Korean American Students' Language and Literacy Practices at a Korean Language School

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DISSERTATION

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DEDICATION

To God, my heavenly Father.

To my dear father, Kyo-Won Han (한 교원).

To my dear mother, Kyoung-Sook Lee (이 경숙).

To my dear sister and two brothers.
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I give thanks to God, my heavenly Father, for his sincere guidance and walk with me through this academic journey in a foreign country. May His name be glorified and honored through this work, which has been full of His faithful and endless love, grace, and help. I love you, Lord Jesus Christ.

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ABSTRACT

This study explores how Korean American young adolescent students engage in and construct meaning in Korean and English language and literacy practices at a Korean Language School (KLS) in the United States. From a sociocultural perspective, it focuses on the KLS, a social context where the students are exposed to and engage in Korean language and literacy practices. This study investigates what kinds of language and literacy practices in Korean and/or English are embedded in the KLS in the particular Korean community in which this study was conducted, how the Korean American students respond to those language and literacy practices through their attitudes, and what social and home factors influence their attitudes toward those practices, toward people they interact with, and toward the social setting of the KLS. Findings show that while the students were participating in the Korean lessons, utilizing CS in the KLS, their construction of meaning varied and their meaning making was related to their complex identity construction, which might have been influenced by their parents’ parenting at home and their Korean ethnic heritage. Not every student constructed meaning in the
same way, therefore they revealed different attitudes toward learning Korean language and literacy. They were surrounded by the Korean academic learning social context, but their degrees of engagement with meaning construction in Korean and English were different. These young adolescent learners, displaying their own agency, made a decision to be part of the surrounding social context of the KLS, or not. Their decisions were possibly made based on adolescent social and ethnic identity construction, self-esteem, young adolescent developmental stage, and parents’ language ideologies.
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CHAPTER 1

Introduction

Background

Approximately 1.25 million Korean Americans reside in the United States, with significant populations in California, New York, New Jersey, Washington, Virginia, Illinois, Texas, Georgia, Maryland, and Pennsylvania (2010 U.S. Census). Among them, the largest group of 300,000 Koreans immigrated to the United States in the 1960s and 1970s as a result of changes in U.S. immigration laws in 1965 (Cho, 2000; Kim, 1993; Shin, 2004). Now they have become a visible and significant minority group in American schools and society and bear the label of a “model minority” (Shin, 2004).

Upon their arrival in the United States, Korean families are exposed to the English language as they embark on their journey of second language and literacy development while at the same time maintaining their native language. It is a big challenge for Korean parents to participate in the English speaking society. Additionally, they have deep concerns about their children’s literacy development in both English and Korean, and they put great emphasis on their children’s education from an early age.

Parents’ concerns about their children’s language development are twofold: first, mastering the dominant English language to have better prospects for their children’s future (Kim, 1993), and second, maintaining the native Korean language in terms of issues of identity and cultural heritage (Kim, Sawdey, & Meihoefer, 1980), and verbal interaction between Korean parents and their children (Shin, 2004). It has always been
difficult for Korean immigrant parents to maintain their children’s heritage language, Korean, while they also work at mastering English literacy, often becoming a part of a model minority that excels in an academic mainstream school setting. Despite Korean parents’ hope to pass down their native language, it is a serious challenge for them to maintain the use of the heritage language in their homes or to pass it along to their children.

This situation is not unique in the literature of immigrant populations. According to Oriyama (2010), most Japanese bilingual children in Australia attend English-medium schools on weekdays and community language schools on weekends, usually at the request of their parents, to maintain their heritage language. Like many other bilingual children, many Korean American children are exposed to a literacy setting in which they develop English literacy at English-medium public schools and their heritage literacy at community Korean language schools.

The parents eagerly send their children to Korean language schools on weekends with the expectation of maintaining their children’s Korean literacy development in a school setting (Cho, 2000). Research has shown that many immigrant or first-generation bilingual children retain only basic skills in their heritage language (Clyne, Fernandez, Chen, & Summo-O’Connell, 1997; Gibbons & Lascar, 2004; Oriyama, 2000). Korean bilingual children are no exception, and it is not a surprising phenomenon because children frequently make the language shift to English after entering a mainstream school (Cho, 2000; Cho & Krashen, 1998; Kim et al., 1981; Wong Fillmore, 1991, 2000). Some parents complain that their children never improve their Korean literacy, yet they
continue sending their children to Korean language schools. It is better than not attending the Korean school at all, they believe. The parents have low academic expectations for their children’s Korean language development, but they think it is important to provide an environment in which Korean language and literacy are taught to their children.

Korean Americans have been actively involved in the maintenance and development of their heritage language. This involvement comes from a concern for passing on to future generations the essence of Korean cultural heritage (Cho, 2000). Korean parents have established ethnic schools, ethnic associations, newspapers, and professional organizations to promote culture and language (Geer, 1981, as cited in Cho, 2000). Korean American children are encouraged to be exposed to and involved in Korean language and literacy practices in different social contexts: home as the primary setting, Korean language schools on weekends, Korean church on Sundays, Korean grocery stores and restaurants, and Korean neighborhoods. Among those important social contexts, I, as a teacher in a Korean language school, became acquainted with many Korean American families and observed their struggles at the school. According to Shin (2014), there are about 1,000 Korean schools in the United States.

As a Korean language teacher and also a private tutor in Korean homes, I have observed that, regardless of Korean parents’ level of proficiency in English, for several reasons, they have a hard time assisting their children’s academic, emotional, and interpersonal development in the United States: failure to communicate with their children either in Korean or in English, lack of understanding of the American school system due to their own very different educational backgrounds, and the children’s
resistance to their parents’ guidance. The children’s resistance to their parents’ discipline stems from the fact that the parents and their children have different linguistic and cultural backgrounds.

The language spoken primarily by Korean immigrant parents at home is Korean, and 99% of the Koreans living in areas with a large Korean community, such as in Los Angeles, New York, and San Francisco, use Korean as their primary language (Kim, Lee, & Kim, 1981). The Korean parents who were born, raised, and educated in Korea have distinct linguistic backgrounds that are different from their Korean American children who were born in the United States. With its transparent orthographic (sound-symbol) alphabet, the Korean language is very different from English, a language whose spelling conventions are an amalgam of many other language and script conventions imported from other language traditions. Not only are there linguistic differences between parents and children, but cultural differences also exist. For example, remnants of Confucianism remain, and evidence of its ideas and values can been seen in many aspects of daily life in Korea (Chung, 1995). Korean society, influenced by Confucianism, puts great value on education for a better life and on respect for teachers’ authority. Almost 95% of Korean children in Korea receive some type of early childhood education prior to enrolling in mandatory schooling (Kim, 2008). In other words, most children learn to read and to write in Korean before entering kindergarten.

These linguistic and social practices affect Korean American parents’ language and literacy practices and expectations in the United States, which in turn influence their children. Thus, the purpose of this dissertation study is to better understand how Korean
American children are engaged in the embedded language and literacy practices in the local community-based Korean heritage language school where a small population of 1,100 Korean Americans reside (2010 U.S. Census).

**Purpose of the Study**

This study explores how Korean American children engage in and construct meaning in Korean and English language and literacy practices in the United States. From a sociocultural perspective, it focuses on the Korean Language School (KLS), a social context where the children are exposed to and engage in Korean language and literacy practices. Gee (2008) defines literacy as semiotic domains—“any set of practices that recruits one or more modalities (e.g., oral or written language, images, equations, symbols, sounds, gestures, graphs, artifacts, etc.) to communicate distinctive types of meanings” (p. 18). The study investigates what kinds of language and literacy practices in Korean and/or English are embedded in the KLS in the particular Korean community in which this study was conducted, how the Korean American students respond to those language and literacy practices through their attitudes, and what social and home factors influence their attitudes toward those practices, toward people they interact with, and toward the social setting of the KLS.

This study addresses the main research question: “How do Korean American children engage in meaning-making through language and literacy practices, either in Korean and/or in English, in the Korean Language School?” Meaning is defined thusly: “situated in specific social and cultural practices, and is continually transformed in those practices . . . meaning is a matter of situated meanings, customized in, to, and for context,
used always against a rich store of cultural knowledge (cultural models) that are themselves ‘activated’ in, for, and by contexts” (Gee, 1999, p. 63). More specifically, this study investigated the following ancillary research questions.

1. What language and literacy practices, either in Korean and/or in English, do the Korean American children engage in at the KLS?
2. What kinds of attitudes do they express verbally and nonverbally toward those language and literacy practices at the KLS?
3. What factors inside and outside of the KLS might influence the children’s experiences at the KLS?

Significance of the Study

Copious research has examined literacy among ESL or minority children in the United States (Cummins, 1994; Gibbons, 2002; McHenry & Heath, 1994; Moll & Gonzales, 1994; Tabors & Snow, 1994), but few studies have explored Korean American children’s bilingual practices that concentrated on a social setting in which those practices occurred. This study has major significance for a better understanding of U.S.-born Korean American students’ experiences at their heritage language school and how their ethnic identity construction is related to their attitudes toward the language and literary practices at the KLS.

