. I looked for language switching and language use such as Korean only, English only, or combined use of Korean and English. For the pages with combined use of Korean and English, I counted the number of sentences written in one language and compared it to the number of sentences written in the other language. If there were only one or two English words in the middle of a Korean sentence, that sentence was regarded as Korean sentence. Similarly, if an English sentence had only one or two Korean words or Romanized Korean expressions, the sentence was counted as English sentence. I also looked for any examples of presenting social identities, changing self-perceptions, or multiple identities.

The web pages were coded and then compared across participants. Since I had divided cases of participants according to their self-stated ethnic identities, I was able to compare web pages from participants in different identity groups. The coding of web pages was done along three dimensions. First, the web pages were coded for language (s), whether Korean, English, or a mixture of both languages. Secondly, the pages were coded for participants' social identities, whether they presented themselves primarily as Koreans, Americans, or Korean-Americans. Lastly, based on categorization in the above two dimensions, I compared the results to determine the connection between language and self-identification.

Within each category, I examined particular terms or expressions created by the participants, focusing on the contexts where those terms or expressions were used, what language or languages were used, and in which page they were used. Furthermore, I looked for the use of more than one language within a particular online context. The evidence of language switching was determined based on whether certain web pages contain an obvious use of Korean, English, or both. In particular, the use of Korean was identified from Korean words or expressions written in Korean alphabet and from the transliteration or Romanization of Korean expressions, in other words, Korean script rendered into the English or European alphabet (Shim, 1994, 1999). I anticipated that bilingual Korean English speakers using English who engaged in shared activities through certain web pages might face a particular kind of challenge: situations where they were not able to type Korean letters but still knew phonetic expressions of specific Korean words they wanted to use.

IV. BILINGUAL KOREAN ENGLISH SPEAKERS' SELF-DESCRIPTION OF SOCIAL IDENTITY AND LANGUAGE PROFICIENCIES: FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

This chapter discusses demographic characteristics of the participants in this study, and how they described themselves in terms of their language proficiencies, language uses, and social identities. Findings discussed in this chapter inform the first research question regarding how bilingual Korean English speakers described themselves in terms of their language proficiencies and social identities.

Demographic Portrait of Survey Participants

Table 3 shows the demographic information of the survey participants. The participants' ages ranged from 19 to 26, and their average age was about 21 years old.

Table 3: Demographic information of survey participants

Birthplace Gender	Korea (n)	United States (n)	Total (n)
Male	26	12	38
Female	27	13	40
Total (n)	53	25	78

Self-description of Social Identity

In the survey, the participants were asked to report their social identities. Two questions were given regarding social identities: one question asked how they perceived themselves, and the other asked how they wanted others to view themselves.

Self-perception of social identity

The participants were asked to state how they regarded themselves in terms of their social identities. The respondents had five choices, and the result is shown in Table 4.

Table 4: Survey participants' self-perception of their social identity

Social identity	Total n (%)
1. Basically Korean, even though I live in America	16 (21%)
2. Basically American, even though I have Korean background	3 (4%)
3. Korean-American, although deep down I always know I am Korean	37(47%)
4. Korean-American, although deep down I always know I am American	3 (4%)
5. Korean-American, I have both Korean and American characteristics, and I view myself as a blend of both	19 (24%)
Total (N)	78

The main finding from the survey was that almost half of the participants (47%) considered themselves “Korean-American although deep down I always know I am Korean.” Almost a quarter of the participants (24%) regarded themselves “a blend of both Korean and American who have both Korean and American characteristics.” Also, one fifth considered themselves “basically Korean even though they live in America.” There were only 4% of participants respectively in categories of “basically American even though I have Korean background” and “Korean-American although deep down I always know I am American.”

Others’ perception of social identity

However, their social identity self-perception was different from how they wanted others to view themselves. In the survey, the participants were also asked to report how they would like other people to regard them in terms of their social identities. The possible choices were “Korean,” “Korean-American,” and “American.” As shown in Table 5, more than half of the participants in the survey (55%) answered that they wanted to be regarded as “Korean-American.” Thirty-two survey respondents answered they wanted others to view them as “Korean.” Only three participants reported that they wanted to be considered “American.”

Table 5: Social identity perceived by others

	“Korean”	“Korean-American”	“American”
Total n (%)	32 (41%)	43 (55%)	3(4%)

In summary, three-fourths of bilingual Korean English speakers in this study thought of themselves as “Korean-American.” Also, more than half of the survey respondents wanted to be identified as “Korean-American” by others. However, almost half of the survey respondents thought others consider them as “Korean” even though they reported themselves to be “Korean-American.”

Social identity and birthplace

When comparing the participants’ self-reported social identities and their birthplace, 29 of 54 Korean-born participants answered that they wanted to be considered “Korean” and 24 wanted to be considered “Korean-American” (see Table 6). It is no surprise that among those Korean-born participants, no one wanted to be viewed as American. Among the 25 U.S. born participants, 19 respondents reported that they want to be viewed as “Korean-American” and three reported their social identity as “American.” For the latter three U.S. born participants who identified themselves as American, their identity followed their birthplace rather than their ethnic background. However, interestingly, there were three participants born in the United States who wanted to be regarded as “Korean.”

Table 6: Social identity and birthplace of survey participants

Social identity Birthplace	“Korean”	“Korean-American”	“American”	Total
Korea	29	24	0	53
United States	3	19	3	25
Total (n)	32	43	3	78

One's birthplace is not related to whether the participants want to be viewed as "Korean-American." Also, being born in Korea does not lead one to be identified as "Korean" by others. Such results indicate that the participants' social identities are generally aligned with their birthplace, but their cultural setting such as family and the place they actually grew up may play an important role in a person's social identity formation. In summary, birthplace does not necessarily predict what bilingual Korean English speakers want others to regard them in terms of their social identity.

Social identity and age of immigration

Participants who were born in Korea and later immigrated to the U.S. were asked to enter the age when they came in the U.S. Table 7 represents the average age of immigration. Those who wanted to be perceived as "Korean" came to the United States when they were around 10 years old (9.9). The participants who wanted to be considered as "Korean-American," including Korean born and the U.S. born participants, were about six and half years old when they first came in the U.S. The average ages in both cases include those who were born in Korea and those who were not born in Korea. For the latter, their age of immigration was entered as 0 years old, which is also shown by the result that the U.S. born who wanted to be viewed as "American" averaged 0 years old.

Table 7: Average age of immigration by social identity

	N	Mean	Range	Post-hoc mean difference
“Korean”	32	9.9	3~15	> Korean-American ^{**} > American ^{**}
“Korean-American”	43	6.4	4~17	< Korean ^{**}
“American”	3	0.0	0	< Korean ^{**}

^{**} $p < .01$.

In order to see whether the age of immigration among different identity groups was a significant difference, a one-way ANOVA was conducted on the age of immigration as a dependent variable with the social identity as an independent variable with three levels of factors. There was a statistically significant difference in the average age of immigration based on the participants' expectation of their social identity perceived by the others ($F(2, 75) = 6.643, p < .005$). The result also showed that the difference came from the gap between “Korean” and “Korean-American”, and between “Korean” and “American.” Such findings suggest that the age of immigration affects the participants' social identities. Specifically, bilingual Korean English speakers who immigrated after the age of ten were more likely to call themselves “Korean” than “Korean-American,” while those who immigrated before the age of ten were more likely to expect the others to regard them as “Korean-American” rather than “Korean.” In short, the older they were when they immigrated to the United States, the more they were likely to expect others to think of them as “Korean.”

Self-assessed Language Proficiencies

In the survey, the participants were asked to assess their Korean proficiency based on ten functional statements in terms of reading, writing, listening and understanding, speaking, and practical skills. Each question was rated with 5-point Likert scale, 1 as “strongly disagree” and 5 as “strongly agree” with the given statement. Not surprisingly, the results showed that the respondents claimed higher levels of proficiency in listening and understanding and speaking, and lower levels on reading and writing.

Within a possible range of 10 to 50, the participants’ self-perceived language proficiency scores varied from 20 to 46, with an average score of 36.1. A t-test on gender difference across all respondents’ self-perceived language proficiencies revealed no significant difference with regard to self-perceived language proficiency. In other words, the statistical result indicated that males were not significantly different from females in their self-reported language proficiency scores ($t(76) = -.499, p = .150$).

In order to identify characteristics of the respondents who rated themselves high in Korean proficiency in contrast to those who rated themselves low, a mean split was created at the score point of 36.1. Those who scored higher than 36.1 were classified as having a high perceived language proficiency, and those who score lower than 36.1 were considered as having a low perceived language proficiency. There were 43 (55%) people in the high proficiency group and 35 (45%) in the low proficiency group. Also, 21 participants in the “Korean” and “Korean- American” groups rated themselves having high language proficiency. Most participants who rated themselves high in Korean proficiency were born in Korea. However, approximately one-third of the participants who wanted to be considered by others as “Korean” reported themselves to be low in

their language proficiency. There were twice as many “Korean Americans” as “Koreans” in the low self-assessed language proficiency group. In addition, among “Korean Americans” who viewed themselves to be low in Korean proficiency, there were equal numbers of participants who were born in Korea and who were born in the United States.

Table 8 represents the mean scores of perceived language proficiency by the participants’ social identity perceived by others and their birthplace. Perceived language proficiency scores were quite similar across all groups of social identity and birthplace.

Table 8: Self-assessed language proficiency, social identities perceived by others, and birthplace

Social identity		Korean		Korean -American		American		Total (n)
Self-assessed language proficiency	Average score	37.4		35.4		32.0		
	High (n)	19	2	13	8	0	1	
	Low (n)	10	1	11	11	0	2	
Birthplace		Korea	U.S	Korea	U.S	Korea	U.S.	–

When compared across groups, there was no statistically significant difference in self-assessed language proficiency between social identity groups, using a one-way ANOVA test ($F(2, 75)=1.923, p>.05$). In other words, comparing the participants’ self-perceived language proficiency and their expectation of social identities viewed by others showed that the participants in the social identity groups of “Koreans,” “Korean-Americans,” and “Americans” were not significantly different from one another in how they rated their perceived language proficiency. Such findings suggest that self-assessed language proficiency does not seem to be the factor that differentiates bilingual Korean English speakers’ social identities.

Information about Interview Participants

Table 9 shows the interview participants' demographic information, their social identities, and their self-assessed language proficiency level.

Table 9: Information about interview participants

Pseudonym	Social identity perceived by self	Social identity perceived by others	Self-assessed language proficiency	Birth -place	Age of immig -ration
Heather	Korean	Korean-American	High	Korea	14
Nick	Korean	Korean-American	High	Korea	11
Tony	Korean	Korean-American	High	Korea	11
Kristine	Korean	Korean-American	High	Korea	5
Elizabeth	Korean-American	Korean-American	High	Korea	10
Michelle	Korean-American	Korean-American	High	Korea	9
Samantha	Korean-American	Korean-American	High	Korea	9
Deborah	Korean-American	Korean-American	High	Korea	4
Jonathan	Korean-American	Korean-American	Low	Korea	10
Gloria	Korean-American	Korean-American	High	U.S.	—
Jason	Korean-American	Korean-American	High	U.S.	—
George	Korean-American	Korean-American	High	U.S.	—
Mark	American	Korean-American	High	U.S.	—
Sandy	American	American	Low	U.S.	—
Peter	American	American	Low	U.S.	—
Brian	American	American	Low	U.S.	—

During the interviews, the participants who categorized themselves in the same way perceived their language proficiency level differently. This indicates that there was no consistent pattern in self-assessment of social identities by the participants. To

illustrate this, I will contrast two participants who were born in Korea and later immigrated to the United States around the age of 10. Nick is a 21 year old male born in Korea and immigrated to the United States in the age of 11 and he wanted others to view him as “Korean.” Nick rated himself 42 in language proficiency within the range of 20 to 46. This indicates that Nick’s score of 42 was higher than the mean score (36.1) of the entire participant group, that is, his self-assessed Korean proficiency was “high.” He mentioned that he wanted to be regarded as “Korean” during the interview.

Interviewer: Do you have any difficulties speaking Korean?

Nick: Not really. I am good at Korean, although some people think that I have a bit of an accent in my Korean, but I have accents in English, too... I basically lived [in] Korea for about ten years, so I learned Korean, it’s stuck in my head. And I keep watching dramas and stuffs, so I never forget.

Nick may represent some typical “Koreans” who came to the U.S. around the age of 10 or over, and who want others to view them as “Korean.” By contrast, Jonathan, a 22 year old male who came to the United States at the age of 10, shares a similar background as Nick, but scored 35 in language proficiency indicating that his perceived language proficiency was slightly below the average. His survey response to the identity items revealed that he wanted to be considered a “Korean-American” and he viewed himself as a blend of both Korean and American characteristics. His lower-than-average perception of his Korean language proficiency may explain his comment that he had stronger American side.

Jonathan: I think um...I’m more towards American...cause back in high school...I didn’t really hang out with “Korean-Korean” friends...there were some Asians, and we only spoke in English...so, I forgot a lot of

Korean...And I think I am not that fluent in Korean...compared to my Korean American friends who are almost perfect in Korean.

Another participant considered himself as a blend of both Korean and American, but he explicitly differentiated himself from other Korean Americans. Brian was born in the United States and rated himself low in language proficiency. He mentioned that he was not like typical Korean-Americans since he was not a fluent Korean speaker.

Brian: I feel like I am not really fluent in Korean... especially when I am with friends from L.A. I am from north-Cal [north California] and even though I had a few Korean American friends, we mostly spoke English...There were a couple of them fluent in Korean, but we just didn't speak Korean that much...maybe because they knew I was not good at Korean...they knew I was born here.

The data suggest no clear pattern among the participants in this study with regard to their language proficiency and social identities. There was no significant difference among those with a high level of self-perceived language proficiency and low self-perceived language proficiency in terms of their social identities viewed by others. This result suggests that there is no direct relationship between social identities and self-perceived language proficiency. Rather, this relationship is much more complicated and a part of it may be related to how the languages are actually used by the speakers, rather than to their self-reported language proficiency. Perhaps one's true language proficiency would better differentiate the participants with different social identities.

Primary Language

The survey participants were asked to indicate their primary language. Fifty of 78

survey respondents (64%), considered themselves both Korean and English speakers, 16 participants regarded themselves as mostly Korean speakers, and 12 participants thought of themselves as mostly English speakers. When looking at the participants' social identities, there was no statistically significant difference between the groups of different social identities based on a chi-square test ($\chi^2(4, N=78)=7.191, p>.05$).

In addition, there was no significant difference between the two groups of language proficiency and their primary language used based on the chi-square test ($\chi^2(2, N=78)=2.689, p>.05$). This result indicates that the primary language used by the participants who were high in self-perceived language proficiency were not different from those who reported their language proficiency as low (see Table 10).

Table 10: Distribution of the participants' primary language based on self-assessed language proficiency

Self-assessed language proficiency	Primary language			Total
	Mostly Korean speaker	Mostly English speaker	Both Korean/English speaker	
High	11	2	30	43
Low	5	10	20	35
Total	16	12	50	78

In general, there were more speakers of both Korean and English in the high self-perceived language proficiency group as well as in the low self-perceived language proficiency group. Moreover, among 'mostly Korean speakers' the number of survey respondents with high language proficiency was twice as big as the number of respondents with low proficiency. Likewise, among 'mostly English speakers,' there were five times more participants with low proficiency than those with high proficiency.

Ethnic Backgrounds of Friends and Self-Assessed Language Proficiency

In regard to the participants' friends group, t-test results showed a significant difference between the ethnic backgrounds of friends in college with whom the two language proficiency groups associate. The survey respondents with a higher level of Korean proficiency associated more with Koreans, whereas those with a lower level of Korean proficiency had more Korean American friends (see Table 11). Additionally, there was no statistically significant difference between the two language proficiency groups in regard to their friends with other ethnic backgrounds such as Asian Americans, White Americans, African Americans, and Hispanic Americans.

Table 11: Results of t-tests on ethnic background of friends with self-assessed language proficiency

Ethnic backgrounds of friends in college	Self-assessed language proficiency	
	High	Low
Korean ($t(76) = -2.13^*$)	3.42	2.89
Korean-American ($t(76) = 3.59^{**}$)	2.77	3.54
Other Asian ($t(76) = 0.04$)	2.53	2.54
White American ($t(76) = -0.48$)	2.00	1.91
African American ($t(76) = 0.93$)	1.29	1.44
Hispanic American ($t(76) = -0.04$)	1.53	1.53

Note: The higher the mean score the greater the number of friends in the given ethnic group.

* $p < .05$. ** $p < .01$.

Summary of Findings

This section summarizes how bilingual Korean English speakers described themselves in terms of their language proficiency and social identity.

Approximately half of bilingual Korean English speakers in this study characterized themselves as “Korean-American, although deep down they always know they are Korean.” However, when they were asked how they wanted others to view them, more than half of them expected others to consider them “Korean-American.” Also, some participants who were born in Korea and immigrated to the United States wanted to be identified as “Korean-American,” while others wanted to be regarded as “American.” Some of the participants who were born in the United States wanted to be considered “Korean.” Such findings indicate that one’s birthplace does not lead bilingual Korean English speakers to be perceived with a particular social identity. Moreover, the survey respondents who regarded themselves as “Korean” came to the United States later than those who identified themselves as “Korean-American.” Therefore, the older they are when they immigrated to the United States, the more likely they are to expect others to think of them as “Korean.” Furthermore, some of the participants who rated themselves low in Korean language proficiency identified themselves as “Korean,” however, there were other participants who self-reported to have high level of Korean proficiency but considered themselves as “Korean-American” or “American.” This finding suggests that bilingual Korean English speakers’ self-assessed language proficiency does not have an effect on the construction of their social identity.

Based on the results from the survey and the interviews, some distinctions can be made between the participant groups, in terms of their different perspectives on their

social identity.

First, those who wanted themselves to be regarded as Korean were likely to be Korean-born, immigrating to the United States around the age of ten or older. They were mostly Korean speakers and generally viewed themselves to have high Korean proficiency.

Secondly, the participants who wanted others to consider themselves as Korean American were either born in Korea and came to the United States in their early childhood, around the age of six, or were born and raised in the United States. Some of them reported themselves to be fluent in Korean, whereas others perceived themselves to have low fluency in Korean. Typical Korean Americans would likely use both Korean and English.

Lastly, those who wanted others to view them as American were all born in the United States. They were likely to report themselves to have low Korean proficiency, and their primary language was English.

Discussion

Based on my experiences with bilingual Korean English speakers I have taught in Korean language courses, I anticipated that there would be an interplay between how they assess their language ability and how they identify themselves. My expectation was that those with higher Korean language proficiency would view themselves as “Korean” or “Korean-American,” whereas those who rate themselves to be low in Korean language proficiency would want to be considered as “American.”

In contrast, the data from this study revealed no clear pattern between the relationship between self-assessed language proficiency and the construction of social identity among bilingual Korean English speakers. That is, bilingual Korean English speakers' self-assessed language proficiency did not correlate with the construction of their social identity. Such a finding is consistent with a previous study of bilingual Korean English speakers done by Jo (2001) who reported that having Korean proficiency does not necessarily lead to ethnic identity formation. However, the finding contrasts to what Lee (2002) and You (2005) found in their studies of second generation bilingual Korean English speakers. From her research, Lee (2002) concluded that a person's identity and language proficiency are strongly related, a finding which was echoed by You (2005) who suggested that maintaining Korean proficiency promotes a positive Korean identity formation.

Such different conclusions about the relationship between bilingual Korean English speakers' language proficiency and the construction of their identity may be partially explained if one considers the Korean heritage background of the bilingual Korean English speakers. Research studies of bilingual Korean English speakers have found that bilingual Korean English speakers have direct or indirect connections to a Korean heritage background and have varying degrees of Korean language proficiency (Lee & Shin, 2008; Shin & Milroy, 1999; Min, 2000; Shin, 2005). This means that bilingual Korean English speakers have various forms of Korean heritage background and various degrees of Korean language ability. For instance, some bilingual Korean English speakers might have grown up in a family setting where they were often exposed to Korean culture and practiced Korean traditions like celebrating Korean holidays.

However, they might not have spoken in Korean very much probably because their parents were 2nd or 3rd generation Korean-Americans who were not fluent in Korean but still valued Korean culture. In this case, bilingual Korean English speakers may not have high Korean proficiency but still characterize themselves as more “Korean” since they have acquired Korean values and culture through their family.

On the other hand, some bilingual Korean English speakers may have grown up with parents who mostly speak Korean but did not have any Korean friends because they lived in a white community with a very limited number of Korean-Americans. These bilingual Korean English speakers may consider themselves to have high level of Korean language ability but perceive themselves not as “Korean,” or not even “Korean-American,” but as “American.” Some other bilingual Korean English speakers may have parents who value Korean culture and traditions but do not insist their children follow them but rather make them become more adapted to American culture because they live in the United States, not in Korea. Children with such parents may be aware of Korean culture but do not strongly attend to it, rather they may identify more with American values, eventually constructing a “Korean-American” identity with one dominant side.

Given that bilingual Korean English speakers come from various Korean heritage backgrounds, it may not be surprising to see that there is no clear pattern in how bilingual Korean English speakers’ self-assessed language proficiency relates to their social identity. Therefore, while the development of Korean language proficiency may relate to Korean heritage background, it does not necessarily influence the formation of Korean identity.

In addition, the participants' self-assessed language proficiency does not seem to differentiate their social identities. There were differences in how they wanted others to perceive them, but these preferences did not appear to be related to their self-reported language proficiency, resulting in no significant difference among the different social identity groups. This lack of significant difference may be due to the fact that self-assessed language proficiency may not be a reliable measure since it is a self-assessed score by the participants. In other words, the participants may have evaluated themselves inaccurately in terms of their language proficiency. Or, one's self-assessment of their language ability may not be a reliable indicator of their social identity. The result might have been different if the social identity was compared to different measures such as the participants' cultural tendency or their friends' group.

Lastly, bilingual Korean English speakers make the same language choices regardless of their self-reported language proficiency. They all claimed to speak mostly English with other students in class. When they talked to their siblings and close friends, all of them reported to mix Korean and English. But when they met Korean adults in public, they claimed to speak mostly Korean. They explained that using Korean language with Korean adults was an appropriate way of showing respect. In other words, they shared the idea that speaking Korean rather than English to Korean adults even if they were not fluent was a desirable cultural script embedded in Korean society. Such a finding not only implies that the bilingual participants in this study knew the cultural meaning of being respectful to the older Koreans, but also indicates that they understand the Korean language as a form of cultural practice that has social functions between conversational partners.

V. BILINGUAL KOREAN ENGLISH SPEAKERS' USE OF LANGUAGES AND THEIR EXPLANATION OF LANGUAGE CHOICES: FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

This chapter discusses the second research question: how do bilingual participants in this study use their two languages in face-to-face interactions as well as in online social worlds and how do they account for their language choices?

Language Uses Patterns

The survey included a series of questions asking the participants to describe what languages they generally used in different contexts. Table 12 shows the participants' responses regarding language choices and self-reported Korean language proficiency.

Generally, participants used more Korean than English with parents and with other Korean adults in public, while they used more English than Korean with siblings and with other students in class. Also, when talking with siblings or close friends who are Koreans or Korean Americans, some use either mostly Korean or English whereas others mix Korean and English.

Such results suggest that the use of languages among bilingual Korean English speakers depends on conversational partners and the settings in which the conversations take place. Although all participants were bilingual in Korean and English, those who rated themselves to have a high level of Korean proficiency tended to use more Korean with other Koreans in all contexts except when talking with other students in class.

However, those who rated themselves having low Korean proficiency tended to use equal amounts of Korean and English or mostly English in talking with other Koreans, except when they talk with their parents or with Korean adults in public.

Table 12: Results of t-tests on language use with self-assessed language proficiency

Language use	Self-assessed language proficiency	
	High	Low
Language used by parents ($t(76)=1.61$)	1.23	1.49
Language used to parents ($t(76)=3.20^{**}$)	1.37	2.09
Language used to Korean adults in public ($t(76)=3.55^{**}$)	1.14	1.69
Language used to siblings ($t(76)=2.09^{*}$)	2.60	3.23
Language used by siblings ($t(76)=2.31^{*}$)	2.67	3.37
Language used with close friends ($t(76)=3.37^{**}$)	2.63	3.46
Language used with friends from church, clubs, etc. ($t(76)=3.61^{**}$)	2.88	3.86
Language used to other students in class ($t(76)=0.93$)	4.05	4.26

Note: The higher the mean score the more English was used and the lower the mean score the more Korean was used.

* $p < .05$. ** $p < .01$.

There were significant group differences between those who perceived themselves to be high in Korean proficiency and those who considered themselves low in Korean proficiency in regard to their language uses in general (see Table 12). There were only two exceptions, cases in which there was no significant difference between high and low

self-perceived language proficiency groups: one was the language used by the parents and the other was the language used to other students in class. All respondents reported that parents spoke to them in Korean. There was no significant difference between those with high self-assessed language proficiency and those with low self-assessed language proficiency. When talking to siblings or close friends, the participants with high level of self-assessed Korean proficiency reported that they spoke Korean and English almost equally but spoke somewhat more Korean than English, while those with low level of self-assessed Korean proficiency reported that they used equal amounts of Korean and English. When talking to friends from church or other social clubs, the participants who viewed themselves low in Korean proficiency used mostly English, whereas those with perceived high proficiency in Korean reported using equal amounts of Korean and English.

Even though both groups used only or mostly Korean when they met Korean adults in public, the mean difference between the group of the participants who reported high in their language proficiency and the group with low perceived language proficiency is significant. This significant mean difference implies that bilingual Korean English speakers of either high or low perceived language proficiency may use the same language, Korean, to Korean adults in public, but the language choice may be made for different reasons. Those who rated themselves as low in Korean proficiency might still be trying to speak more Korean in situations like talking to Korean adults in public, even though they claim that they are not very fluent in Korean.

These findings about speaking Korean with parents and with other Korean adults were also illustrated in the stories from the interview participants. During the interview,

the bilingual Korean English speakers in this study explained the reason they would use Korean when speaking to their parents or to Korean adults in public, and the reason was mostly to show respect to the older people. This reasoning was revealed by the remarks made by the participants regardless of whether they wanted to be considered “Korean,” “Korean-American,” or “American.”

When the interviewees were asked to describe situations in which they had to think about what languages they use, 13 people out of 16 brought up the case of talking to adults, especially in public places such as church or markets. For example, Nick said:

Interviewer: Can you think of any situation that you have to use specific language, like only Korean or only English?

Nick: Um...probably to older people. Even though they are fluent in English and they know English, I'll still speak to them in Korean.

Interviewer: Why would you use Korean to the older people?

Nick: Um...it's like...it feels not right to say 'you' or something to older people...I know grammatically it's correct in English form, but as Korean it feels like kind of rude...to say such things to older people...

Nick's comment suggests that speaking Korean to older people is a way of showing respect probably because the Korean language, unlike the English language, has honorifics exclusively used to show respect to older people or in first encounter with people in public places. Similarly, Peter who was born in the United States reported using Korean to older people to be respectful.

Peter: If I meet or talk to older people, than I would have to be nice and respectful, so I have to choose Korean words really carefully. So that time it'll be different [from speaking to friends] and I kind of think about

what I say and how I say it. But when I see people in my age, like my friends, then I wouldn't think that much.

Jonathan who regularly played on a Korean baseball team at his university explained that younger students including himself only spoke Korean to older people in the Korean baseball club.

Jonathan: ...most members in the team are Korean, and some of the members are much older than us. And they are more used to Korean, so we use Korean. Well, we have to use Korean, solely Korean, otherwise I get “혼나” if I don't [speak Korean]...so I use Korean...nobody really use English... everything is in Korean...

Jonathan used the term “혼나[Hon-na],” which means getting scolded in Korean in his comment above. So his comment indicates that he would try to avoid getting scolded or blamed by the older members in his baseball team by not using English but only using Korean with them. In summary, the interview participants strongly believed speaking Korean to adults such as parents was an appropriate way of using the language, a practice embedded in Korean culture regardless of their self-perceived language proficiency level.

George mentioned that his parents might feel bad about him speaking English, so he never tried speaking English to them.

George: ...if I'm home, then...I have to use Korean to my parents.

Interviewer: Have you ever tried mixing up Korean and English to your parents?