Despite the positive social label “model minority” that Korean American children have earned, I have witnessed that there are unseen and unreported struggles and obstacles within Korean families in terms of parent-child relationships due to a lack of
mutual communicative interaction with, and understanding of, each other. One reason these nuclear family members do not understand each other well is the lack of a common language (Shin, 2004). Thus, the significance of this study is that we can learn more about Korean American families’ struggles and obstacles in relation to their language use at home and their experiences of socialization in the mainstream society of the United States.

This study is significant in that it provides complex interrelations among language shift, heritage language maintenance efforts, the Korean American students’ ethnic identification, and their parents’ language ideologies. A language shift across generations creates problems for inter-generational communication, as the first immigrant generation speaks the native language while the second generation may be bilingual or may speak the majority language with limited native language proficiency, and the third generation probably speaks only the majority language (Fishman, 1989). A statistical analysis of the 1990 U.S. Census data supports the fact that language shift in second generation Korean Americans is high (Hing & Lee, 1996). In Shin’s (2004) study, Korean American parents switched from Korean to English as their children spoke English at home; however, the parents experienced that they could not carry on a conversation in English with their children as the children grew older, due to the parents’ own lack of sophisticated expressions to convey more complex thoughts (Lee & Shin, 2008). In the worst case, parents’ limited English proficiency resulted in low respect for the parents by their children, which caused veiled conflicts between parents and children in Korean families.
Despite parental and communal efforts for maintaining heritage languages and cultures at home and at the KLS, a language shift occurred among the Korean American families in relation to students’ identity and parental language ideologies. This study has significance for educators in mainstream and heritage schools, immigrant and language minority parents, and researchers who are advocating heritage language maintenance, as well as for better understanding bilingual and biliteracy practices.

Organization of Chapters

This dissertation study is organized in six chapters. Chapter 1 introduces the background, purpose of the study, and significance of the study, as well as the overall organization of the study.

Chapter 2 introduces sociocultural theory as the theoretical framework of this study and how it provides a lens to conceptualize and analyze the research setting, participants, and interrelations among them in relation to language and literacy practices. It also provides relevant literature reviews of the history of Korean Americans, including their social and demographic characteristics, heritage language and its learners, including heritage language education, discourse analysis, code-switching, ethnic identity, and language ideology.

Chapter 3 consists of the research methodology, the research site, the participants, data collection instruments, data analysis, and researcher positionality. The chapter introduces characteristics of the qualitative case study research methodology this study utilized and its rationale. The research site (KLS) and the research participants (two KLS
teachers and four students), including family contexts, are introduced. Various instrumental tools for data collection and how they were carried out are presented: classroom observations with field notes at the KLS, audio-recordings of classroom interaction at the KLS, and interviews with the KLS teachers, the focal Korean American students, and their parents. The process of data collection, transcription, qualitative data analysis and researcher positionality are presented.

Chapter 4 illustrates language and literacy practices of the Korean American students and their teachers at the KLS. The findings that emerged from the analysis of oral language interaction focusing on code-switching (CS)—the prominent language practice—in the advanced and intermediate classes are illustrated and discussed, as well as the findings from literacy practices in the extracurricular activities at the KLS. Six excerpts of actual language practices consisting of CS in either Korean and/or English through classroom interaction in the advanced class and in the intermediate class are included. All Korean utterances are accompanied by English translations. A table of summarized CS functions, tables and pictures of the examples of students’ work, and tables of literacy related activities and artifacts are added.

Chapter 5 discusses the findings that emerged from interview data, as well as classroom observation data, in relation to the Korean American students’ ethnic identity and their parents’ language ideologies in relation to English as the dominant societal language and Korean as their heritage language and its maintenance. This chapter presents analysis of the Korean American students’ attitudes toward the language and literacy practices at the KLS.
In conclusion, Chapter 6 discusses the significant findings and potential implications of the findings while revisiting the previous chapters in an effort to answer the main research question and three research sub-questions. This chapter includes limitations of the study and my final thoughts about this prolonged research journey. I end the chapter with some research questions for further studies.
CHAPTER 2

Literature Review

This chapter introduces how sociocultural theory—the main anchor of this study—frames this research and provides a lens to conceptualize and analyze the research setting, participants, and interactions between them in relation to language and literacy practices. Also, to strengthen this study by supporting the main theoretical perspective, other relevant studies in literature are reviewed: Korean immigrants in the United States, heritage language education, discourse analysis, code-switching (CS), ethnic identity development theory, and language ideology.

Theoretical Framework

The theoretical foundation for this study is framed and interpreted by sociocultural theory (Mercer et al., 1999; van der Veer and Valsiner, 1991; Vygotsky, 1978, 1986). Sociocultural theory which originated with Vygotsky and was extended by others (Lantolf & Thorne, 2006; van der Veer & Valsiner, 1991; Wertsch et al, 1993) provides the basic, profound understanding of intertwined and nonseparable interrelations between individuals and social and cultural aspects in a social context.

Korean American students at the Korean Language School (KLS) were socialized through learning the Korean language and culture, thus examining key concepts of sociocultural theory in relation to learning and development is necessary. Key concepts of sociocultural theory about learning and development have three constituents: society, the individual, and mediation. For a child to learn to become a social member, first, the child needs to be exposed to social contexts in which human activities take place. Second, the child needs mediation, such as language, to understand and make things meaningful.
and learnable. Last, that kind of mediated social interaction between social sources and 
the child can be explained through historical development (John-Steiner & Mahn, 1996).
Here, the historical development means that without taking into account 
interconnectedness of the origins of development and the phenomena of development, we 
cannot examine the essence of the very process of development in language and thought. 
Thus, it is very critical to examine not only the product or result of development, but also 
the developmental process, focusing on different phases and changes.

In this study, there are three necessary constituents demarcated accordingly. First, 
the components of society (social contexts) consist of the KLS and the homes. Second, 
regarding the individual component, there are four Korean American children 
participating by learning English and Korean. Finally, language and literacy practices in 
English and Korean comprise the mediation sector.

*Figure 1.1 Sociocultural Theory in this Study*
Vygotsky (1986) emphasized the dynamic interdependence of social and individual processes. In his philosophical and psychological era, there were two schools competing with each other, one focusing on the internal nature of learning—innateness, and the other focusing on the external nurture of learning—behaviorism. However, Vygotsky broke through the crisis of psychology by embracing both schools as he conceptualized cognitive development as the transformation of socially shared activities into internalized processes across time. This study does not intend to investigate cognitive developmental stages; however, it does intend to document and analyze Korean American students’ engagement with their literacy and language practices which would reveal how they interact in their dynamic social world.

Mercer et al. (1999) argue that research on children’s perception or thinking has elaborated a sociocultural theory of intellectual and language development that has important functions: “as a cognitive tool which children come to use to process knowledge; as a social or cultural tool for sharing knowledge amongst people; and as a pedagogic tool which one person can use to provide intellectual guidance to another” (p. 96). Sociocultural theorists claim that individual cognition is shaped by social experience of language use, and especially through engagement in interactional dialogues, children gain the psychological benefit of the historical and contemporary experience of their culture (Mercer et al., 1999). In other words, social environment embedded within its own cultural frame affects an individual child’s thinking and language development as he or she uses language as a tool to interact with others. According to sociocultural theory, Korean American children develop their perceptions, critical thinking, and language skills while they engage in language use with others. Both thinking and language as a tool
enable the Korean American children to make meaning within their social world. This study does not plan to investigate how using two languages affects children’s ways of thinking. However, this can be an important future inquiry growing out of this study.

As language learners are socialized through language in social interactions, they learn how to develop “the percepts, concepts, recipes, and skills by which to make utterances that others will accept as meeting their standards” (Goodenough, 1981, p. 51). Language socialization (Ochs & Schieffelin, 1983) is viewed as “how to think, feel, know, interact, or project a social persona or construct a relationship” (p. 74). Further, language socialization includes both the use of language in a community where a learner’s knowledge of correct grammatical forms is culturally relevant and also acquiring the values and communication styles of speakers and audiences within their local community (Ochs & Schieffelin, 1983). As Korean American children are socialized in Korean and English within different social interactions, they may develop social language skills to successfully discern what others in different communities expect them to use, either Korean or English, including appropriate language conventions. They may not only learn how to use each language in the expected way, but also sociocultural values that affect their identity.

Perez (1998) states, “Literacy is defined not just as the multifaceted act of reading, writing, and thinking, but as constructing meaning from printed text within a sociocultural context (p. 4).” Literacy in a sociocultural theory of learning emphasizes the sociocultural contexts within which children grow up. Perez comments that a sociocultural theory of literacy also searches for understanding about “how children interpret who they are in relation to others,” and how they have learned “to process,
interpret, and encode their world” (p. 4). The social contexts are an important component that needs to be understood regarding literacy practices because the members in the social contexts engage in different cultural practices.

Korean American students engage in diverse acts of reading, writing, and thinking, either in English or in Korean. Their literacy practices are introduced to them by more knowledgeable social members, such as Korean-born parents and grandparents, Korean language teachers, Sunday school teachers, and other grown-ups, as well as their peers. In this language and literacy engaging process, the more knowledgeable social members play a crucial mediating role, embracing young members into these cultural practices. This social mediation by more knowledgeable members is the central tenet of Vygotsky’s theory (Perez, 1994). The social mediation includes not only language but also other semiotic means such as words, drawings, musical notes, and scientific diagrams (John-Steiner, 1985). John-Steiner’s cognitive pluralism allows us to look at the ways in which Korean American children from different extracurricular settings (drawing lessons, music lessons, dance lessons, etc.) at the KLS appropriate and process their social world through both Korean and English.