George: I didn't try [to mix the languages]. I didn't even try to speak in English to my parents because I just knew that they'd be more comfortable with Korean, and if I spoke English to them, then it would make them feel bad...So, I have never tried to speak English to my parents.

Elizabeth, who immigrated to the United States when she was 9 years old and considered herself to be “Korean-American,” provided several examples of using Korean to the older Korean people in different contexts. According to Elizabeth, using Korean language to the elderly was a part of Korean traditions that she acquired from her parents.

Elizabeth: when I’m in an area and someone come to that area as a tour, like adults, and they don’t know where to go and they ask me a question, I know I would have to talk to them in Korean. I guess that’s one example. And I don’t know why, but whenever I see Korean and I know they’re Korean and I know they’re older than me, I always have to talk to them in Korean even if they speak to me in English. I’m a high school teacher at the Sunday school of my church, and there is this older person who is also a high school teacher, and she wants us to speak in English to her, but then for me it’s like going against the whole Korean traditional culture. It’s like you always have to use honorifics to someone who’s older than you. So for me I would always talk in Korean to someone who’s older than me. Another example is that I have a family friend who is old. She has three kids and I used to tutor her kids. And she graduated college here, so she is very fluent in English. And I know that she would rather speak in English, but I’ve heard her speaking Korean with her mom. And I would still speak to her in Korean but she would reply back to me in English. But I’ll still be like speaking in Korean.

Interviewer: Can you explain why you would speak mostly or only Korean even to the older person who knows how to speak English?

Elizabeth: I think it’s because I lived in Korean until 2nd grade. I mean that’s still early but my parents are Koreans, like strict traditional Koreans, I think that’s why the whole Korean tradition is stuck on me.

Therefore, three claims can be made from the findings above.

First, context is important for language use among people who are bilingual Korean English speakers. Bilingual Korean English speakers choose a specific language based on their conversational partners as well as on the settings in which the

conversations occur.

Secondly, bilingual Korean English speakers who report different levels of self-assessed language proficiency report using the two languages differently. Those who assessed themselves having a high level of Korean language proficiency use more Korean in general, whereas those with a low self-assessed language proficiency use more English, except for talking with parents and talking with friends in class.

Lastly, there are some contexts in which bilingual Korean English speakers use the same languages regardless of their self-reported language proficiency. One of these contexts is talking with parents. In this context, all claimed to speak Korean. The other is with friends in class. In this context, both groups speak mostly English.

Such claims support the important finding that bilingual Korean English speakers recognize the contexts as an important factor when they choose languages. In other words, social situation dictates the appropriateness of the choice of language far beyond the speakers' perceived language proficiency.

Explanation of Language Use: First Encounters

The bilingual Korean English speakers claimed that they spoke Korean and English differently based on with whom they were speaking. In order to find out how they choose languages and when they use a specific language, the participants were asked about this in the interview.

Interviewer: There are some bilinguals who use two languages, Korean and English, at the same time, but some others may use only one language. So, what about you? Does a language naturally come out of

you, or do you usually stop and think about the language you use? Please tell me about yourself.

Every one of the 16 interviewees, all of whom were bilingual Korean English speakers, stated that they did not really think about their use of languages, but just “naturally” used them. However, when they were talking to specific people, they intentionally chose a certain language that was more comfortable, either Korean or English, based on to whom they were talking. For example, Kristine, who immigrated to the United States when she was four years old and viewed herself as Korean American, said that choosing a language was more natural than intentional to her.

Kristine: I never really think about it. It just comes naturally. But if I’m talking to a non-Korean person, then I know I have to speak in English. And if I’m talking to my close friends who usually speak both, I can just be free like whatever is comfortable...so I just mix them up.

Interestingly, a notable pattern was that the participants said they generally followed the language used by the people when they first met. Most participants (13 out of 16) stated that they usually followed the language initiated during the first encounter with the other party in their conversation. In other words, when two bilingual Korean English speakers meet for the first time and start to speak in English even if they are both fluent in Korean, they may still talk to each other in English afterwards. Similarly, if Korean is the first spoken language between two people, then they would continuously use Korean. Nick was one of those participants who reported to follow the language used when he met a person for the first time.

Nick: I think I use both languages at the same time, or if I feel like [the other is] more fluent in Korean, then I'll use Korean. So, I met this friend. He was also Korean. But we started talking to each other in English, and it felt kind of awkward to change back to Korean...so it took a while to...like us talking in Korean...

Interviewer: Who started to use English at first?

Nick: I think he did...or both of us did...

Interviewer: So, are you saying that English which was first used between you and your friend was the language you continuously used?

Nick: Yeah...I think that's usually what happens when I meet a new person.

Deborah stated that she and her friend spoke in English to each other even though they were both fluent Korean speakers, because they had used English when they first met.

Deborah: One of my roommates was a very close friend of mine. I think she tends to speak more Korean to some of her friends. But to me, we speak in English. I met her in Korean class, but I spoke to her in English first, and then even though she's comfortable with Korean and I was good at Korean, we just spoke in English to each other. So, it's really weird but I think the language you first speak with your friends, you can't change it back.

Michelle provided a reason why she continued to speak the language that was used in the first meeting.

Michelle: When I meet someone and I speak to them in English first, I would speak to them in English the whole time. It'd be kind of hard for me to speak to them in Korean. I'll be like hesitating. And then, if I meet someone and I speak to them in Korean, it's hard for me to speak to them in English. It's really weird.

Interviewer: You mentioned that you hesitate to speak in Korean when you first started to speak in English. Why do you think you do so?

Michelle: I think maybe I'm worried that they might not understand what I'm saying. I'd just rather speak in English especially because I started to speak in English to them. And that first impression of me or of them was that oh, this person would rather speak in English than Korean, probably they're more comfortable with speaking in English, so I just stick to speak in English.

Michelle pointed out the difficulty of switching from one language to the other because of the first impression on her or on the others regarding each other's language ability. The impressions about the other person's language ability or preference may be the reason why bilingual Korean English speakers continue to speak the language they used when they met them for the first time.

In summary, bilingual Korean English speakers think they use languages “naturally” in face-to-face interaction. That is, they claim that they do not think about the language they use. However, when asked to talk about this claim, they explained that whatever language they used during the first encounter with the other person was the language they continued to speak in subsequent encounters.

A decision to follow the language first used by the other person was also seen in some of the participants' online interactions. When Jason showed his wall page from his Facebook, I asked him what language he generally used. He stated that when responding to others' comment on his web page, he usually used the language used initially by the other party.

Interviewer: It seems that you have some visitors who use English and some others who use Korean, so when you respond to their comments, what language do you usually use?

Jason: ...most of the time I just follow the language they started. If they started in Korean, then I just write in Korean, and if they started in English, then I just comment in English as well. And I haven't really thought about why I do so, but the people who usually come to my wall use English, and I usually talk to them in English when we meet in person. And to my perception, I guess I see them as more of English speakers and they're more comfortable with English, that's what I think. But the people who speak in Korean, I guess they're better in Korean. So I just use Korean to them. So, basically I think I follow their language. But then usually I do the same to their wall.

Jason's comment indicates that the language he used to respond to the comments on his personal web page was the one he used while talking to the commenter in person. George was another one who followed the written language of the comments and he further stated that the language he used to respond to a comment left by a person was the language he actually used when speaking to the person face-to-face.

Interviewer: When you respond to the comments on your wall, what languages do you usually use?

George: It depends on whom I talk to. If it [a comment] is in Korean, then I use Korean. And if it's from non Korean, I use English...And for those Korean Americans who were born in America, like who're not fluent in Korean, I would use English...I usually use the language that I use when I talk to them in person. If I use English with this person outside, then I use English on his Facebook. And I think they do the same to me, too.

Explanation of Language Use: Consideration of Conversational Partners' Language Ability

The above comments from both Jason and George indicate that they thought about whether the other person would have fluency in a certain language when responding to

the comments on their personal webpage. Especially in online interactions, 12 out of 16 interview participants, like Jason and George, considered the language ability of the others with whom they were interacting when posting messages or replying to certain comments.

Bilingual Korean English speakers in this study generally considered the language ability of the people with whom they were interacting online and chose the language they thought would be comfortable or easier for those visiting their personal webpage. That is, the interviewees took into consideration the other person's language ability and chose a language based on their belief about whether or not the people who left message on their web page would understand Korean. Gloria was one of those who stopped and thought about the language of the person with whom she interacted.

Gloria: I think I stop and think about. Um...it usually depends on who the person I am interacting with...it they don't really understand Korean, then I don't use it. So, I think about the person I am talking to, and decide whether the person would understand me or not in certain language, and then I choose the language, either Korean or English, that I think the person would be more comfortable with. So basically I choose whatever language I could express myself most clearly.

Kristine's statement below shows another example of considering the online audience. She made the comment as she showed her recently updated Facebook wall page.

Kristine: On my Facebook, like when I'm updating my status or whatever, I purposely keep in mind that I shouldn't include anything in Korean.

Interviewer: Really? How interesting. Can you tell me more about that?

Kristine: Well, sometimes I want to [write in Korean], but generally, for example, like my last status it says “I’m hungry.” If I were to just regularly express it, maybe I’d just say “배고파” in Korean. But then, because I know that there are gonna be majority of people on Facebook who won’t understand that, I never really put Korean on it. Even though there are some people who don’t care, but you know, I just don’t want to [write in Korean].

According to Kristine, even though she wanted to use Korean word “배고파,” which means “hungry” in Korean, she knew there would be some people who would not understand the term. So instead of writing in Korean, she wrote “I’m hungry” in English so that everybody who visited her web page would understand what her status was.

Samantha mentioned that she also considered whether or not the other person she interacted with online would understand her. She explained that she made a distinction between her Korean friends and American friends according to her knowledge of the other person’s language ability. She further provided an example of her American friends who understood certain Korean expressions that were frequently used by her and her Korean friends.

Samantha: ...I usually respond back either in Korean or in English based on my thoughts about...whether they would understand me or not. It’s funny because one time there was like...I used “ㅋㅋㅋㅋ” [in Korean] when I updated my status and you know it means ‘laugh out loud’ in Korean. But then, one time my American friend, she commented in Korean, not exactly in Korean but copied and pasted that “ㅋㅋㅋㅋ” because she probably knew it was some sign of laughter. I thought it was hilarious. Some of my American friends, they already know certain Korean phrases like “ㅇㅈ” which means ‘hey’ and they literally copy it and use it in my pages. So it’s really funny how they use it. I think it’s because a lot of people use it in my page, they [American friends] can easily find it and use it.

Samantha's comment above clearly showed that some of her American friends understood the meaning of the Korean expression “ㅋㅋㅋㅋ,” which indicates laughter or a giggle in Korean, because the expression often came up in the online conversation Samantha had with her Korean friends.

The comments above lead to the conclusion that the bilingual Korean English speakers in this study considered the linguistic skills of their online conversational partners and chose the language they thought was comprehensible to their conversational partners.

Explanation of Language Choice: Culturally Specific Topics

In the interview, the participants were asked to describe when they would specifically choose a certain language. Ten of 16 participants stated that they intentionally chose to use Korean or mix Korean in English conversation when talking about specific topics such as Korean food or dramas. Kristine mentioned that she and her roommates would use English when talking about school related work, but they would use Korean when the subjects are related to Korean dramas, jokes, or Korean food.

Interviewer: Can you explain why you would sometimes use Korean or sometimes English when you talk to your roommates?

Kristine: I don't exactly know how it happened. Maybe it's just easier to connect or to answer with the same language when you are being asked a question. But it really depends on what the subject is. Because like, for example, when we're talking about what kind of homework we have, like school stuff, it's almost all the time in English. But if we talk about like dramas or jokes, those kind of things are usually in Korean. And when we talk about like food, then we speak in Korean.

Brian was another one who used Korean in the middle of English conversation when talking about Korean food with his roommate.

Interviewer: What would be the examples that you and your roommates would say in Korean?

Brian: Usually foods. When we cook or something, we'd just say “라면” or “밥” or something. Or if we went to a Korean market together to buy something, we'd say the things like “만두” or “과자” like that.

Interviewer: Were your roommates not really fluent in Korean?

Brian: I think they were like pretty fluent in Korean, but we were just more comfortable with English. Even if we say foods in Korean, we'd continue our conversation in English.

Brian's comment showed that he and his roommates used certain Korean terms for food, such as “라면” meaning ramen, “밥” meaning rice, “만두” meaning dumpling, and “과자” meaning cracker, even when they were having a conversation in English.

Heather also mentioned during the interview that she and her Korean associates in her campus activity club mixed Korean and English when they talked about specific issues related to Korea.

Heather: Some activities I'm involved in campus, a lot of Koreans are also involved with those. So, sometimes a little Korean slips here and there, especially when we talk about something that's related to Korea. Sometimes it's about Korean celebrities or foods, and sometimes it's about current political issues in Korea. For example, when we talk about some serious issues like problems of public education in Korea, we have to bring in some specific terms like “야자” or “학원” you know. So, I can say it's like Konglish kind of stuffs.

*야자 self-study after school 학원 private institute

In addition, four among the ten who used mixed languages intentionally responded that when making jokes or saying something that contained personal feeling or emotions, they would use a specific language to deliver what they wanted to express. Tony reported that he would use Korean when he talked about something that contained personal emotion.

Tony: ...the time that I try to speak Korean is like...when talking about what I feel or think because Korean is more suitable for explaining something emotional. I think English doesn't fully contain the meaning I want to describe...So, I use Korean when I have to talk about those [emotional] stuffs, and if the topic is too serious and is hard to continue in English, then I just switch to Korean.

Gloria also mentioned that she mixed Korean and English when she made jokes or had to express her thoughts or ideas about certain topics.

Gloria: I live with a roommate who is also kind of like me. She was born here, she spoke Korean at home, and she is really comfortable with Korean as well. When we talk, there are some things like...either we make jokes or when we kind of express ourselves, we use Konglish [mixing Korean and English words]

Unlike Tony and Gloria who used Korean to express themselves better, Heather used English when she made jokes or made sarcastic remarks. Based on her comment below, it seems that she would rather use English than Korean when making jokes or speaking sarcastically because using Korean in those subjects might give the wrong impression to others since she was not familiar with the way Korean is used in such situations. So, it is likely that Heather would use English if she wants to say something that connotes negative nuance.

Interviewer: Can you give me some examples of the situations that you choose a specific language to express yourself more clearly?

Heather: I like joking around a lot. And you know in English sarcasm is really popular. I always ask Koreans [around me] whether they speak sarcasm or not, whether they use it or they understand it...and sometimes it feels rude [to speak sarcastically] in Korean because it comes out wrong. And I'm not very familiar with Korean jokes, and I don't want to give wrong impression by using Korean in a wrong way. So, when someone makes a joke in Korean and I want to be funny, then I respond in English sarcasm because in Korean it could sound rude. So, when joking around and being informal, I just try to use English because English is more fun that way.

Explanation of Language Choice: Culturally Specific Vocabulary

The Korean language contains certain titles for siblings or close friends who are a different age. Korean people do not call their siblings or other older friends by their names. Instead, the terms like 'older sister' or 'older brother' are used. Nine out of 16 participants mentioned this concept during the interview. They said that they used Korean in the middle of interactions in English when they needed to address other people. Brian and Sandy, both born in the United States, were among the nine participants who used the Korean terms for addressing their older siblings.

Brian: I have an older brother, and my parents want me to call him “형.” I called him by his name once, and then they got mad at me, and I was like really little, and I realized that that's not something I should do as Korean. So, even if I talk to him in English mostly, I still call him “형,” not by his name.

Sandy: I wouldn't call my cousin by her name, especially when we are with our parents or like other adults. We would try to use Korean in front of them, but between us we just use speak in English. But still, I know it's not proper to call your older siblings by their names, so I just call her “언니” when I talk to her. She calls my name because I am younger than

her, but I always call her “언니” ‘cause she is older than me and it’s the way how it should be.

Brian used “형” which means ‘older brother’ to his older brother, and Sandy used “언니” meaning ‘older sister’ when she had to address her older cousin. This way of addressing other people also appeared on the participants’ personal web pages. Five out of those nine participants who reported using honorifics and Korean appellation to address people in person also used these forms written in English alphabet on their wall pages of Facebook. Brian’s comment above showed his experience of using Korean terms for addressing his older brother. He also mentioned that he would address his brother in Korean or use Korean names in online web pages as follow.

Interviewer: Do you ever use English to write out Korean? Like using English alphabet to say Korean words?

Brian: Right here, like she calls me “oh pa” something like that, and something like “hyung” here and there. I use “hyung” to call someone older than me, like my brother, because like I said, Koreans don’t call each other by name when there is an age difference. And especially for her, she was like a family friend, and I knew her when she was little and her parents made her call me “oh pa” so we just got used to that. But other than that, if people have like Korean names, then I’ll spell out their Korean names in English like “yeona.” So I think I use English for Korean names.

Brian’s web pages had certain terms like “oh pa,” meaning ‘older brother’ only used by females which should be written as “오빠” in Korean, and “hyung,” or “형” in Korean meaning older brother only used by males. These are all Korean terms for addressing somebody who is older, one’s siblings as well as other people.

Brian used the Romanized Korean terms online, that is, used the English alphabets to express Korean vocabulary. Half of the participants in this study reported using the English alphabet to write Korean words, especially when they texted or made comments on Facebook, or to express certain ideas in Korean online or in texting. Such uses of Romanization occurred not only in addressing others in Korean terms as described above, but also in using public computers or texting with a cell phone which did not have Korean typing fonts. For example, Kristine explained the times during which she used the English alphabet to write Korean words.

Kristine: For example, my friends, that comment, there are like Korean-English mix. There are some people who write Korean on it. Usually a lot of people write in Korean but in English. I do that a lot. Especially when I'm texting, 'cause I don't have the phone that has the function. You know, like the real Koreanized people, they actually type in Korean, but I can't do that, and my phone doesn't do that, so even when I am texting, I just write Korean in English.

Then Kristine not only provided an example of Romanization but further stated why she used Romanization.

Interviewer: Can you show me some examples?

Kristine: Yeah, so for example....“sul jip”....it was an answer for “where were you yesterday?” It definitely has a different kind of nuance that writing “beer house.” And this is another thing. So for example, with this specific friend, she was inviting me during the weekend to that “sul jip”, and I was like “can you not call it ‘sul jip’? We can just call it a bar.” And she’s like “what’s wrong with that?” And I was like “I don’t know, it’s just like the feeling of it.” And for some reason it felt like something worse than just a bar.

According to Kristine, certain Korean expressions have different meanings when they are translated into English. She indicated that “sul jip” used by her friend, which means ‘beer house’ in English and should be written as “술집” in Korean, has a more negative meaning than a simple ‘beer house’ in English.

Similar to Kristine’s friend who used “sul jip” in Korean instead of using the English translation of the word, some participants used Romanization when they wanted to use certain expressions that were not fully describable in English, but had clearer meaning when expressed in Korean. Such expressions included the title of Korean movies, the names of Korean foods, and certain expressions which indicate a unique Korean context. For example, Michelle used English letters to write Korean expressions. When Michelle was exchanging comments about a Korean movie with her friend on her Facebook, she wrote out the title of the movie as “ah juh ssi” in English. The title itself means ‘a grown up man’ in English. However, considering the context of the movie, the literal translation of the title as ‘a grown up man’ does not fully depict the nuance of the Korean word “ah juh ssi.”

In another example, George mentioned that he would just use Korean names for Korean cuisine because he felt that the literal translations of the names of the Korean dishes were strange.

George: I just type it out. And mostly names, if it’s like a Korean name, I’ll type that in English, or sometimes foods, not too often but like some Korean cuisine that has just like a Korean name, then I’ll type it out. For example, like “순두부,” I’ll write “soon doo boo.” I know it’s really kind of hard to find the right expression for “순두부,” and we don’t really say “do you want to get like ‘spicy tofu stewed soup’ ‘cause the literal translation is kind of weird. So instead of typing the description or translation, I’ll just use ‘soon doo boo.’ Or like “kim chi” stuff like that.

But then, I never really use Korean in a full sentence when I type in English.

Samantha also brought up the fact that she used the English alphabet to write comments in Korean. She pointed out one of the Romanized expressions, “oh nul duk bun ea jae mi it sut uh,” from the comments she made in her Facebook wall page as an example. Then she further noted that she would use such Romanization because she felt that some expressions were more concise and clearer when written in Korean.

Samantha: You know sometimes some words are better to say in Korean then in English because if that [the last comment] was translate in English, it' just “I had a fun with you.” And you know it doesn't fully show the Korean meaning of the phrase. It's more than just simply ‘had a fun with you.’ It'll be more like ‘I had a fun, exciting, or good time today because of you.’ And I think that writing such feeling in English is not concise as writing in Korean.

Interestingly, Samantha further showed a unique way of using Korean. She used the Korean alphabet to say words in English, which might be called a “reverse Romanization.” Her explanation was more interesting. Since most of her “friends” on Facebook understand English but do not understand Korean, sometimes she made comments using the Korean alphabet for English words so that she could make it somewhat secret and put an emphasis on the word as well. So, as for Samantha, she says that she is likely to choose either the English alphabet to write Korean expressions or the Korean alphabet to write English words so that she can express herself better.

Bilingual Korean English speakers use specific terminology in Korean to express important aspects of Korean culture. Also, they write Korean expressions using the English alphabet in texting or especially in online settings in order to deliver their

personal thoughts more clearly when they think writing in English may not fully describe what they want to say. In other words, when Korean is more precise in terms of meaning, they use Korean even in an English language context.

Language as a Marker of Personal Attachment

Half of the interviewees mentioned that they spoke Korean in order to show their personal attachment to their online conversational partners. Even though they generally followed the language initiated by the others and they considered the visitors' language ability, sometimes they chose to use Korean as a way of showing their attachment to the visitors. For example, Deborah intentionally chose Korean when replying to comments made by her cousin.

Deborah: I write mostly in English, but some people write to me in Korean, like my cousin who lives in Korea. I still haven't responded yet because I kind of have struggle typing in Korean, it's uncomfortable.

Interviewer: Why didn't you reply back in English to him?

Deborah: Well, even though he speaks English really well but his native language is Korean. And I feel like it's more personal if I write to him in Korean. I'm not sure exactly why I feel that way, but I kind of think that responding back in English may not show like a personal attachment...so when he writes to me in Korean, I want to return the care I have for him [by replying in Korean].

Mark also explained that writing in Korean to his close friends was more personal and comfortable to him.

Interviewer: Why would you do so? Why would you choose to use Korean differently?

Mark: It's more comfortable that way. And it's more personal. And I don't know why but it's easier for me to hang out with high school friends than with college friends. So I think I use more Korean with my high school friends than with my college friends. Probably it's because I haven't had college friends who are Korean American up until four months ago, and I'm not really close to them compared to my high school friends. Maybe that's why I'm kind of more attached to my high school friends and I kind of naturally speak in Korean to them. But with college friends, I think I use more English because I'm not that close [to them].

Gloria was another one who explained using Korean was a way of showing her personal attention to her online "friend."

Interviewer: I could see that most of your friends on Facebook use English. But for those who use Korean, what language do you usually response back to them?

Gloria: It depends. If I could explain the situation in English better, I would use English. But sometimes it feels like it's rude [to use English]. When they are comfortable with Korean but if I reply back to them in English, I feel like it's rude. So if they initiate in Korean, then I reply back in Korean. And if somebody says something in English, then I'd say back something in English, too. I feel like it's more personal to use Korean especially to my close friends and families unless they are not comfortable with speaking Korean. Because if somebody leaves a message in Korean, I kind of get the feeling that the person is paying attention to me, knows that I can speak Korean, something like that. I don't know why but I just feel that way. So, I want to show the same to others when I write something to my friends on my Facebook.

According to Gloria, leaving responsive comments in English to comments written in Korean may be seen as "rude." Like Gloria, Tony also thought writing in English on his Korean baseball team website was seen as "disrespectful" to the older group members of the team.

Interviewer: Have you or other members ever tried writing in English on that website?

Tony: Yeah...we did...and some of the members got mad...so after that we never did it again.

Interviewer: Who were those members who got mad and why do you think they got mad?

Tony: They were some graduate students who were much older than us...and they were from Korea...and they probably got mad because for them, Korean is way more easier than English, and they do not want to use English with younger students like us. And I know speaking honorifics is like a proper manner in Korean culture, and using English to them [older people] might be seen as disrespectful. So we would rather not write in English in this website when we talk with older members.

The bilingual Korean English speakers noted a “downside” to using Korean to show personal attachment. Gloria pointed out that speaking Korean in a public setting like in a work place may give the wrong impression of intimacy between people, which may be seen as favoritism.

Gloria: Let’s say I work at a company and the boss is a very Americanized Korean and all the other coworkers are white people, then I would never speak Korean to the boss...because it would kind of show an intimate relationship with the boss, which the other coworkers may think unfair because I am Korean and people would think of it as a favoritism. So, I would always try to speak English so that there is no unfair relationship. Because I feel like Americans already know that Koreans are so grouped together who always stick with each other. And I never really liked that because I like diversity. I know Koreans are comfortable with each other especially in America, but in the workplace, I think they should keep it off because we have to be fair.

These comments suggest that these bilingual Korean English speakers think that choosing to speak in Korean to other bilingual Korean English speakers makes a

statement about a relationship. By speaking Korean, they can be more personal and caring. This personal connection is generally seen as good, but in some contexts such as in a work place, it is also can be seen as inappropriately personal.

Summary of Findings

Based on their explanations of their use of languages, bilingual Korean English speakers use languages differently based on the contexts where conversations take place or to whom they are speaking. They talk to their parents in Korean but they mix Korean and English with their siblings and close friends. Also, they speak in Korean when talking to adults in public areas, whereas they speak mostly in English with their friends in church or clubs. Moreover, bilingual Korean English speakers with different levels of self-perceived language proficiency use languages differently. Those with high self-assessed language proficiency tend to use more Korean, whereas those who rated themselves having low language proficiency are likely to use more English. Yet, there are certain contexts where they use the same languages regardless of the level of their self-assessed language proficiency. Both proficiency groups mostly speak in Korean when talking to parents or other Korean adults in public, whereas they mostly speak in English when talking to their friends in class.

Bilingual Korean English speakers use the language that was initially used in the first encounter with their conversational partner. In addition, they may choose a specific language according to the primary language of their online conversational partners. When they leave comments or chat online, they consider the others' language skills, and they use the language in which they think their conversational partners are more proficient.

Furthermore, bilingual Korean English speakers intentionally choose to use Korean in specific situations such as addressing others who are older, making jokes, or talking about Korean food or movies. Sometimes they choose English when they want to express something with a negative meaning. For example, when making sarcastic comments, they may use English instead of Korean. Moreover, they may use Romanized expressions – Korean written in the English alphabet – especially in online or in texting. That is, bilingual Korean English speakers transliterated the Korean words using English in the middle of English language conversation. They choose this way of Romanization because they believe these certain Korean expressions have a unique quality that cannot be fully described in English. Also, they use Romanization to address their conversational partners in Korean terms. Even though the script of such conversations only showed English letters, it still represented language switching and the speakers clearly used Korean expressions written phonetically in English.

Lastly, bilingual Korean English speakers use Korean to show personal attachment to the people with whom they interact in a workplace setting. While they believe that speaking Korean to other bilingual speakers might be seen as inappropriate, writing in Korean online is a way of showing personal caring.

Discussion

An examination of the language use patterns revealed that bilingual Korean English speakers use languages differently depending on the social context. The bilingual participants in this study spoke more Korean than English with their parents and other Korean adults in public, while they used more English than Korean with siblings and

friends. When they needed to address a person who is Korean or Korean-American or to show personal attachment to the people they talk to, they were likely to speak in Korean with their conversational partners. In these kinds of social situations, language switching occurred among bilingual Korean English speakers not only in face-to-face interactions but also in online social worlds. In other words, they used Korean and English back and forth based on the social relationship between them and their conversational partners. In this sense, for bilingual Korean English speakers Korean language is a mediating tool that connects individuals and shows the relationship between them.