Ferdman (1991) proposes understanding literacy through cultural lenses. We try to have and keep “an image of the behaviors, beliefs, values, and norms—in short, of the culture – appropriate to members of the ethnic groups(s) to which we belong” (p. 348, cited in Perez, 1998, p. 4). Cultural identity has roots in this kind of cultural literacy, where symbols and practical usages have significance. Perez (1998) asserts that the view of literacy consisting of “decontextualized linguistic skills (sounds of letters, knowledge of words, and so on)” and of learning discrete skills is rejected in a sociocultural
framework of literacy (p. 5). Instead, being literate is associated with the ability to function in a culturally appropriate manner. In other words, being able to read and write the symbols is not enough to be literate (Perez, 1998). Perez (1998) defines literacy, emphasizing the functional purposes based on sociocultural perspectives:

Sociocultural perspectives (Heath, 1986; McLaughlin, 1989; Moll, 1992) of literacy argue that writing, reading, and language are not isolated and decontextualized; nor are they generalized skills separate from specific contents, contexts, and social-communicative purposes; rather, there are multiple literacies (Scbriber & Cole, 1981; Street, 1984) and reading, writing and language are embedded in and inextricable from discourses (the way the communicative systems are organized within social practices)” (p. 23).

For example, in Scribner and Cole’s study the Vai people in West Africa use English in school, Arabic in morning prayers from the Quran, and Vai in community life. English and Vai are used for letter writing but not Arabic. Perez states that “literacy is a technology or a tool that is culturally determined and used for specific purposes…thus literacy practices are culture-specific ways of knowledge” (p. 24). Like Vai people using different languages for different purposes, the Korean American children might choose a specific language depending on their purposes on different occasions and in varied contexts.

This study does not pursue any concrete connections between cognitive development and language development. Instead, it intends to explore how the sociocultural theory about language and literacy helps to answer the research questions. Sociocultural theory provides a lens with which to investigate Korean American children’s meaning-making about their social world at the KLS, keeping in mind the importance of the dynamic interdependence of individual learning processes and social contexts. To understand how the Korean American students perceive their embedded
language and literacy practices at the KLS, it is crucial to explore their heritage language school social context. Documenting and analyzing their language and literacy practices within this specific sociocultural context illuminate how the Korean American language learners engage in embedded literacy practices, how they perceive and respond to these practices, and how they adapt their practices to differing contexts.

This section reviewed several key aspects of sociocultural theory: language as a cognitive tool; the importance of socialization through, as well as into, culturally adapted social interaction; literacy as a medium for constructing meaning and personal identity; the importance of semiotic tools for learning; understanding literacy within culture; and literacy for functional purposes. According to the studies reviewed here, the Korean American students are socialized while they make meaning in both Korean and English. They not only construct their own meanings, but also they are socialized to meet expected cultural language and literacy practices. The sociocultural theory shows the interrelationship between an individual Korean American child and his or her social environments as the child interacts with other people who will influence the ways she or he looks at their society, while at the same time developing the child’s sociocultural values.

**Korean Americans in the United States**

In this section, a brief history of Korean immigration to the United States is reviewed, as well as social and demographic characteristics of Korean immigrants based on Shin’s (2004) study.
**History of Korean Americans**

Korean immigrants, with a population of over one million, rank fifth among the Asian and Pacific Islanders in the United States, after the Chinese, Filipino, Asian Indian, and Vietnamese immigrants (Shin, 2004). Over one-fourth of the present Korean population in the United States has arrived since 1965 as a result of changes in U.S. immigration law, and according to Shin (2004), a majority of the recent Korean immigrants have settled in metropolitan areas, such as Los Angeles, New York, Chicago and Washington, D.C. The typical Korean immigrant, young and married, prefers to live in urban areas on either the West Coast or in the northeast, where there are high concentrations of Korean immigrants (Jo, 1999, as cited in Shin, 2004).

Korean immigration to the United States has proceeded in four distinct periods. The first period was between 1883 and 1902. Korean immigration to the United States was allowed when the diplomatic relationship between the United States and Korea was established in 1883 (Yu, Cho, & Han, 2002). Approximately 200 to 400 Koreans came to the United States during this period. By the time the first organized group of Korean immigrants arrived in Hawaii in 1902, a small Korean community had already formed in San Francisco and Los Angeles respectively (Yu, Cho, & Han, 2002). At that time, the first Korean legation (a group of government officials sent to work in the United States), a diplomatic minister below the rank of ambassador, was established in Washington, D.C. Most of these Koreans were students, political exiles, ginseng merchants, and migrant laborers (Hurh & Kim, 1984, as cited in Shin, 2004).

The second immigration period is between 1903 and 1924, sparked by the needs of sugar plantations in Hawaii. Yu et al. (2002) reported that about 7,000 Koreans were
recruited to the U.S. territory of Hawaii as plantation laborers from 1903 to 1905, and later about 1,100 Korean brides were brought in through traditional matchmaking between 1910 and 1924. Most of these early immigrants (laborers, ex-soldiers, students, and political refugees) came to Hawaii as a way of fleeing exploitation by the Korean government and the increasing control of the Japanese in Korea. They labored long hours under harsh conditions for very small incomes as sugar plantation workers, cooks, janitors, and launderers (Hurh & Kim, 1984, as cited in Shin, 2004).

The third period represents post-Korean War immigrants who arrived in the United States between 1951 and 1964 (a total of about 15,000). The post-Korean War immigrants were comprised of Korean wives of U.S. servicemen, a higher proportion of girls than boys adopted by American families, and a small number of Korean students and doctors (about 2,000). Their education interrupted by the Korean War, the students and doctors came to continue their schooling in U.S. colleges and universities. Many of them later returned to Korea to contribute in the areas of economics, science, technology, and education (Yu, Cho, & Han, 2002).

The last full-scale family immigration wave began after the U.S. Immigration and Naturalization Act of 1965. The population of Korean immigrants in the 1960s increased fivefold to 34,526 and in the 1970s to 267,638 (Mangiafico, 1988, as cited in Shin, 2004). A majority of the new immigrants were educated, college-trained professionals from urban middle class Korean society because they were able to apply for permanent residence visas, unlike the earlier immigrants who were mostly illiterate, poor, and low-skilled laborers. These newer immigrants came to the United States as nuclear families. Subsequently, these professionals, together with the wives of U.S. servicemen, petitioned
for their respective spouses, siblings, and parents to immigrate, as well (Yu, Cho, & Han, 2002).

According to Shin (2004), there were several factors influencing the huge increases in the number of Korean immigrants in the last period. First, there were favorable changes in US immigration law, which opened the gate for Koreans to immigrate to the United States. Second, the Korean government loosened its strict emigration policies in order to promote Korea’s economic development and its defense against communist North Korea by strengthening its friendship with the United States. Third, the Korean government’s dictatorship under the Park Junghee regime, which lasted three decades (1961–1987), drove many Koreans to flee South Korea for the United States for economic and political freedom. They moved to the United States for better life opportunities, as well as for their children’s education.

**Social and Demographic Characteristics**

As of 2010, the U.S. Census Bureau reported that 1,246,240 Koreans who identified themselves as “Korean alone” reside in the United States. This number does not include people who identified themselves as “Korean in combination with other Asian or other race.” The total number of both “Korean alone” and “Korean in combination with other” is 1,406,687. In terms of birth origin, the 2010 Census revealed that over half of Korean Americans were foreign-born. Of the 1.25 million Koreans reported by the Census, approximately 433,000 were U.S.-born and 974,000 were foreign-born. Of the 974,000 foreign born, 530,000 were naturalized U.S. citizens. The U.S.-born together with naturalized citizens (963,000) comprised 77% of the total Korean population in the United States.
Regarding gender, female Korean Americans outnumbered male Korean Americans as of 2005 (2010 U.S. census). Shin (2004) attributed the favored female sex ratio to “a higher proportion of young Korean female children being adopted by American parents and the large number of inter-racial marriages of Korean women to US servicemen in Korea (p. 45).” Regarding age, Korean immigrants have a young profile, with a median age of 33.5. The range from 18 to 61 years old comprises the largest proportion of the Korean population in the United States.

Geographically, most Korean immigrants tend to reside in large urban settings because they came from urban areas in Korea where they developed skills that they can employ in the United States. It also is easier for them to adjust and get material and psychological support from a community where other Koreans are already settled. While Koreans are widely dispersed among all regions of the United States, according to the 2009 American Community Survey, the highest population of around 300,000 Korean Americans lives in Los Angeles, and the second largest population of around 201,000 lives in New York. In areas of the Southwest such as the city where this study was conducted, not many Korean people are aggregated. There are about 3,100 Korean Americans in the state of the city (2010 U.S. Census); about 1,100 of these live in the city (2010 U.S. Census).