This aspect of language use based on social contexts may be explained by the social theory of language. This theory emphasizes that language cannot exist outside of a society and its meanings are constrained by social context. Lemke (1995) claimed that language plays a role within social contexts where various actions and relationships exist. Schiffrin (1994) also states that the meaning of language is relative to a culturally determined social situation. Given that the bilingual participants in this study, regardless of their self-assessed Korean proficiency level, said they spoke Korean to their parents and to other Korean adults, it is reasonable to conclude that bilingual Korean English speakers understand the meaning of honorific expressions in Korean. Their reports of speaking Korean in social settings with adults shows their understanding of Korean culture and the functions of the Korean language within the cultural context.

The current study also indicates that bilingual Korean English speakers use Korean and English depending on culturally specific topics and vocabulary. For example, these speakers use Korean to discuss topics which include Korean foods, movies or

dramas, or making jokes. They may also use specific Korean terms for addressing their conversational partners as they consider the social order based on age.

Such aspects of language practice by the bilingual Korean English speakers are well supported by the social theory of language which describes how language functions within the social situation, especially at the interpersonal level. According to this theory, the meaning of language is reflected in social structure. Halliday (1978) asserted that the meaning of language is related to the social order or social situation. Lemke (1995) also reiterated the point that language displays relationships in the social contexts of actions. For instance, in a situation when bilingual Korean English speakers have to talk about certain Korean foods or dramas, they use specific Korean terms to describe the foods or the dramas. Such specific Korean terms are meaningful only when they are used within the contexts of Korean culture. Another example is the use of Korean titles by the bilingual Korean English speakers in addressing other bilingual Korean English speakers who are older. The former know that using specific titles based on age and gender of the latter is proper cultural manners especially in Korea. Such titles reflect the speaker's understanding of the meaning of social order especially the hierarchy in a group of people in Korean society. In short, through the lens of social theory of language, language choice and language switching by the bilingual Korean English speakers demonstrate their knowledge of Korean language as a vehicle of social meaning.

The use of Romanized Korean words in the middle of an English language interaction is another example that reflects the core idea of the social theory of language. Bilingual Korean English speakers Romanized Korean words in text messages as well as in online social worlds in order to express their ideas more clearly. They are aware of the

fact that Romanized Korean words do not have any meaning in English unless they are read and understood as Korean based on the pronunciation. Through this practice, the bilingual Korean English speakers focus on the meaning of Romanized Korean words. When they Romanize Korean words, they assume that their online conversational partners know the Korean word and expect them to understand the meaning of it. For example, when bilingual Korean English speakers talk about what kinds of food they want to eat or where to eat, they may Romanize the name of specific Korean food or restaurants instead of writing them out in English translation in the middle of online English language interaction. By doing so, they expect their online conversational partners to be able to understand the meaning of the words since those words are only meaningful when read in Korean language. Such an application of Romanization fits well within the social theory of language. This theory holds that social activities generate the meaning of language and other symbolic systems in a particular situation placed within discourses settings. Lemke (2000) claimed that language use is meaningful within social contexts, and the meaning is created interpersonally. Schiffrin (1994) and Lindhom (1992) would support Lemke's claim in that language or discourse is never neutral, but rather conveys social and cultural meaning.

In summary, bilingual Korean English speakers' language uses and explanations of their language choices illustrate the social nature of language use. For bilingual Korean English speakers, speaking Korean mediates the conversations with other bilingual Korean English speakers, creating socially constructed meanings within social contexts.

VI. BILINGUAL KOREAN ENGLISH SPEAKERS' PRESENTATION OF THEIR SOCIAL IDENTITIES THROUGH LANGUAGE USE: FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

This chapter discusses the third research question: how do the bilingual Korean English speakers present their social identities through the language used in face-to-face interactions as well as in online social worlds?

Description of Korean-Americans

During the interviews, the bilingual Korean English speakers in this study were asked to express their thoughts about what it means to be Korean-American. The question is shown below:

Interviewer: Some people think that Korean-Americans are basically like other Americans. But, other people don't think so. What do you think?

Even though the question asked whether Korean-Americans were like other Americans or not, all interview participants responded in terms of typical characteristics of Korean-Americans.

Image of typical Korean-Americans

Fourteen of 16 interviewees answered that Korean-Americans were neither Korean nor American, but rather a group of people living in the United States with a

unique culture. Only two interviewees considered Korean-Americans to be a blend of both Korean culture and American culture with one dominant side, either more Korean or more Americanized.

These 14 interview participants who shared the idea that Korean-Americans were different from Koreans and from Americans mentioned that Korean-Americans know Korean language, are adapted to Korean culture as well as to American culture, and usually associate with other Korean-Americans. They also held a shared belief that Korean culture has values and traditions that are significantly different from those of Americans. Some of the examples they identified as a part of unique Korean-American culture were honorifics in Korean language, using specific terms to address people, the way of greeting on the first meeting, and manners to show respect to the older people. These bilingual interviewees thought that Korean-Americans have been successfully assimilated into American culture but at the same time follow unique Korean traditions. For instance, Tony made a comment that Korean-Americans were different from Americans and from Koreans as well because of they have a unique cultural background, a blend of two distinctive cultures.

Tony: I think a lot of such things come from [Korean] ethics. For example, English doesn't have words for the older people, like honorifics, so it's much comfortable to speak to the older people such as professors and supervisors, but in Korean you have to be fully conscious of the language you're speaking and the action you're taking...and it'll be really strange to switch the two,...like it'll be really odd for me to treat American people with Korean-based culture, and it'll be very rude for me to treat Koreans with American-based culture, especially to the older Koreans. I guess Koreans, I mean real Koreans, would not deal with such kind of things since it's natural to them to use honorifics and proper manners to the old. However, for Korean

Americans, I think they are being kind of cautious when talking to older people or speaking Korean in certain places.

The interview data illustrate the point that the bilingual Korean English speakers think typical Korean-Americans are people who have language skills in both Korean and English, who are adapted to both Korean and American culture, and who associate with other Korean-Americans.

Self-identification based on the image of typical Korean-Americans

The interviewees who had a shared image of Korean-Americans varied in terms of their self-perception of their social identity. Nine out of the 14 interviewees considered themselves Korean-American, three identified themselves as Korean, and two regarded themselves as “more towards American.” Interestingly, such thoughts on typical Korean-Americans seemed to shape their perception of their social identity according to their self-assessed language ability and the degree of their association with other Korean-Americans.

Gloria identified herself as Korean-American and expected others to view her as Korean-American. She stated that Korean-Americans should know how to speak Korean properly according to the situation and know appropriate manners.

Gloria: I feel like...no matter how long you lived in America as Korean, if you are Korean American, you really need to know how to speak Korean. You really need to know the manners and how to interact with adults correctly. And keep the Korean etiquettes, keep your roots. And try to keep connected to your Korean friends, because I think ethnic connections are important.

Gloria further mentioned that language was important to one's identity. She rated herself high in Korean language proficiency in the survey, which may explain why she differentiated herself from Korean-Americans who only speak English.

Gloria: I think language really makes up one's identity. I feel like I am very different from those Korean-Americans who only speak English. I feel like they are missing out on a very important culture.

Samantha, who also identified herself as Korean-American, implied that language was a key indicator that describes Korean-Americans. She explained that speaking Korean was more like a naturally formed habit to Korean-Americans like her.

Samantha: From my perspective, [speaking Korean] is not about they want to show off their ethnicity or their heritage. It's like it's the language we use most often I guess...Like we don't even notice that we use mostly one language. It's like it's in my vein. It's not like I can't change it, you know. I talk to my roommates in Korean, and we don't really talk in English even though we are all fluent in English...probably never...even in public because we are so used to it [speaking Korean].

Nick believed that Korean-Americans should be able to communicate in Korean and know Korean culture. Like Gloria and Samantha, Nick wanted others to regard him as Korean-American, however, he identified himself as Korean. During the interview, Nick clearly stated that he was Korean and was well adapted to both Korean culture and American culture, and he rated himself as having higher Korean language proficiency than his Korean-American friends. In this sense, Nick agrees with Gloria that language is a key factor that determines one's identity.

Nick: I'm like two really opposite things. Although I am Korean, sometimes I feel like some Korean cultures are weird, but still I live

in that culture and have no problems living in that culture. But I am also living in America and I am adapted to American culture, too. So, it's just two opposite things I just cope with...I basically lived in Korea for about ten years, so I learned Korean, it's stuck in my head. And I keep watching dramas and stuff, so I never forgot. And maybe that's why I'm very fluent in Korean. When I speak in Korean to my Korean-American friends, sometimes I feel like I'm better than them.

Jonathan also mentioned that being a Korean-American means that the person has adequate amount of knowledge of Korean language and culture. He was one of the two participants who identified himself as American, but he expected others to consider him Korean-American. Jonathan explained that he did not associate with Korean friends and he thought of himself having low proficiency in Korean, and for these reasons he differentiated himself from a typical Korean American.

Jonathan: I think I'm more towards American 'cause back in high school I didn't really hang out with Korean friends. There were some Asians, and we only spoke in English. I forgot a lot of Korean, so I am not that fluent in Korean compared to my Korean-American friends who are almost perfect in Korean. My neighborhood was basically a white community, so there were not many Koreans. I was like a white guy. But when I came here [at UCSD] I met a lot of Koreans and have hung out with them a lot, but still I think I'm more towards like American.

Elizabeth wanted to be categorized as Korean-American, but she indicated that her ethnic identity is Korean. After stating that Korean language skill is an important component to judge whether or not a person is Korean-American, she explained that it is difficult to define a person's identity since it is constructed through complex interplay of the person's citizenship, cultural background, and way of thinking.

Elizabeth: ...when other people ask me what ethnicity I am, I always say Korean and I don't say Korean-American. But then I would still be categorized as Korean-American, which technically means I'm American. I mean, even though I'm in Korean ethnicity, I am also American. But some people take it a lot more literally in terms of what your citizenship status is, and I'm still a citizen of Korea. So then maybe that has something to do with it, too. I'm not a citizen here. But one thing for sure is that when I feel like I'm more Korean is when like...for example watching Olympics or something I'm all for the Korean side. And also, I get more offended when Koreans get insulted than Americans. But at the same time, as much as that's true I know that how I think and stuff has a lot to do with American culture. I think identity-wise, it's difficult to always 100% express what you feel like your identity is. And it's something that others would never really know, only you yourself would know. And of course you can express it, but it's limited and it [your identity] is more complicated than that.

In summary, the interviewees' self-perception of their social identity as a Korean-American seemed to depend on their self-assessed language skills. These bilingual Korean English speakers have a well-articulated and shared image of typical Korean-Americans, and this image shapes their own social identity.

Theories of How Social Identities Are Formed

During the interviews, nine out of 16 bilingual Korean English speakers in this study pointed out that social context greatly affect a person's social identity. Families or friends were frequently mentioned as major components of the social environment. Samantha's comment below shows that friends and family within the social environment are important factors that shape the person's identity. Samantha indicated that her sustained relationship with her Korean-American friends enabled her to maintain her identity as Korean-American.

Samantha: It's more like a personal choice. And it depends on where you grew up. Like when I was in high school, in my geometry class when I was in 9th grade, there were fifty percent Mexican and fifty percent Korean. My school was a public school in the middle of K-town [in L.A.], so it was almost like Mexican versus Korean-Americans. But then I moved to Santa Barbara, and I was the only Asian there. So, I constantly contacted my friends in L.A. If I had lost that contact, then I would have lost my Korean skill easily 'cause during those two years I only spoke Korean with my parents and that was it. Then, when I came here, it was just like naturally coming back to me. So, I guess if I hadn't had my friends in L.A. I might have ended up being more American than Korean-American.

Heather stated ways in which the social environment could affect a person's social identity. Heather came to the United States in her early teens, and she stated that in the United States the parents were the most important factor for children in forming a Korean-American identity. According to Heather, the way Korean-Americans' parents raise their children has a significant impact on whether their children become Korean-American or not.

Heather: I think it really depends on how long you lived here and on the home environment lived in. I think it's really important for Korean-Americans to maintain their Korean identity rather than seeing themselves as mixed Koreans or mixed Americans. I think it's kind of a unique characteristics of Korean-Americans.

Interviewer: You mentioned home environment as a factor that affects on a person's identity. Can you elaborate on this?

Heather: I think the parents are the most important environment factors who really need to care their children in terms of forming Korean identity so that they can grow up to be Korean-American, not American. If they think about their children's future, it would be wise to keep them bilingual. Because we have the advantage, like having a Korean root in us, it will expand our world, give more opportunities. So, it'll be like keep that root and use it wisely, and I think it's really up to the parents to raising their kids in certain ways.

Kristine shared similar ideas with Heather. She indicated that family setting plays an important role in identity formation. Kristine mentioned her Chinese-Korean friend who identified herself as more Korean than Taiwanese, explaining that her friend's mother who is Korean may have formed a Korean-dominant family setting which seems to have affected her friend's identity.

Kristine: I feel like I'm almost fifty [Korean] fifty [American]. I don't know how to put it in numbers exactly. But as much as I feel like...because I was raised here and educated here, the way I think, like what I think different things should be or what I think is fair, in stuff like that or in American values, I'm very Americanized. But at the same time I really can't ignore the fact that I'm very Korean-cultured because apparently I am from a Korean family. Even I really get confused about that sometimes. The friends that I have that came a lot later than me, I feel like they are definitely more Korean-cultured since they spent more time in Korea. And I have a friend who is half Korean half Chinese. She was born in Taiwan, but she came here when she was really young and she was raised here in America. Her dad is Taiwanese, and her mom is Korean. And even though she is very Americanized, she is a lot more Korean than Taiwanese. You wouldn't really know that she's half Chinese because she doesn't really speak Chinese at all. She does speak Korean but not too well. And what's funny is that when I ask her [about her identity], she claims to be more Korean, too. And even when we eat cause we dorm together, she would bring Korean food and not Chinese food. Maybe her mom dominates more than her dad in her family. Because I would think that since she was born in Taiwan, and I was born in Korea, so she would be more Taiwanese. But then she has this strong Korean side. So I can say the environment is really important.

Michelle also shared the idea that one's social environment influences that person's social identity. Based on Michelle's comment, social environment not only includes families but also peer groups.

Michelle: I think for me I know that I am Korean American, but then I'm more towards Korean only because I'm more comfortable that way especially with the whole adult thing and like that. I think it's never like Korean American equally. It's rather one way or the other. So, depending on how your environment was when you grew up, if you grew up in more of a Korean cultured tradition family and had more Korean friends, then you'd go more to the Korean side. But if you grew up in an Americanized family or hung out with more American people or with non-Korean kids, then you'd be more to the American side.

Mark's comment below also implies that a person's identity is determined by one's associations and by social community. Mark stated that he rejected his Korean identity once because he lived in a "white community." But when he moved to an area where many Asians, including Koreans, were present, he "recovered" his Korean identity.

Mark: I would say it depends on what circumstance the person is in. Because before I transferred here, I was in San Luis Obispo and it was about four hours away northbound from L.A., that area was a white community. And there were only a few Koreans for three years. And that's why I hung out with Chinese people. And during that time, I refused my Korean identity on purpose. I wouldn't say I didn't like to be called Korean, but at that time I tried to refuse it unless it's necessary because I guess I was in a white community and I tried to hang out with white people. I think I wanted to blend into the [white] group, but then I ended up hanging out with Chinese and it was kind of sad. But I thought if I threw away my Korean identity, it would be easier to hang out with them. But in here, recently, the majority of students are Asians and there are a lot of Koreans here, too. So I realized that it's time to recover my Korean identity, so I needed to get back. I transferred here last year and I was still denying my Korean identity for about a year, but then I was kind of lonely, so I started hanging out with Korean people recently.

In summary, these bilingual Korean English speakers believe that a person's identity is formed by the person's social environment such as family, peer groups, and communities. To this extent, a person's identity is socially constructed based on how he

or she is raised by his parents and with whom he or she usually associate as he or she grows up. Bilingual Korean English speakers who grow up in a social environment where they encounter both Korean and American cultures may form both Korean and American identities. For instance, those who grow up in Korean-dominant cultural community in the United States may learn various aspects of Korean culture from their families and Korean-American friends and at the same time, they may still practice American values and enjoy American culture as they meet non Korean-American associates in school or workplace. An important point here is that such formation of identities is cultural.

Explanation of Language Choices with Regard to the Presentation of Social Identity

The bilingual Korean English speakers in this study showed me their personal web pages such as Facebook, which were then analyzed for the language use. Twelve out of the 16 interviewees wrote in both Korean and English on their web pages; two wrote mostly in English and the other two wrote only in English. None of the interviewed participants used only Korean on their online pages. Among the 12 bilingual Korean English speakers who had both Korean and English on their personal web pages, seven participants identified themselves as “Korean-American,” three participants regarded themselves as “Korean,” and two of them viewed themselves as “American.”

Presentation of identity by “Koreans”

The survey and interview results showed that the participants in this study who wanted to be considered as Korean were likely to be Korean-born who came to the

United States in their early teens. They generally had a high level of self-assessed language proficiency in Korean and they were mostly Korean speakers.

Among the 16 interviewees, Heather, Tony, Nick, and Kristine identified themselves as “Korean” and reported having high proficiency in the Korean language. All of them wrote mostly in Korean on their personal web pages. Even though they had some English on their web pages, they stated that they were able to use more Korean because they were comfortable with the Korean language.

As shown in Figure 1, Heather used mostly Korean with her friends online. She said that most of her online friends were the friends she usually met face-to-face, and they were “Korean-Americans” who came to the United States around the age of ten just like she did. She claimed that her Korean-American friends and she were all fluent bilingual Korean English speakers and were comfortable writing in Korean.



Figure 1: Facebook page excerpt by a "Korean"

Tony, who also wanted to be identified as “Korean-American” by others but thought of himself as “Korean,” stated that he had many online friends who usually wrote in Korean, and he replied to them in Korean as well.

Tony: I have a lot of friends who usually type in Korean. And I reply to them in Korean as well because I am pretty much comfortable with writing in Korean I guess. But most of the time I just follow the language they started. If they started in Korean, then I just write in Korean, and if they started in English, then I just comment in English as well.

Tony's comment indicates that even though he used the same language written by his online conversational partners, he had more Korean than English on his personal web pages because he had a number of friends who interacted with him online in Korean.

Figure 2 shows a part of Tony's Facebook page.



Figure 2: Facebook page excerpt by a “Korean”

Similar to Heather and Tony, Nick and Kristine considered themselves “Korean” even though they wanted to be identified as “Korean-American” by others. Their Facebook pages were also written mostly in Korean. Particularly, Nick explained that his Korean-American friends who visited his Facebook were fluent in both Korean and English and he often wrote in Korean to them.

Interestingly, none of the participants with a “Korean” identity indicated that they used Korean to show their Korean identity. But their web pages suggest that bilingual participants who consider themselves “Korean” do use more Korean than English with their online conversational partners.

Presentation of identity by “Korean-Americans”

The participants who wanted to be regarded as “Korean-Americans” were either born in Korea and immigrated to the United States in their early childhood, or born in the United States and grew up here. Some of them had a high level of self-assessed Korean proficiency, while other reported having a low level Korean proficiency.

The eight bilingual participants in the interviews who viewed themselves as “Korean-American” wrote in both Korean and English online, and their Facebook pages had a mixture of Korean and English. Qualitative analysis of sentence units in their Facebook pages showed that they used about the same number of sentences in Korean and in English. Figure 3 shows the Facebook page of Elizabeth, one of the eight participants who perceived themselves as a “Korean-American” and wrote in a mixture of Korean and English.

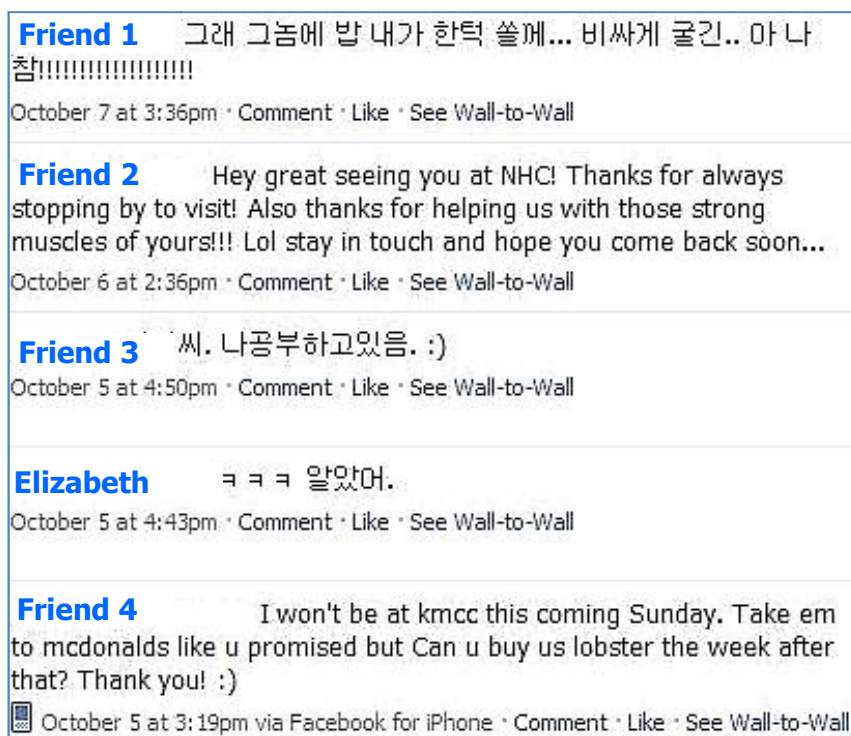


Figure 3: Facebook page excerpt by a “Korean-American”

Elizabeth, who wrote in both Korean and English, explained that she used languages differently based on with whom she interacted with online. When she was asked to describe her friends on this specific Facebook page, she identified all of them as bilingual “Korean-Americans.”

Elizabeth: If I see a comment in Korean or written by my close friend who is good at Korean, then I just write in Korean without even thinking. But if I see someone who wrote something in English and if I know that person is more comfortable with English even if that person is Korean-American, then I know I have to write in English. But some of my close friends usually speak both, and when we write something back and forth to each other on the wall, we just mix up [Korean and English].

Elizabeth's comment indicates that she considered the language skills of her online conversational partners when she responded to their comments, which explains why she used both Korean and English when writing online.

Samantha, who also considered herself "Korean-American", stated that she chose a specific language based on the person with whom she interacted with online.

Samantha:...to my American friends or who only speak English even though they're Korean, I intentionally write to them in English. I think I naturally...or unconsciously choose either English or Korean according to whom I'm talking to.

Even though these "Korean-American" interviewees did not specify the Korean language proficiency level of their online friends who were also "Korean-Americans," they stated that their friends also wrote to them in Korean and English online. This implies that these bilingual Korean English speakers have the ability to use both Korean and English freely, that is, they have language skills not only in English but also in Korean.

Such language skills were one of the characteristics of typical Korean-Americans described by the bilingual participants in this study. Bilingual Korean English speakers may be representing their social identity as "Korean-American" by using both Korean and English online. Although none of the participants directly said that they wrote in Korean and English in order to show their Korean-American identity, they did say that they were aware of the idea that typical Korean-Americans have language abilities in both Korean and English. Therefore, it seems reasonable to argue that

bilingual Korean English speakers are displaying their Korean-American identity by writing in both Korean and English online.

Presentation of identity by “Americans”

The four participants who wanted to be identified as “American” were all born in the United States. They were likely to perceive themselves having low Korean proficiency and mostly English users.

Four of the interviewees self-identified as “American,” Mark, Sandy, Peter, and Brian. Among these four, Mark and Brian reported that they use both Korean and English but they intentionally used more English than Korean online. Mark and Brian’s Facebook wall pages, which were written mostly in English, supported their claims. Figure 4 is an example of Mark’s Facebook page, which has just one Korean expression written by Mark’s friend and the rest of the comments were all in English.



Figure 4: Facebook page excerpt by an “American”

Unlike Mark and Brian, Peter and Sandy used only English on their personal web pages. Figure 5 is the Facebook page from Sandy who identified herself as “American” and wrote entirely in English. These two participants pointed out that they mostly used English because they feared making mistakes writing Korean when they were online. It is not surprising that they also assessed themselves to have low language proficiency in Korean.

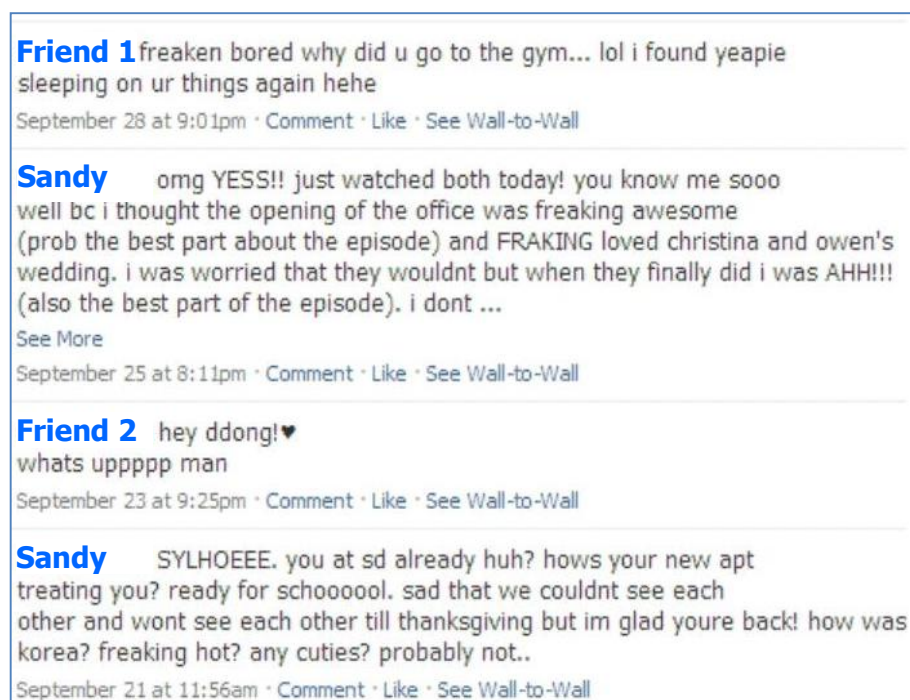


Figure 5: Facebook page excerpt by an “American”

Hiding Korean identity by avoiding the use of Korean language

Two of the four participants who used mostly English on their personal web pages said that they tended to hide their Korean identity online. Kristine, who wanted to be identified as “Korean-American” but considered herself “Korean” and assessed her

Korean language proficiency as high, thought writing in Korean online might be seen as “being too much Korean” or showing a strong Korean identity especially to those who are not Koreans or Korean-Americans.

Kristine: On Facebook, like I said before, in general I tried to speak or write mostly in English. Because I know that even though I’m on a Korean page, Americans or other non-Korean speaking people will be able to see it. And I don’t want them to feel offended. It’s like in two different levels. One is that I don’t want them to feel like “Oh, I don’t understand” like, getting offended or something, right? But on the second level, I don’t want to be portrayed as someone who always speaks Korean. And that was actually like my first reason I never did that [writing things in Korean]. I still have a lot of non-Korean friends. And I don’t like to be too “fobby” like thought of as ‘she is Korean, she speaks Korean everywhere.’ And I actually don’t. So, it’s like two different levels.

Interviewer: So, basically do you mean you are considering about the people’s view, the people you interact with?

Kristine: Right, you’re correct. I’ll show you something interesting here. (as showing her profile page) So then, like I said I don’t want to be portrayed as someone who always speaks Korean, or too fobby, right? But at the same time, what’s funny is that I’d love to show that...for some reason...I’d love to tell everyone that I’m Korean. It’s kind of interesting. I wouldn’t write Korean everywhere because I don’t want to be seen as too Korean, but for my bio, my info in Facebook, I would write “Korean” for my ethnicity.

Interviewer: So, are you saying that even though you don’t want to be regarded as too Korean, but still you want them to think of you as someone who is both Korean and American who can speak both Korean and English, right?

Kristine: Yeah, exactly. And I just say Korean, not Korean American.

As a matter of fact, Kristine’s Facebook wall pages were mostly written in English. Her status updates were written only in English. After the interview, Kristine sent me an unsolicited email and further explained that she chose not to use Korean in

order to avoid others' biased views on "Fresh off the boat (FOB)" Koreans.