In terms of education and occupation, Korean Americans are generally well educated, since new Korean immigrants are educated, college-trained professionals from the urban middle class of Korean society. Half of Korean Americans 25 years of age or over have had some college education and 80% have had a high school education. Due to their weak English language skills, many of them experience a great deal of difficulty and
frustration finding jobs to match their education and professional training, which leads a high proportion of Koreans to establish self-owned small businesses (Shin, 2004). For example, three-quarters of the Korean Americans in New York City are involved in small businesses such as produce stores, groceries, dry cleaners, seafood stores, and nail salons. Some are also concentrated in the retail and service sectors (Kim & Hurh, 1985). Many of the businesses are owned by well-educated Korean immigrants, but their lack of English skills has driven them to non-professional work (Shin, 2004). Because of a great willingness to work hard, ethnic financial resources, and family member laborers, Korean business owners have had great success, despite having no previous business experience in Korea.

Education plays a motivational role for Koreans to relocate their residency to the United States in order to seek better educational opportunities for their children. Education is believed to enable social mobility to a higher social status and economic prosperity (Hurh, 1998; Jo, 1999, as cited in Shin, 2004). This belief has historical roots in Korea. In AD 788, Korea adopted the Chinese examination system that had been developed to select prominent Confucian scholars for high government positions in China around 201 BC. Since then, passing the Chinese influenced examination provided the most obvious way to political and financial success in Korea until the end of the Korea Yi dynasty in 1905. This historical legacy of attaining social mobility through education is still deeply rooted in Korean people.

According to Shin (2004), as most Korean parents put great effort into providing children with the best possible education, many of them search for better educational opportunities overseas. That is usually due to problems in the Korean educational system.
More and more Koreans believe that the Korean educational system, which emphasizes rote learning and memorization in a rigid national curriculum, provides little room for instructional flexibility and creative thinking. Therefore, children cannot learn critical thinking and problem-solving skills which are the hallmarks of western (e.g. American) education. Another problem is that only a few universities in Korea have reputations as prestigious universities equivalent to the United States. Ivy League, so it is extremely competitive to secure admission into one of these top Korean universities. The extreme competition pressures many Korean students to start to prepare for the university admission test from an early age by attending cram schools after regular school. It also places a tremendous amount of pressure on students to excel in school, which creates all sorts of physical, psychological and emotional stress (Shin, 2004).

Korean Americans conserve this passion for education. Many Korean American parents try to make up for their lower social status by prioritizing their children’s educational and career success (Jo, 1999, as cited in Shin, 2004). There are many accounts of Korean Americans’ obsession to enroll their children in Ivy League schools (Kim, 1993). Korean parents either in Korea or in the United States pay a great deal of attention to their children’s education. Korean American parents provide their children with lessons after school either in private institutions or with a private tutor to prepare for admission to prestigious colleges and universities (Min, 1995, as cited in Shin, 2004). In 1995, Min reported that there were about 20 tutoring academies, mostly owned by Korean Americans, providing English and math lessons to Korean American students in the city of New York (Shin, 2004).
Most Korean immigrants with school-age children seem to locate their housing based on the school district rankings, with a high concern for the academic quality of public schools in the neighborhood (Shin, 2004). It is noted that Korean American parents’ passion for education and their willingness to sacrifice for their children’s education has enabled many Korean American children to excel in scholastic achievement compared to other immigrant children (Hurh, 1998, cited in Shin, 2004). However, Shin points out that there are indeed various social and psychological costs to being a “model minority,” and some Korean American children resent being pushed beyond their capabilities to accomplish their parents’ dreams of getting a good education and becoming successful in some professional career.

Heritage Language and Heritage Language Learners

Since heritage language learning was first recognized in the 1980s (Finch, 2009), there have been attempts to define heritage language and heritage language learners. Different scholars define heritage language differently. Some define it as an immigrant or ancestral language associated either with language learners’ ethnicity (Wiley, 2005), cultural background (Chinen & Tucker, 2005; Cho, 2000), or ethno-linguistic heritage (Lee & Shin, 2008). Therefore, Heritage Language (HL) has been used synonymously with community language, native language, and mother tongue (Lee & Shin, 2008). Others associate heritage language with a home language setting where language learners are exposed to and raised with a non-English language (Chevalier, 2004; Kondo-Brown & Brown, 2008; Valdes, 2001).

Van Deusen-Scholl (2003) characterizes heritage language learners as a diverse group ranging from fluent heritage language speakers to non-speakers who may still feel
culturally connected to their heritage language. Heritage language learners are diverse, not only in their heritage language fluency, but also in terms of their age, educational levels, heritage language learning goals, family backgrounds, parents’ professions, and religions (Finch, 2009). Despite the aforementioned diversity, there are common characteristics of heritage language learners. They use two language systems, the societal language system and that of the heritage language, to varying extents, and they consider their societal language skills to be stronger than those in their heritage language (Chevalier, 2004).

Lee & Shin (2008) categorize Korean heritage language learners in the United States according to Valdes’s (2001) definition of a heritage language learner—“someone who is raised in a home where a non-English language is spoken and who speaks or at least understands the language and is to some degree bilingual in the home language and in English” (p. 38). According to Lee & Shin, most Korean heritage language learners are young second-generation Korean Americans who grow up hearing and speaking Korean to varying degrees in the home and community. When they are young, they often communicate both in Korean and English. However, many become English-dominant speakers once they begin school (Shin & Milroy, 1999, as cited in Lee & Shin). Therefore, while most Korean parents speak almost exclusively Korean (Hing & Lee, 1996; Min, 2000; Shin, 2004), their children communicate predominantly in English as they grow older. Min’s (2000) study reports that 77% of the second-generation Korean Americans speak only or mostly English to their parents after the age of five.
Heritage Language Education

Research has shown that heritage language maintenance has positive benefits for immigrant children compared to their English monolingual counterparts (Lee & Shin, 2008). For example, bilingual students have higher grades, higher standardized test scores, lower drop-out rates, greater educational and occupational aspirations, and greater cognitive flexibility than monolingual students (Lee & Shin, 2008). Immigrant children with strong competence in the home language have higher self-esteem, a greater sense of belonging, greater ability to seek support, and a stronger sense of linguistic and cultural identity (Cho, 2000; Stanton-Salazar & Dornbusch, 1995; Pigott & Karoche, 2005, cited in Lee & Shin, 2008). It is asserted that heritage language development helps promote strong parent-child communication and improved family relationships (Wong Fillmore, 2000).

Lee & Shin (2008) summarize three research articles based on recent doctoral dissertations related to Korean heritage language education. The first article by Park investigates how parents and grandparents in three-generational Korean American households socialize young children by examining spontaneous talk-in-interaction in the family setting. The study shows that Korean adults mostly use the honorific verb-suffix “–ta (–따)” to socialize children into culturally-expected behavior and to warn them of the negative consequences of undesirable behavior. It is asserted that sustained family interaction makes it possible for children to learn the socially appropriate uses of linguistic markers such as “–ta.” It is also important and necessary for children to have observational opportunities and a community of practice in their acquisition of the rules...
of polite speech, with an emphasis on meaningful and sustained interaction with Korean-speaking family members.

The second article by Jeon explores ways in which language ideology is linked to the maintenance of Korean, with the assumption of a connected relationship between language maintenance and speakers’ attitudes and values. Jeon examines the range of language ideologies developed by individuals in different phases of life. This three-year, multi-site ethnographic study provides a lens into the complex range of language ideologies held by the first generation of Korean-speaking elders, the second generation of English-speaking college students, and a recent immigrant father who asks his son to speak only English. Jeon concludes that the three generations’ language ideologies can be placed on a continuum ranging from assimilationist on the one end to pluralist on the other. It is not clearly stated where each generational group locates itself on the continuum. However, this study makes an important point that the formation of language ideologies is affected continuously by changing life circumstances, such as amount of time in the new country, and that promoting bilingualism at the societal level is required for successful language maintenance.

The third article by Yi investigates the significance of peer networks in Korean American adolescents’ literacy development. This case study shows that two Korean American adolescents who are literate in both Korean and English create ties to Korea by participating actively in instant messaging, online community posting, note-exchanging, and online diary-writing as they pursue their personal interests through close interactions with ethnic peers in Korea who share similar life experiences. For these students, writing in Korean was meaningful and enjoyable because it was done for social and
communicative purposes. Yi argues that heritage language literacy and the development of personal interest should go together.

**Discourse Analysis**

The term discourse analysis is used in a variety of academic departments and disciplines, such as linguistics, anthropology, communication, cultural studies, psychology, or education, and in interdisciplinary fields (Johnstone, 2008). Despite many diverse questions and divergent answers, depending on what the discourse analyst’s purpose is, all these uses appear to involve studying language and its effects. Johnstone (2008) differentiates discourse analysis from other approaches to language study by separating two terms—“discourse” and “analysis.”

According to this author, “discourse usually means actual instances of communicative action in the medium of language” (p. 2). It is not about language as an abstract system; instead, it is about both people’s generalizations about language and its usage. Discourse analysis focuses on “what happens when people draw on the knowledge they have about language, knowledge based on their memories of things they have said, heard, seen, or written before, to do things in the world: exchange information, express feelings, make things happen, create beauty, entertain themselves and others, and so on” (p. 3). The term “analysis” has to do with the fact that discourse analysis usually focuses on the analytical process in a somewhat explicit way. Discourse analysis is a methodology that can be used in answering many kinds of questions by examining aspects of the structure and function of language in use. This analysis can be a process of taking apart by dividing longer stretches of discourse into parts according to various criteria and then looking at the particular characteristics of each part. It also can be done
by asking a number of questions, taking relevant theoretical perspectives, or performing a variety of tests, all in systematic ways (Johnstone, 2008).

Johnstone (2008) provides examples of questions for the second type of analysis—breaking-down into parts, including (a) functions—“What is persuasive discourse like?” “What is narrative discourse like?” (b) participants—“How do men talk in all-male groups?” “How do psychotherapists talk?” “What is newspaper writing like?” (c) settings—“What goes on in classrooms, in workplaces, or in sororities?” and (d) processes—“How do children learn to get the conversational floor?” “How do people create social categories like ‘girl’ or ‘foreigner’ or ‘old person’ as they talk to and about each other?” (p. 5).

Gee (1992) argues that meaning resides in social practices that are parts of “Discourses” (with a capital “D”). Discourses are defined as being “composed of people, of objects (like books), and of characteristic ways of talking, acting, interacting, thinking, believing, and valuing, and sometimes characteristic ways of writing, reading, and/or interpreting” (p. 20). Discourses are deeply rooted in a great deal of the social work people do to “get recognized, and to recognize others (or refuse to), as having some specific socially-situated and consequential identity” (Gee, 2003, p. 6). Gee’s idea of Discourses came out of an understanding of the importance of “recognition” among a certain group of people in a certain society. In other words, people make a great effort to fit into a certain group by being recognized as engaging in the expected or valued behavior of the group. For example, a five-year-old boy seeks to get recognized as a “good student” in Ms. Smith’s kindergarten, a young Assistant Professor seeks to get recognized as a “respected Chomskian linguist,” a Los Angeles policeman seeks to get
recognized as a “tough cop,” or a Native-American seeks to get recognized as a “real Indian” (p. 7). Their expected behaviors differ depending on the group they wish to be recognized by, but the social process that they are engaged in to gain recognition is the same. Gee calls all of these “Discourses.”

Explicating Discourses from a smaller unit, Gee (1999) introduces situated meanings from the level of word meaning. When a little child develops a meaning of a word, the child sees an object in a context and hears the name of the object from people directly or indirectly. He associates an object with the name. Before the child develops the full range of the word, he overextends the meaning of the word. For example, the little child might put socks on a teddy bear’s shoeless feet and call the socks shoes. The child associates the word ‘shoe’ with features like fittable to the body and associated with a lower limb of the body. In other words, young children associate a word with a variety of different contexts and each of the contexts contains one or more salient ‘features’ that could trigger the use of the word. Gee asserts that what the little child is doing is not atypical. We adults deal with meaning in the same way as we learn the full range of features of a word, consulting the context in order to call something a ‘shoe.’

Furthermore, we also come to realize that the features associated with different contexts which trigger the application of a word are not just a random list. Rather, the features of a word coalesce to form a pattern that specific sociocultural groups of people find significant. The patterns of features of a word generate situated meanings of the word. Situated meanings are not the same as literal meanings. For example, an American mother spills coffee on the floor and asks her son to bring a broom. From the context, we know the coffee she spilled must be ground coffee that can be collected with a broom, not
the brewed liquid. In Korean, the word “coffee (커피)” has still different contextual meanings. For example, elderly Koreans consider coffee to be bitter and do not understand why people choose to drink it. At the same time, most young Korean males would invite an attractive female out for a cup of coffee. Their intention, recognized by young women, is to go out together, not merely to have coffee. Gee (1999) states that situated meanings are associated with two processes: first, an individual’s bottom-up reflective action with which the learner engages the world, and second, the top-down guidance of the cultural models or theories the learner is developing. The author asserts that having both bottom-up and top-down processes helps the learner avoid ending up with something too “general” or with something too “specific” or “contextualized” (p. 51).

Gee (1999) makes a strong point of what meaning is. According to him, meaning is not general or abstract. It does not reside in dictionaries with word definition forms, nor does it reside inside people’s minds in general symbolic representations. Rather, meaning is “situated in specific social and cultural practices, and is continually transformed in those practices . . . meaning is a matter of situated meanings, customized in, to, and for context, used always against a rich store of cultural knowledge (cultural models) that are themselves ‘activated’ in, for, and by contexts” (p. 63). Gee also describes that an interlocutor knows what matters to a certain group of people at a certain time and place, that is, what is “relevant”, by having been allowed to have certain “conversations.” Therefore, we speak and write not in “a language” alone, but in specific “social languages.” Meaning is embedded in the utterances of these “social languages” in specific “social conversations” (p. 34). Gee also asserts that a meaning from a word is
generated by a person recognizing certain patterns in his experience of the world and the patterns are comprised of one of the several situated meanings of a word.

Code-switching (CS)—alternating two or more languages in the same utterance or conversation (Grosjean 1982)—is understood by a certain group of people who share the same linguistic and cultural backgrounds and their cultural models. CS, appeared as the prominent language practice among the KLS teachers and their students at the KLS, shows that those Korean American language users utilize both Korean and English according to social conventions in the various situated meanings of a word. For example, Korean American students address their Korean language teachers, Korean martial art teachers, and parents with Korean terms of address—senseygnim (선생님/teacher), kwancangnim (관장님/head master), emma (엄마/mom), and appa (아빠/dad) respectively—while they code-switch to English after the terms of Korean address. The notion of situated meanings in a cultural model is crucial to better understand how young adolescent Korean American students and their teachers attempt to construct meaning in the KLS social context in each of their languages, employing CS. In the following section, the definitions of CS and its various functions are discussed.

**Code-Switching**

Code-switching (CS), occurring when a speaker alternates between two or more languages in the context of a single conversation, has important implications for Korean American bilinguals at the KLS because it appeared as a prominent phenomenon among them. Gumperz (1982) defined CS as “the juxtaposition within the same speech exchange of passages of speech belonging to two different grammatical systems or subsystems” (p.
His pioneering work on bilingual discourse strategies, according to Shin and Milroy (2000), suggests language alteration as an additional linguistic resource that “bilinguals systematically exploited to express a range of social and rhetorical meanings” (p. 352). Based on Gumperz’s perspective, CA is considered to be an important conversational or literary element of socially agreed contextualization cues and conventions including gestures or prosodic patterns “used by speakers to alert addressees, in the course of ongoing interaction, to the social and situational context of the conversation” (Gumperz, 1982, p. 132).

There is no conclusive consensus among CS researchers regarding types (Merritt et al., 1992; Poplack, 1980), categories (Blom & Gumperz, 1972), and functions (Canagarajah, 1995; Gumperz, 1982; Merritt et al., 1992) of CS because they use them interchangeably or differently without a clear-cut distinction among them. In this study, being selective, all possible types and functions of CS in Chapter 4 are examined. Analyzing specific functions of CS at the KLS, I named some of the functions as they emerged from data.

Poplack (1980) categorized CS into three types: intersentential CS, intrasentential CS, and tag CS. The first type of CS is intersentential switching in that CS takes place between sentences or clauses. An example of intersentential CS is: Sometimes I feel like I should speak English, 그리고 어느 때는 한국어를 해야할 것 같애. (Sometimes I feel like I should speak English, and other times I feel like I should speak Korean.)

The second type of CS is tag-switching that involves inserting a tag in one language to an utterance in another language. For example, the expression “You know,”
uttered in English, can be inserted as a tag at the end of an utterance in Korean. The third type of CS is intrasentential, which occurs within a sentence. This type of CS requires a lot of integration and alternation between two languages and it has a great risk of violating syntactic rules, as words or phrases from one language are inserted into the syntax of the other language if the interlocutors do not know both grammars in two languages well. Thus, intrasentential CS is mostly observed among fluent bilinguals (Poplack, 1980) who possess two different grammatical and syntactic systems and the rules of two different languages. An example of this type of CS is: 그건 academic 한 말이 아니야. (That is not an academic word.) Here, the English word academic is inserted into the Korean utterance and 한 following after the English word represents a Korean syntactic rule. 한 is usually used to make an abstract figurative noun an adjective.

Myers-Scotton (1983, 1993) developed Gumperz’s analysis of CS and systematized it further. The author in her Markedness Model of language choice argues that language users are rational decision makers and interpret all code choices in terms of a natural theory of markedness as part of their communicative competence. “Community norms designate specific linguistic choices as the unmarked realization of a specific set of rights and obligations holding between a speaker and addressee,” Myers Scotton asserts (1983, p. 115). Thus, social members are responsible for their marked choice because the unmarked choice in any context is the normatively expected one. She also argues that speaking is an interactional behavior rather situated. While social members utilize situated (unmarked) code choices, they also choose unexpected marked codes for negotiations based on their rational processes of decision-making. In other words, a
marked code is unexpected and an unmarked code is expected in a discourse community. For instance, at the KLS, the Korean language is the expected unmarked code. However, when the KLS teachers code-switch to English, the English language is the marked code. However, other sociolinguists (Auer, 1998; Woolard, 2004) object to the postulation of the Markedness Model that language choice made by speakers is entirely rational.