Kristine: I restrict myself from using Korean on Facebook because I don't want to be viewed "too" Korean. But at the same time, I choose to publicize on my own page that I am "Korean." Why do I do this? Maybe it's a way for me to stand up/be proud of my individuality and ethnicity, and at the same time defending/protecting myself from being judged as a typical minority in this racialized society. If I'm correct, Koreans tend to take a lot of pride in their nationality. So by having pride that I am Korean and thus publicizing it on my page, I am reinforcing a characteristic of the Korean cultural identity. But at the same time, I am aware of how others view "fobs", therefore I try to escape that reputation/image by purposely not using Korean on Facebook (trying to go against this idea of racial interpellation--being aware of my ethnic identity, recognizing how I am being looked at by others). In other words, I get to shape my true identity by choosing to present myself in a certain way.

Mark was the other person who explicitly did not write in Korean online. He identified himself as "more towards American" and wanted others to regard him as "American" although he rated himself having high Korean proficiency. He stated that using Korean may mark a person as having a stronger Korean identity, which he wanted to avoid.

Mark: It would be weird to say this but I tried not to use Korean. Since Facebook is an American website, I tried not to use Korean because I don't want to be seen as Korean. If I do so, I think people would regard me as someone who is more Korean than American. Well, I guess I am not a 100% American, but it doesn't mean that I am a 100% Korean. I think of myself as having both sides, but probably I am more Americanized since I grew up in a white community... And you know Facebook is opened to everyone, and I have some friends who won't understand Korean at all. So, I wouldn't write anything in Korean.

Both statements from Kristine and Mark implied that they were considering a wider audience when writing online. Additionally, although these two participants had a

high level of self-assessed language proficiency, and yet they intentionally did not use Korean online. Thus, their language use reflected an idea that their Korean identity would be revealed through their use of Korean language online. There are two possible explanations for why bilingual Korean English speakers avoid using Korean but rather write in English online. One is that they take this action so that their online audience who are not familiar with Korean may understand what they are posting on their personal web pages. The other is that they do so in order to intentionally hide their Korean identity.

Summary of Findings

In summary, bilingual Korean English speakers have a shared image of typical Korean-Americans. They consider typical Korean-American as people who speak both Korean and English, who are a blend of both Korean culture and American culture, showing characteristics from both cultures, and who associate with other Korean-Americans. Such notions about typical Korean-Americans may influence the self-identification of bilingual Korean English speakers particularly among those with low self-assessed proficiency in Korean. In addition, bilingual Korean English speakers observe and learn Korean culture through their families and friends with Korean heritage background, but they also experience American culture and learn American values as they interact with non Korean-American people outside their cultural surroundings. In this way, bilingual Korean English speakers' identity as Korean-American is formed based on the social environment in which the person grows up.

Bilingual Korean English speakers who view themselves as "Korean-American" use Korean and English equally with their online conversational partners. By doing so,

they may represent their Korean-American identity. Those who regard themselves as “Korean” seem to use more Korean than English online. And finally, some bilingual Korean English speakers use no Korean online. These speakers account for their language choice by considering the nature of their audience. Those who intentionally avoid using Korean state that they do not want to be regarded as Korean by a non-Korean audience.

Discussion

One major finding was the shared image of a typical Korean-American among bilingual Korean English speakers. Even though the bilingual participants in this study were not explicitly asked to describe their idea of a typical Korean-American, they all offered a similar description of Korean-Americans when they were prompted to compare Korean-Americans to other Americans or other Koreans. Typical characteristics of Korean-Americans include speaking both Korean and English, being adapted to Korean culture as well as to American culture, and associating with other Korean-Americans. Such characteristics formed an “Korean-American” identity among bilingual Korean English speakers.

Recognizing “Korean-Americans” as a certain kind of people based on their common traits corresponds to the core idea of affinity identity suggested by Gee (2000). According to Gee, affinity identity is a form of social identity which is based upon an individual being a member in a group of people who share similar interests and participate in a set of distinctive practices. In other words, Gee suggested that people with the same affinity identity display common behaviors or practices in terms of shared

culture or traits. Gee's notion of affinity identity fits with how bilingual Korean English speakers view typical "Korean-American" in that they exhibit common behaviors of speaking in Korean and English and associating with Korean-American peers, and they display similar cultural practices in Korean-American society.

A second finding is that bilingual Korean English speakers seem to categorize themselves based on the notion of a typical "Korean-American." For example, Jonathan, who wanted to be regarded as Korean-American but identified himself "more towards American" said that he was not a typical Korean-American because he thought he had low skills in Korean as compared to other Korean-American friends. He further stated that growing up in a white community without many Korean-American peers made him become more Americanized. Similarly, David and Sandy, who also regarded themselves as "American," stated that their Korean language skills were not high, which made them different from other typical Korean-Americans. On the other hand, Kristine, Gloria, Samantha, Tony, and Elizabeth all reported to have a high level of Korean proficiency and all viewed themselves as "Korean-American" as well. All of them frequently associated with Korean-American peers in face-to-face settings as well as in online social worlds. In short, the image of typical Korean-Americans seems to be closely tied to how bilingual Korean English speakers identify themselves.

Through the lens of social identity theory, bilingual Korean English speakers' self-identification can be explained in two ways. One is that they perceive themselves based on where they are within the "Korean-American" group with whom they associate. Based on the concept of self-categorization asserted by Hornsey (2008), it can be claimed that bilingual Korean English speakers categorize themselves as having the same social

identity or being identical to other members of the “Korean-American” group and display behaviors considered common or stereotypical by the group members such as speaking in Korean and English and associating within the group. Pavlenko and Blackledge (2004) claimed that the construction of social identity involves a complex self-perceiving process by individuals as they make sense of who they are in terms of how they are viewed within the group in which they have the membership.

Finally, social identity theory helps explain why bilingual Korean English speakers may disguise their Korean identity online by not writing in Korean. This theory defines social identity as an individual’s knowledge that he or she belongs to certain social groups particularly important to him or her (Hogg & Abrams, 1988). One’s identity is largely composed of self-descriptions based on the defining characteristics of the social groups to which one belongs. To this extent, bilingual Korean English speakers’ behavior of hiding their Korean identity in online social worlds may be understood as a way of expressing their desire to belong to a larger social group, not merely a Korean group or Korean-American group. They explained that they hid their Korean identity intentionally avoiding using Korean because they did not want to be regarded as Korean by a non-Korean audience. In this sense, bilingual Korean English speakers view themselves as a part of a larger “non-Korean” group in online social worlds. They identify themselves based on their knowledge about the attributes of the larger group of English language speakers in online social worlds and their perception of themselves within the group.

In summary, how bilingual Korean English speakers construct their social identities, and how they understand and present their identities fit well into social identity

theory. In other words, the “Korean-American” identity described by the bilingual Korean English speakers can be characterized by the social identity concept. This means that one’s identity is formed based on the individual’s perception of self in relation to other members in the social group that he or she interacts. In this sense, personal identity is constructed socially.

VII. CONCLUSION AND IMPLICATIONS

Overview of the Research

The current study examines how the use of language in face-to-face interaction as well as in online social networks by bilingual Korean English speakers relates to their social identities. I grounded the study in two conceptual frameworks – social theory of language and social identity theory. Social theory of language (Bakhtin, 1981; Fairclough, 1989; Halliday, 1978; Lemke, 1995; Lindholm, 1992) views language as a form of social practice. This theory also suggests that language is meaningful within social contexts, and the meaning is created interpersonally within a series of social activities. Social identity theory (Feuer, 2008; Gee, 2000; Hogg & Abrams, 1988; Hogg & Vaughan, 2002; Hornsey, 2008; Turner & Onorato, 1999) defines social identity as an individual's self-definition or perception in relation to other associates in the social group to which one belongs. According to this theory, one's identity is constructed through social interactions between group members within a social group.

The existing research on language use among bilingual Korean English speakers helped set the stage for this study. Bilingual Korean English speakers are likely to be Korean heritage speakers who have direct or indirect connections to Korean heritage background, have affiliations to American culture as well, and have varying degrees of Korean language proficiency (Chung, 2006; Jo, 2001; Lee, 2002; Lee & Shin, 2008; Min, 2000; Shin, 2005). Furthermore, a review of literature regarding online social networks (Blanchard & Horan, 2000; Foster, 1996; O'Connell, 2000; Leander & McKim, 2003; Parks, 1996) and online literacy practice of Korean immigrants in the United States (Yi,

2009) allowed me to understand that social activities on the internet provide bilingual Korean English speakers with additional sources of language contacts and multilingual exposure.

Based on the theoretical frameworks of social theory of language and social identity theory as well as on the body of literature in bilingual Korean English speakers and online social networks in Korean community, I generated an overarching research question: what is the relationship between language use of bilingual Korean English speakers and their social identity? This question was then divided into three sub-questions.

1. How do bilingual Korean English speakers describe themselves in terms of their language proficiencies and social identities?
2. How do the bilingual participants in this study use their two languages in face-to-face interactions as well as in online social worlds, and how do they account for their language choices?
3. How do the bilingual participants in this study present their social identities in online social worlds as well as in face-to-face interactions?

In order to answer these research questions, I designed a study with a mixed-method approach. An online questionnaire was used to collect demographic data as well as the information about the bilingual Korean English speakers' self-assessed language proficiencies, language uses, and their social identities. I also used semi-structured interviews to gather in-depth explanations from the bilingual participants in terms of their use of languages and their presentation of social identities.

There are two major areas of findings from this study. One is that bilingual Korean English speakers purposefully use Korean and English differently in online social

worlds to either display or hide their social identity. The other is that bilingual Korean English speakers with different levels of self-assessed language proficiency use Korean and English differently depending on their conversational partners and the social contexts in which the conversations occur.

Summary of Principal Findings by Research Questions

In this study, there were six principal findings about the relationship between language use of bilingual Korean English speakers and their social identities.

Research question 1: How do bilingual Korean English speakers describe themselves in terms of their language proficiencies and social identities?

First, bilingual Korean English speakers with different levels of self-perceived language proficiency use the languages differently based on their conversational partners or the social contexts of conversations. However, bilingual Korean English speakers, regardless of their self-perceived language proficiency, use more Korean with their parents and other Korean adults in public, while they use more English with siblings and friends.

Secondly, bilingual Korean English speakers' self-perceived language proficiency does not seem to play a role in the formation of their social identities. In other words, having high self-perceived Korean proficiency does not necessarily lead to having a Korean or Korean-American identity. Similarly, even if a person perceives oneself as

being not very proficient in Korean, the person may still identify himself as Korean or Korean-American.

Research question 2: How do the bilingual participants in this study use their two languages in face-to-face interaction as well as in online social worlds, and how do they account for their language choices?

Third, bilingual Korean English speakers claim to select a specific language based on the language skills of their conversational partners. In particular, when they interact online with others, they choose the language they think is more comfortable for their conversational partners to understand.

Fourth, bilingual Korean English speakers intentionally use Korean when talking about certain topics specifically related to Korea, or in particular situations such as addressing others who reflect Korean cultural norms. They may even use Romanized Korean words online in order to express their thoughts more clearly in the middle of English language conversation.

Research question 3: How do the bilingual participants in this study present their social identities in online social worlds as well as in face-to-face interaction?

Fifth, bilingual Korean English speakers have a shared idea about being a typical Korean-American. A concept of a typical Korean-American shapes their own identities, which drives them to categorize themselves based on their perception of whether they share the characteristics or cultural traits of the Korean-American group.

Lastly, bilingual Korean English speakers seem to purposefully use languages in online social worlds in order to either display or hide their social identities. Some bilingual Korean-Americans use both Korean and English to display their Korean-American identity, whereas others may avoid using Korean in order to hide their Korean identity. For the latter, their action supports their belief that by not using Korean, they can prevent their non-Korean online audience from regarding them as “Korean.”

Limitations of the Study

There are several limitations to this study. First of all, generalizing this study will be a major issue. The geographical area of this study where the sample was recruited is limited to southern California. In addition, the sample size of interviews was limited to 16 participants. Given that this study was done within a particular area with a small sample size, the findings of this study may not fully represent the entire population of bilingual Korean English speakers, and may not be generalized to all bilingual speakers.

Another limitation is related to the focus on the participants’ online social activities rather than their general language practice in face-to-face communications. Language use by the participants in online social networks may be different from their use of languages in face-to-face interactions. The construction of a social identity is of the result of a complex social process that occurs not only in online social worlds but also in the non-online world. For this reason, language use in online social worlds may not display the full spectrum of the ways in which languages relate to the construction and maintenance of social identities.

Language proficiency assessment can be pointed out as another limitation. The

participants in this study were asked to evaluate their own language proficiency based on functional statements. Because the participants rated themselves based on their self-perception of their language skills, this measure of language proficiency may not be an accurate measure of proficiency that reflected their actual level of Korean language ability but a perceived proficiency by the participants. Therefore, such self-assessed language proficiency may have been an inaccurate measure of the participants' language use patterns and social identities.

Lastly, the participants were asked to complete an online questionnaire before the interviews. The questionnaire about language use and self-identity might have shaped the participants' thoughts on their typical language practices and presentation of self with a bias that may not be congruent with how they actually behaved. The questionnaire might have led the participants to focus too much on specific terms or expressions they thought would be necessary to describe themselves, which may have eventually limited their account of self-identities in relation to their language use.

In summary, the proposed study has several possible limitations. However, the study still has the potential to further our understanding of bilingual Korean English speakers in terms of their language use and the construction of their social identities. The findings of this study may also guide Korean language instructors by making recommendations for ways to incorporate students' experiences of using languages outside of the classroom in meaningful ways. Such implications are discussed further in next section.

Implications for Further Research

The current study has several implications for further research. One line of research might be to explore the relationship between the cultural preference of bilingual Korean English speakers and their construction of social identity. The findings from this study indicate that social environment or cultural background such as family setting or peer group influences the formation of social identity. Through this study, I collected rich and complex data from the bilingual participants in regard to their linguistic behaviors, which can be used to further analyze their cultural activities, such as consuming media. However, this study was focused on the relationship between the use of languages and social identity, so I did not fully look into other aspects of bilingual Korean English speakers. It is possible that other cultural factors interact with language use patterns in social identity formation.