Auer (1995) suggests that analyzing CS as a contextualization cue could explain the social motivation behind CS in conversational interaction by focusing on the sequential development of interaction. That is, to investigate motives of CS, one needs to address the question of how it occurs, looking at the conversational sequences because the meanings of CS unfold as interaction proceeds. Researchers of conversation analysis (Auer, 1998; Li & Milroy, 1995; Li, 1998) concur that speakers “exploit variable spoken language elements at all linguistic levels” (Shin & Milroy, 2000, p. 353) in the process of organizing the ongoing interaction. The studies of CS in conversation analysis focus on the meanings that the act of CS creates rather than the social values inherent in the languages speakers choose. Shin and Milroy (2000) state that the CS approach in Auer’s view has two advantages: giving priority to the sequential implicativeness of language choice and limiting the external analysts’ interpretational leeway. The first advantage is that “whatever language a participant chooses for the organization of his or her turn, or for an utterance which is part of the turn, the choice exerts an influence on subsequent language choices by the same or other speakers” (Auer, 1984, p. 5). The second advantage is that it “limits the external analyst’s interpretational leeway because it relates his or her interpretations back to the members’ mutual understanding of their utterances as manifest in their behavior” (Auer, 1984, p. 6).
In this approach, two kinds of CS are introduced: participant related CS and discourse related CS. Participant related CS takes into account the addressee’s language preferences or competence, which can be observed among the Korean American children and their KLS teachers in Chapter 4 in detail. For example, some of the KLS students who speak English as their preferred and dominant language code-switch to English among them while they code-switch to Korean to their teachers. Discourse related CS means “the use of code-switching to organize the conversation by contributing to the interactional meaning of a particular utterance” (Auer, 1998, p. 4). It functions for setting up the new language as a contrast “frame” or “footing” for the interaction, which means that the new language is accepted and shared by all the interlocutors. For example, two Korean-English bilingual interlocutors speak Korean in several turns and then one of them switches to English, maintaining the English language, and then the other interlocutor switches to English as well. Discourse-related CS is speaker-oriented whereas participant-related CS is hearer-oriented (Martin-Jones, 1995).

Canagarajah (1995) examined functions of CS in ESL classrooms. He observed secondary school teachers in the ESL classrooms in Sri Lanka and found there were two levels of CS functions: micro- and macro-functions. At the micro-level functions, there were two components: classroom management and content transmission. When CS facilitates the teachers and students to regulate classroom interactions efficiently and effectively, the function of CS is considered as classroom management. The examples are “opening the class, negotiating directions, requesting help, managing commands, teacher admonitions, mitigation, pleading and unofficial interactions” (p. 179). The function of CS for content transmission refers when CS facilitates effective communication of the
lesson content and language skills so that it helps students’ learning. The examples are “review, definition, explanation, negotiating cultural relevance, parallel translation, and unofficial student collaboration” (p. 179).

In macro-level functions, he found that different language uses were contingent to socio-political situations (e.g., bilingualism and language ideology) in Jaffna. The students were exposed to bilingualism naturally as well as CS. The use of English was strictly encouraged and demanded in the classroom, whereas Tamil for extra-pedagogical purposes such as for personal or unofficial interactions. Many of the functions of CS in Canagarajah’s study were applied to this study in Chapter 4.

**Ethnic Identity**

No conclusive or agreed-upon definition of ethnic identity exists among researchers in ethnic identity studies (Phinney, 1990) because they perceive ethnic identity with quite different understandings or emphases. However, a number of researchers defined it as the ethnic component of social identity, as defined by Tajfel (1981): “part of an individual’s self-concept which derives from his knowledge of his membership of a social group (or groups) together with the value and emotional significance attached to that membership” (p. 255). I use Tajfel’s definition of ethnic identity in this study. It is students’ self-identification that entails from their understanding of the values, perceptions, feelings, and behavior of, and their sense of belonging to, an ethnic group with emotional attachment to the group and its membership. Ethnic identity comprises awareness, self-identification, attitudes, and behaviors. Even though it is not clear-cut to differentiate ethnic identity from racial identity, Chavez et al. (1999) assert that racial identity can be
referred to as a sense of a collective group identity based on one’s perception that one shares a common heritage with a particular race group. However, ethnic identity is based on shared cultural practices, perspectives, and distinctions that set apart one group of people from another. That is, ethnic identity refers to a shared cultural heritage.

Phinney’s (1989, 1990) model of ethnic identity development focuses on the adolescent, the significant changes during this time period, including greater cognitive abilities to contemplate ethnic identity, a broader exposure outside of one’s own community, a greater focus on one’s social life, and an increased concern for physical appearance. There are three developmental stages, derived from other studies (Atkinson et al., 1983; Cross, 1978; Kim, 1981): unexamined ethnic identity, ethnic identity search, and ethnic identity achievement. In the early stage, children prior to adolescence may simply not pay attention to their ethnicity and may have given it little thought. Instead, they perceive or absorb their ethnic identity from others (their parents and family members). Marcia (1980) calls this stage “foreclosed” identity status, in which one’s ethnicity is absorbed in the socialization process. In this stage, socialization plays a crucial role for children to acquire behaviors, perceptions, values, and attitudes of an ethnic group, and their feelings about their own ethnic group are influenced by and projected from family, peers, community, and the larger society. Their early socialization experiences reflect their ethnic identity development.

In the second developmental stage—ethnic identity search, children nearing their adolescence start an exploration of their own ethnicity in a more abstract sense, questioning accepted views of ethnicity. The exploration may be initiated by a significant
experience that forces awareness of one’s ethnicity, such as discrimination. In this stage, adolescents engage and are involved in “an often intense process of immersion in one’s own culture through activities such as reading, talking to people, going to ethnic museums, and participating actively in cultural events” (Phinney, 1990, p. 503).

In the final stage, through their exploration, the individual comes to a deeper and clear understanding and appreciation of their ethnicity. This stage is characterized as achievement or internalization. However, the author cautions that this achievement does not necessarily imply a high degree of ethnic involvement. One can be clear of and confident about one’s ethnic identity without maintaining one’s ethnic language and customs. Also, the developmental stages do not necessarily terminate in the final stage of ethnic identity achievement, but may continue in cycles for further re-examination of one’s ethnicity (Parham, 1989, cited in Phinney, 1990).

**Language Ideology**

In this study, Korean American student’s attitudes toward language and literacy practices at the KLS were examined; findings suggested interrelations among their attitudes, self-ethnic identification, and parents’ language ideologies. According to Woodlard (1992), the term ideology has been characterized in a variety of ways ranging across a variety of disciplines: linguistic ideology (Silverstein, 1979, 1985), grammatical ideology (Kroch & Small, 1978), purist ideology (Hill & Hill, 1980; Hill, 1985), and language ideology (Hornberger, 1988; Sonntag & Pool, 1987; Woodlard, 1989) in anthropology, sociolinguistics, and cultural studies. Those various terms have been used to ask
questions about language from myriad perspectives: cultural and linguistic anthropology, through linguistics, to education and political science (Woodlard, 1992).

Definitions of language ideologies vary from being neutral to critical of the term. Heath (1977) defined language ideology as “self-evident ideas and objectives a group holds concerning roles of language in the social experiences of members as they contribute to the expression of the group” (p. 53). Silverstein (1979) defined it as “a set of beliefs about language articulated by the users as a rationalization of perceived language structure and use” (p. 193). Rumsey (1990) defined it as “shared bodies of commonsense notions about the nature of language in the world” (p. 346), and Woolard (1998) as “representations, whether explicit or implicit, that construe the intersection of language and human beings in a social world” (p. 3). Among the various definitions of language ideology, I take Silverstein’s definition of language ideology as a set of beliefs about language, since I examine Korean American parents’ views and beliefs about the Korean language and the English language in the United States.

Woolard (1992) reviewed four dimensions of ideology based on recurring central features: conceptual or ideational; social and experiential origins; distortion, falsity, mystification, or rationalization; and social power and its legitimation. The first dimension of ideology is characterized with “consciousness, beliefs, notions, or ideas” in relation to “intellectual and conceptual constitution of culture” (p. 237). The second dimension focuses on the experience or interests of a particular social position which ideological concepts or notions emphasized in the first dimension are derived from. The next dimension views ideology with the negative aspect associated with “distortion,
falsity, mystification, or rationalization” (p. 238). The last dimension is concerned with social power and its legitimation “linked to the process of sustaining asymmetrical relations of power—to maintaining domination . . . by disguising, legitimating, or distorting those relations” (Thompson, 1984, p. 4, cited in Woolard, p. 238). In addition to the four-prototypical features of ideology, according to the author, two other dimensions help in an understanding of ideology: the degree to which it is held to be a coherent system, and the degree to which ideology is conscious and explicit.

In sum, with a more sociocultural emphasis, language ideology can be explained as social representations or cultural systems of ideas about social and linguistic relationships including “ideas about power relationships among different speech communities through which symbolic and material resources are produced, distributed, and validated” (Jeon, 2007, p. 116). Language ideologies grant ideas or notions of language, influence social experiences or interests, distort or legitimate existing power relations, and sustain asymmetrical power relations of power. Language ideologies compete in a society, thus some ideologies are held and sustained by people and some may be discarded.

It is important to point out that language ideology and language attitudes are different. They have different traditions in research, theory, and expression (Baker, 1992): whereas language ideologies tend to be studied in anthropology and sociology, language attitudes are more studied in the field of social psychology (King, 2000). Also, while the former tend to be conceived in terms of evaluative reactions to language, the later tends to be associated with “broader systems of, often naturalized, beliefs, ideas or
values concerning language” (Jeon, 2007, p. 115). According to Woolard (1998), while language ideology and language attitudes are similar, ideology additionally implies a distorted reflection of the reality and its rationalization. Acknowledging different traditions in research and emphasis between language ideology and language attitudes, in this study, I use language ideology in general form, encompassing language attitudes. I suggest that external language attitudes are observable aspects that reveal internal language ideology.

Sociolinguists have focused on how social structure affects a group’s language attitudes and how these attitudes cumulatively result in language shift (Fasold, 1990). In many communities in the rapidly changing modernizing world, language shift has occurred and is occurring due to globalization and industrialization (Gal, 1979). Language shift is a social phenomenon that can be explained by means of language attitudes and ideology. While the phenomenon of language shift is a familiar one in the United States (Wong Fillmore, 1991), heritage language education in homes and heritage language schools play a crucial role to decelerate the language shift or heritage language loss.
CHAPTER 3

Research Methodology

This qualitative case study, framed by the sociocultural perspective, intended to answer the following main research question: “How do Korean American children engage in meaning making through language and literacy practices, either in Korean and/or in English, at the Korean Language School (KLS)?” More specifically, this study investigated the following ancillary research questions:

1. What language and literacy practices, either in Korean and/or in English, do the Korean American children engage in at the KLS?
2. What kinds of attitudes do they express verbally and nonverbally toward those language and literacy practices at the KLS?
3. What factors inside and outside of the KLS might influence the children’s experiences at the KLS?

Research Methodology and Rationale

It is necessary to point out some characteristics of qualitative research and describe how the aforementioned research questions fit those characteristics. Merriam (1998) introduces five characteristics of qualitative research. First, qualitative research has an interest in understanding the meanings that people have constructed. It has a root in the key philosophical assumption that individuals construct their reality by interacting with their social worlds. It also is concerned with understanding a phenomenon from the participants’ perspectives. The main purpose of this study was to understand Korean American children’s attitudes toward embedded Korean and/or English literacy practices.
in their heritage language school where they interacted with their social worlds either in Korean and/or English. Therefore, this study raised several research questions concerning the children’s responses and attitudes toward embedded Korean and English literacy practices, and parents’ perspectives about their children as they engage in these literacy practices. Korean American children’s perspectives on their literacy practices construct their reality of literacy practices from their own point of view.

Second, a researcher becomes the primary instrument for data collection and analysis. Data are collected by the researcher, rather than by inventory, questionnaire, or computer. These inanimate instruments cannot be responsive to the context, nor can they adapt to circumstances, nor can they consider the total context as the human instrument does. Researchers can be sensitive to nonverbal aspects of participants, process data immediately, clarify and summarize as the study evolves, and explore anomalous responses (Guba & Lincoln, 1981). One of the research questions of this study concerns attitudes that the Korean American children express verbally and nonverbally toward their literacy practices, people whom they interact with, and the social setting, the KLS. Attitudes can be revealed verbally, but non-verbal expressions of attitudes can convey even more significant meanings. Structured open-ended interview questions, as well as keen observation, allow the researcher to be sensitive and flexible to gain meaningful data. I was the primary “instrument” for data collection and analysis in this study. I was a Korean Language School teacher for many years. However, in order to carefully observe and document the four participants during the study, I did not teach at the school in fall 2011 and spring 2012 during the data collection period.
Third, qualitative research usually involves fieldwork, meaning “the researcher must physically go to the people, setting, site, institution (the field) in order to observe behavior in its natural setting” (Merriam, 1998, p. 7). My primary data gathering setting was the KLS. As the researcher, I met my participants and the people surrounding them at the KLS in order to answer my research questions.

Fourth, qualitative research builds abstractions, concepts, hypotheses, or theories, rather than testing existing theory, which is an inductive research strategy. This study employed sociocultural approaches, theories such as discourse analysis, not with the intent of confirming or disconfirming these hypotheses, but to discover their presence and usefulness, or not, in the data. The goal is to document and analyze a phenomenon that is not adequately explained in the research literature: Korean American children’s literacy practices in both Korean and English. Merriam (1998) asserts, “typically, qualitative research findings are in the form of themes, categories, typologies, concepts, tentative hypotheses, even theory, which have been inductively derived from the data” (p. 8).

Finally, qualitative research generates rich descriptive data, meaning researchers tend to have “descriptions of the context, the players involved, and the activities of interest” (p. 8). Data are “in the form of participants’ own words, direct citations from documents, excerpts of videotapes, and so on” (p. 8). Hence, my data were collected through direct observations of participants, interviews, and tape recordings of interactions, to have rich descriptions of what was happening in each social setting where Korean American children were exposed to literacy practices.
**Research Site: The Korean Language School**

The first Korean heritage language school in the southwestern U.S. city where this study was conducted was founded as a non-profit organization and run by one of the Korean ethnic churches in fall 1998. Because the church members ran the school, the classes were held at an American church facility the Korean church rented on Saturday and Sunday afternoons. Most of the teachers were international undergraduate or graduate students and Korean church members. The church building had several classrooms, each with its own door, so that each classroom had its own activities without distracting other classes. The neighborhood around the school was nice and safe in a community where there was a park and a playground. As the school grew bigger, more Korean parents showed interest in sending their children to the school. Therefore, the KLS became unified as an official Korean Language School in fall 2003. The school relocated to the Korean Community Center; in that way, more Korean parents would participate in the school, regardless of their religion.

The KLS at the Korean Community Center was located in a strip shopping center in the northeast quadrant of the city. The strip shopping center was on the northwest side of the intersection of two main roads, connected to highways. The shopping center had various stores with a big parking area to the south of the intersection; the center had a barber shop, a thrift store, a tattoo shop, a pipe store, a Mexican restaurant, and an fast food restaurant right at the corner of the intersection. The store buildings and signs were outdated and worn-out; they reminded me of stores and signs in the 1970s in Korea. The parking area was huge near the busy roads, which seemed unsafe for young children.
without adult guidance, but also isolated the school building from any traffic noises or commotion.

The school was held on Saturday mornings from 9:15 a.m. and to 12:15 p.m. The first two classes were for Korean language instruction and the third class was for music, art, or dance, including Korean culture. Each class ran about 45 minutes and a 40-minute-snack time followed after two classes. Parents who signed up for snacks prepared them voluntarily. At the time of this study, there were three female Korean language teachers who taught beginner, intermediate, and advanced students respectively, and three extracurricular teachers; a male teacher taught the young children and also taught art, a mother of a student in the beginner class volunteered to teach music, and the principal taught Korean traditional dance. The total student enrollment was 15. Their ages varied from four to 13.

At the end of the school year, the school had a year-end performance with several purposes: to show students’ work, to attract more attention from Korean community members, and to have a fundraiser for the school. Guests purchased a ticket for the show. Many parents and important Korean community members came to celebrate the event together. At the ceremony before the performance, a guest speaker, the president of the Korean community, made a speech, followed by the singing of the Korean national anthem. The students sang Korean songs and danced the traditional Korean mask dance. One of the student participants played saxophone. Several outside invited teams or individuals performed, as well: a professional taekwondo team, a traditional fan dance team, a professional classical dancer, and a soprano singer. A student work exhibition
was held with students’ poems, paintings, and art crafts. A collage of the national Korean flag made of each student’s handprint was on the wall.

Table 3.1. Classes at the Korean Language School

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Class</th>
<th>Teacher</th>
<th>Student Enrollment</th>
<th>Student Participants</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Young Children</td>
<td>Mr. Kang</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>None</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Beginner</td>
<td>Ms. Lee</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>Alex (eliminated)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Intermediate</td>
<td>Ms. Song</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>Elise &amp; Dana</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Advanced</td>
<td>Ms. Kim</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>Kevin &amp; James</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Student Participant Criteria

The student participants were selected by purposeful and convenient sampling, described by Merriam (1998) as a sample from which the most can be learned because the researcher has his or her own unique purpose to study in order to discover, understand, and gain insight about the sample. The inclusion criteria for participant selection were that:

- The students were in upper elementary grades in public elementary or middle schools.
- They were 11 years old or older.
- They attended the weekend Korean Language School to develop Korean, a language they hear to varying degrees at home.
- They were either born in the U.S. or have lived here since they were toddlers.
- The parents of the participants were Korean-born American immigrants who speak the Korean language.