Another possible direction of research is to investigate the language use and social identity formation among younger bilingual Korean English speakers, especially young Korean-American children. This study targeted college-aged bilingual Korean English speakers. However, given that the development of language proficiency and construction of social identity starts from an early age, it might be worthwhile to focus on younger bilingual Korean English speakers through the lens of ecocultural theory. From an ecocultural perspective, children learn and synthesize shared knowledge accumulated within their cultural community through their engagement in daily activities that are locally situated or contextualized. This perspective may be useful especially for considering children's development of language and social identity. Indeed, cultural activities are accompanied by a language or languages if the activities are situated in

multicultural community. Children use and learn how to use a language when they are engaged in daily routines with other cultural members such as parents, friends, and teachers. Even when they do some activities alone such as reading books or watching television, they are not truly 'alone' because they are still interacting with 'other community members' who provide the cultural information through written scripts or television programs. Children pick up vocabulary and various expressions used in certain activities within the given social context. Such activities mediated by languages within the cultural contexts may influence how the children perceive themselves in relation to others. In addition, certain activities such as watching television, video gaming, listening to music in Korean may expedite children's learning and maintenance of bilingual, bicultural identity. Therefore, it would be useful to study the relationship among children's behaviors accessing multimedia resources, their proficiency level of the target language, their knowledge about the cultural community, and their self-identification within the community.

Finally, further study is needed to determine how bilingual Korean English speakers' self-assessed language proficiency differs from their actual level of language proficiency, and how such differences relate to their language practices and social identity. This study relied on bilingual participants' self-assessed language proficiency. It is possible that the participants in this study may not have accurately evaluated their Korean language proficiency. Some might have rated themselves higher than their actual level of proficiency, while others might have perceived themselves having lower language skills than their true language proficiency. Thus, comparing bilingual Korean English speakers' self-assessed language proficiency to a more formal assessment of

language proficiency may provide a new direction in studying the relationship between language use patterns and social identity.

Implications for Practice

The current study also has several implications for instructional practice. First, since bilingual Korean English speakers use languages differently based on where conversations occur and to whom they are talking, the materials for teaching Korean should reflect these varying social contexts. Currently, instructional materials for teaching Korean used in educational institutions in the United States are distributed from Korean embassies, and those materials are developed by Korean language experts in Korea. The materials place an emphasis on language structures and grammars, not on contextualized expressions and usage of situation-specific idioms used especially in multicultural settings like Korean-American communities. Therefore, developing instructional materials for actual language use by Korean-Americans that contain more socially contextualized expressions would be academically beneficial and practically effective as well.

Another implication for practice can be drawn from the finding that bilingual Korean English speakers use languages in online social worlds in a variety of ways. In general, they follow the lead of their online conversational partners using the language of the person writing to them, yet they also switch between Korean and English or mix the two based on the language of the person with whom they interact and what they want to describe. However, the multiple language use practiced by bilingual Korean English speakers is not recognized by teachers in post-secondary educational institutions. During

my four years of experience teaching Korean at a university level, I had not seen actual Korean language classes build on the ways bilingual Korean-American students use languages outside the classroom. I believe it is important to pay attention to language practices outside the school setting. I have learned from the bilingual students in my Korean language class that using the internet is an important part of their daily routine and they interact with their Korean-American peers in both Korean and English. Thus, incorporating such language use patterns into curricular activities in post-secondary educational institutions may have a positive impact not only on promoting students' engagement of learning Korean but also on improving their Korean language proficiency.

Appendices

Appendix A – Email Message

October 3, 2010

Dear whom it may concern

You are receiving this email as a member of Korean-American student association to be included as a participant in a study regarding language use in online social networks and social identities.

Your participation will require you take approximately 30-45 minutes to complete an online survey. The survey is divided into three sections. The first section is a demographic survey asking general questions about you. The second section contains questions regarding language proficiency and language use. The third sections will ask you to evaluate your cultural preference and cultural behaviors

There are no known risks to participation in this study. Your survey responses will be kept confidential and available only to the researcher for analysis purposes. Upon completion of the survey, you will be assigned a unique ID number and your email address will be deleted from the database. Results from the survey will be aggregated to the group level and no names or identifiable information will be used.

Although there is no direct benefit to you for participating in this study, the findings of this study have the potential to benefit practitioners teaching Korean language to design and customize Korean instructions that can encompass bilingual Korean English speakers' language practice outside the classroom. This study will also benefit other language teachers, language researchers, and sociologists who wish to better understand the relationship between language use and social identities.

You do not have to participate in this study if you do not want to. If you agree to be in this study, but later change your mind, you may drop out at any time and all information will be deleted from the database. There are no penalties or consequences of any kind if you decide you do not want to participate.

If you have questions about the study, you may direct those to me, Yoon Joo Park at 858-882-7015. If you have any questions about your rights as a research participant, you may contact the Institutional Review Board at the University of California, San Diego at (858) 455-5050.

To complete the online survey, please click on the attached link.

<https://spreadsheets.google.com/viewform?formkey=dGpPZjF0WHFJdEI0MnV0RnFQQ185aGc6MA>

Thank you.

Yoon Joo Park
Doctoral Student
University of California, San Diego

Appendix B– Online Questionnaire about Language Use and Self-Identity

Adapted from Lee (2002)

Language and identity questionnaire

Thank you for participating in this survey.

[Part A] About you

1. Where were you born?

- ☐ Korea
☐ United States
☐ Other:

2-A. If you were born in the U.S., how old were you when you first came to the U.S.? (If not applicable, skip to the next question)

Specify age

2-B. If you were born in the U.S., how long have you been in the U.S.? (If not applicable, skip to the next question)

(Specify the number of years)

3. Where were your parents born?

(If not applicable, skip to the next question)

	Korea	U.S.	Other
Father	☐	☐	☐
Mother	☐	☐	☐

5. How many times have you been to Korea?

- ☐ Never
☐ 1–3 times
☐ 4–6 times
☐ 7–9 times
☐ More than 10 times

6. If you add up all the times you were in Korea, how long have you stayed there?

- ☐ 1~2 weeks
- ☐ 1~6 months
- ☐ 6 months ~ 1 year
- ☐ more than 1 year

7. Do you hope to return to Korea to live there permanently?

- ☐ Yes
- ☐ No
- ☐ I am not sure.

8-A. Have you ever attended a supplementary Korean language school?
(e.g. Saturday school)

- ☐ Yes
- ☐ No

8-B. If yes to question 8-A, how long did you attend? (If not applicable, skip to the next question.)

(Add up the total time if you went to more than one school.)

- ☐ under 1 month
- ☐ 1~6 months
- ☐ 6 months ~ 1 year
- ☐ 1~3 years
- ☐ 3~5 years
- ☐ More than 5 years

8-C. If yes to question 8-A, why did you attend the supplementary Korean language school? Describe your experience there. (If not applicable, please skip to the next question.)

9. What is your gender?

- ☐ Male
☐ Female

10. What is your age?

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[Part B]

11. Select the appropriate place on the scale for each item.

	 1	 2	 3	 4	 5
	strongly disagree				strongly agree
I can read Korean books or newspapers without any difficulties.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
I can write freely and expressively in grammatically correct Korean sentences.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
I have trouble spelling Korean words.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
I have no problem understanding my parents' conversations with other adults in Korean.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
I cannot understand the language used in Korean TV shows, videos, movies, or songs.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
I speak Korean fluently.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
I have a foreign accent when I speak Korean.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
I have no problem using Korean in discussing any topic.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
I can use Korean in socially appropriate contexts (i.e. honorifics).	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
People in Korea cannot tell that I am a Korean-American when they hear me speaking.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

12. Which of the following best describes the language used at home?

	Korean only	Mostly Korean and some English	Almost equal amount of Korean and English	Mostly English and some Korean	English only
By you to your parents	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
By your parents to you	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
By you to your siblings	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
By your siblings to you	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Between parents	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

13. Which best describes your parents' English proficiency?

	Poor...	Fair...	Good...	Fluent
Father	☐	☐	☐	☐
Mother	☐	☐	☐	☐

14. Which of the following best describes the language you use...?

	Korean only	Mostly Korean and some English	Almost equal amount of Korean and English	Mostly English and some Korean	English only
with Korean adults in public?	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
with close friends from school?	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
with classmates?	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
with friends from church, clubs, etc.?	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

15. Please describe yourself.

- ☐ Dominant Korean speaker
- ☐ Dominant English speaker
- ☐ Bilingual Korean English speaker

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[Part C]

16. Please select the appropriate scale applicable to you for each item.

	 1	 2	 3	 4	 5
	strongly disagree				strongly agree
Knowing Korean language and culture will help me become successful.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Knowing English language and American culture will help me become successful.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
I like listening to contemporary Korean music.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
I like listening to popular American music.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
I like watching Korean videos and movies.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
I like watching American videos and movies.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
I like surfing Korean online social networks.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
I like surfing American online social networks.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
I am proud of the Korean culture and history.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
I am proud of the American culture and history.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
I feel insulted when people joke about or put down Korean people.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
I feel insulted when people joke about or put down American people.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
I would like to see more people of Korean background in high places in U.S. society and government.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
A person's ethnicity is not an important quality to consider of those holding jobs in high places.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Koreans should live in Korean communities.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Koreans should live in ethnically diverse communities.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

My family and I celebrate most Korean traditions, customs, and holidays.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
My family and I celebrate most American traditions, customs, and holidays.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
I like to be called by my Korean name.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
I like to be called by my American name.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Koreans living in the U.S. should have an American name so that it will be easier for people to pronounce and remember.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
I like to eat Korean food at least once a day.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
I like to eat American food at least once a day.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

17-A. How would you describe the ethnic origin of your friends you had in high school?

	None	Just a few	About half	Mostly	Exclusively
Koreans	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Korean Americans	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Other Asians	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
White Americans	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
African Americans	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Hispanic Americans	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Others	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

17-B. If you answered 'Others' for question 17-A, please specify them below.

18-A. How would you describe the ethnic origin of your friends in college?

	None	Just a few	About half	Mostly	Exclusively
Koreans	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Korean Americans	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Other Asians	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
White Americans	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
African Americans	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Hispanic Americans	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Others	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

18-B. If you answered 'Others' for question 18-A, please specify them below.

19. In terms of marriage, families, work, and education, would you say you believe in....

	 1 do not believe at all	 2	 3	 4	 5 strongly believe
Korean values	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
American (Western) values	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

20. Rate yourself how well you fit in with...

	 1 do not fit at all	 2	 3	 4	 5 fit very well
Other Koreans	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Americans who are not Korean	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

21. Which one of the following best describes how you view yourself? You consider yourself as

- ☐ basically Korean, even though I live in America.
- ☐ basically American, even though I have Korean background.
- ☐ Korean-American, although deep down I always know I am Korean.
- ☐ Korean-American, although deep down I always know I am American.
- ☐ Korean-American. I have both Korean and American characteristics, and I view myself as a blend

22. I would like other people to regard me as:

☐ Korean

☐ American

☐ Korean-American

☐ Other:

23. I am regularly involved in....

(Check all that apply.)

☐ Korean personal webpages (e.g. blogs, Cyworld, etc.)

☐ American personal webpages (e.g. Facebook, MySpace, etc.)

☐ Korean online communities (e.g. online cafe)

☐ American online communities (e.g. online cafe)

☐ Other:

24-A. I would like to participate further in this study.

☐ Yes

☐ No

24-B. If yes to the question 24-A, please leave your email address below.

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Thank you for participating in this survey.

If you have indicated that you would like to participate further in this study, you will be contacted soon via email.

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Appendix C– Interview Questions

Interview elicited by web pages of participants

(Introduce self and make sure all consent forms are signed).

Interview questions before viewing web pages

1. Just to get started, I am interested in finding out kinds of things Korean American students do during their typical school days. So, what kinds of things do you usually do, like yesterday?
 - A. (If the interview takes place on Monday) What about the day you had class last week?
 - B. What languages did you use...?
 - C. How did that happen...? (Tell me more about that...)

2. During your typical school day, how often are you online?
 - A. How are you online? (e.g. using computer, iphone, smartphone)
 - B. When and how long are you online?

Interview prompts for web pages

3. Can you show me your personal web pages?
 - A. What major changes have you made since you created your web pages?
 - B. What made you decide to revise your profile page?

4. Do you have another personal web page? Can you show it to me?
 - A. (If yes) How did you decide to create more than one webpage?
 - B. What do you do on the different pages? Tell me about them.

(Repeat question 3 and 4 if the interviewee has more than two personal web pages.)

5. (Looking at specific pages) Can you briefly describe what is going on here...?
 - A. It seems that you used (Korean, English, both Korean and English). Can you tell me more about this?
 - B. So, you were trying to....would you tell me more about that?

6. I am interested in your involvement in online activities. How often do you interact with people online? How long are you online...?

7. For some people, online activities may be a part of their daily routine but not on their must-do list. But for some other people, they may not spend a day without. For the latter, if they are off-line due to an electricity outage or a problem with their smart phone, then they might be very nervous and even feel alarmed. Where are you on that scale?
8. Tell me about kinds of people you frequently interact with online.
 - A. Is there anybody else?
9. I am interested in languages people use online. Some bilinguals use two languages simultaneously, but some others use only one language. Tell me about you.
 - A. You mentioned that you use (languages) when you are online. Does it naturally occur to you? Or do you usually stop and think about the languages you use choose certain languages?
 - B. Was there any time you actually had to speak a specific language? Would you tell me more about that?
 - C. Can you imagine other situations where you might have to think about what languages you have to use? Please tell me about it.
10. Let's talk about other online websites. Could you show me some that you visit often?
 - A. Can you tell me about them?
 - B. Are there any specific pages from that you'd like to look at? What made you want to visit those pages?
 - C. What are some things on your bookmark bar? What made you decide to these pages in your bookmark?
11. In addition to (other online pages mentioned above, like Facebook pages or...), are there any online communities you regularly visit?
 - A. Tell me about them.
 - B. What would be some activities you do together with the other people in that community?
12. Some Korean Americans speak both Korean and English. Others don't. What is your thought about that? Can you talk about that for you?
13. Some people think that Korean Americans are basically like other Americans. But, other people don't think so. What do you think?

- A. Some people think that it is really important for Korean Americans to speak Korean, but other people may not think so. How about you? What do you think?
 - B. Some people think that being a Korean American means you are both Korean and American. But, other people think that being both is not possible. What do you think?
14. Are there anything more you would like to add, or any questions you wish I had asked?

Thank you for your time!

- Sentence starters:
 - i. You mentioned.....
 - ii. that means....
 - iii. because....
 - iv. So...
 - v. I can see that....how does it relate to....?

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