As a Korean language teacher in the weekend Korean Language School, I had been observing potential participants for my study and narrowed them down to five
students. Three fifth graders, a seventh grader, and an eighth grader, all Korean American bilingual students who were 11 to 13 years old, participated in this study. They were all English speaking students from Korean family backgrounds, learning Korean as their heritage language. The five participants were all engaged in both Korean and English language and literacy practices in their daily life. The students were James, Kevin, Elise, Dana, and Alex. The students’ names are pseudonyms for participants’ identity protection. However, Alex was eliminated from this study because of his inability to answer the interview questions due to his delayed language development both in Korean and in English.¹

Data Collection

I utilized different research instruments corresponding to each research question, as this study intended to examine three things: each participant’s embedded language and literacy practices at the KLS, either in Korean or in English; each participant’s responses/attitudes toward these practices; and parents’ views about their child’s struggles and obstacles. In order to observe and examine embedded literacy practices, I visited the KLS each Saturday for three months and stayed during the three class periods of instruction, which totaled three hours each Saturday. I observed and took field notes of each participant in the different periods of Korean classes. I also conducted interviews with the focal students and their parents.

¹ I could not carry on the interview because Alex’s answers were mostly, “I don’t know.” Even though, he assented to participate in this study, his lack of either English or Korean verbal skills prevented him from participating in this study. I stopped interviewing him after 18 minutes. I observed Alex at the KLS and interviewed his mother, but the data are not included in this study.
Classroom Observation at the KLS

I observed four students in the three classes in each of their three 45 minute-lessons; James and Kevin in the advanced class, Elise and Dana in the intermediate class, and Alex in the beginner class. To examine the five Korean American children’s responses to their embedded language and literacy practices, the primary research instruments were the researcher’s field notebook of focused observations of the students, as well as transcripts of audiotapes of their verbal interactions in class. As a former Korean language teacher, I had easy access to the KLS. My presence in this social setting did not create any uncomfortable or strange atmosphere. In fact, some of the students felt comfortable and secure around me due to our acquaintance of many years’ duration. Field notes along with observations were used for written descriptions of each student’s nonverbal, behavioral responses. In order to capture each student’s verbal expressions toward literacy practices, I recorded the students’ verbal interactions in their classrooms and transcribed the audio-recorded data.

I collected classroom observation data from early March until July in 2012. During the data collection period, I did not teach at the KLS; instead, I was a teacher’s assistant, which allowed me to give less attention to teaching per se in order to focus on each participant. In my field notes I made an observation chart for each student, including nonverbal expressions: their facial and body gestures that appeared to display attitudes (e.g., smiles for pleasure and excitement; frowns or silent inattention displaying displeasure or boredom). A brief private conversation with a specific student followed if there was any unusual indication from the student, such as negative attitudes toward a teacher, classmates, or a specific lesson.
Table 3.2. Classroom Observation at the Korean Language School

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Class</th>
<th>Student</th>
<th>Date</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Intermediate</td>
<td>Elise &amp; Dana</td>
<td>March 10, 2012</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>March 24, 2012</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>April 21, 2012</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>April 28, 2012</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Advanced</td>
<td>James &amp; Kevin</td>
<td>March 31, 2012</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>April 14, 2012</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>April 21, 2012</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>April 21, 2012</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>May 5, 2012</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

I observed four students from March to May and each classroom observation was made on four different dates. During these classroom observations, I audio-recorded to collect oral data of verbal interactions during instruction. Audio-recorded data were transcribed in either Korean or English as spoken verbatim. The Korean language data were provided with English translation. I made sure with each student’s parents ahead of time that these students would attend on the days they were to be observed. If they were going to be absent, I shifted the data collection schedule.

**Participant Interviews**

In order to explore the students’ inner struggles and obstacles in their language and literacy practices, as well as their perspectives on learning Korean, I conducted an in-depth interview with the students with semi-structured interview questions (Appendix B). Before the students participated in the interviews, they all consented to participate in this study in the assent form (Appendix A). I interviewed the students after they became familiarized with their teachers and had enough experiences of learning the Korean language and literacy at the KLS in May and June. Student interviews took place in their home, except for Kevin. Kevin’s mother preferred to have an interview with him in the city library. The student interviews were conducted in English, their preferred language. Each interview took about an hour. All the student interviews were audio-recorded and transcribed verbatim.
Table 3.3. Student Interview

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Student</th>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Place</th>
<th>Duration</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Elise</td>
<td>May 24, 2012</td>
<td>Her Home</td>
<td>1 hour, 10 minutes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dana</td>
<td>May 24, 2012</td>
<td>Her Home</td>
<td>1 hour</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kevin</td>
<td>June 18, 2012</td>
<td>City Library</td>
<td>50 minutes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>James</td>
<td>June 27, 2012</td>
<td>His Home</td>
<td>1 hour, 10 minutes</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Teacher interviews were made during and after the school year. Before they participated in the interviews, they all agreed to participate in this study by signing the teacher consent form (Appendix A). In April before the end of the school year, an informal teacher group interview was conducted at the KLS when all of the teachers stayed after school to prepare the year-end performance. All teachers including the principal participated in the teacher group interview. I prompted some questions in a casual way and let the teachers lead discussions as they talked about any issues about the KLS. The group interview took about an hour. In May and June after the year-end performance, each individual teacher interview was conducted in his or her preferred place. The advanced class and the beginner class teachers invited me to their home for the interview. The intermediate class teacher and the young children’s teachers preferred to have their interview at the college library. I interviewed these two teachers separately in a study room in the library, one in May and the other in June. The teacher interviews took between one hour to one hour and a half. All teacher interviews were conducted in Korean, audio-recorded, transcribed, and translated into English.
Table 3.4. Teacher Interview

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Teacher</th>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Place</th>
<th>Duration</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Group (including principal)</td>
<td>April 28, 2012</td>
<td>KLS</td>
<td>1 hour</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Advanced Class (Ms. Kim)</td>
<td>May 25, 2012</td>
<td>Her Home</td>
<td>1 hour, 30 minutes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Young Children Class (Mr. Kang)</td>
<td>May 5, 2012</td>
<td>College Library</td>
<td>1 hour</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Intermediate Class (Ms. Song)</td>
<td>June 1, 2012</td>
<td>College Library</td>
<td>1 hour, 30 minutes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Beginner Class (Ms. Lee)</td>
<td>June 8, 2012</td>
<td>Her Home</td>
<td>1 hour, 40 minutes</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

While making a home visit (except for Kevin) in order to observe each student’s home environment, I conducted an interview with one or both of the parents regarding issues and problems they had observed regarding their child’s literacy practices and/or within the parent-child relationship. Before the parents participated in the interviews, they all agreed to participate in this study by signing the parent consent form (Appendix A). All parent interviews were conducted in Korean, audio-recorded, transcribed, and translated into English. As Table 3.5 shows, the duration of each interview varied from one hour to three hours. I hoped to make a home visit to all of the students’ households, but Kevin’s mother preferred to have an interview outside of the home in a city library. In-depth interview questions (Appendix B) helped me to understand the parents’ perspectives on the struggles and obstacles each student experienced and any relational problems they had with their parents due to lack of a common language. The interviews with the parents regarding their children’s attitudes, struggles, and obstacles from the parents’ perspective helped me examine unseen or untold issues surrounding these literacy practices.
Table 3.5. Parent Interview

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Parent</th>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Place</th>
<th>Duration</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Elise and Dana’s Mother</td>
<td>May 24, 2012</td>
<td>Her Home</td>
<td>1 hour, 20 minutes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kevin’s Mother</td>
<td>June 18, 2012</td>
<td>City Library</td>
<td>1 hour, 30 minutes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>James’s Parents</td>
<td>June 27, 2012</td>
<td>His Home</td>
<td>2 hours, 50 minutes</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Students and their Family Contexts

The student participants are introduced under three specific aspects: family context, personal traits, and language choice. Family context provides each participant’s demographic and family background information: birth place, siblings, and parents’ career, and education. Personal traits include each student’s characteristics, future career orientations, and personality. The language choice is related to their use of language, either English or Korean or both, at home and outside of the home. Last, literacy practices out of the KLS consist of any reading and writing activities, either English or Korean or both. Table 3.1 shows basic demographic information about each participant, as well as parents’ occupations and education levels.

Table 3.6. Student Demographics

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Students (Pseudonyms)</th>
<th>Age/ Grade</th>
<th>Gender</th>
<th>Birth Place</th>
<th>Siblings</th>
<th>Parents’ Occupations</th>
<th>Parents’ Education Level</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Elise</td>
<td>11/5th</td>
<td>F</td>
<td>U.S.A</td>
<td>Older twin sister</td>
<td>Father: Dentist Mother: Homemaker</td>
<td>Father: Doctorate Mother: High School</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dana</td>
<td>11/5th</td>
<td>F</td>
<td>U.S.A</td>
<td>Younger twin sister</td>
<td>Father: Dentist Mother: Homemaker</td>
<td>Father: Doctorate Mother: High School</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>James</td>
<td>13/7th</td>
<td>M</td>
<td>U.S.A</td>
<td>Younger sister</td>
<td>Father: Environmental Engineer Mother: Geographic Information</td>
<td>Father: Doctorate Mother: Baccalaureate</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
James and Kevin were close friends while Elise and Dana were twins. It is necessary to point out that the three families of the participants had a close relationship with each other. The parents made an effort to provide opportunities for their children to make Korean friends in the community. The parents knew each other well and connected through social networking among Korean parents in order to share information, mostly about education for their children (public and heritage), schooling, and extracurricular and other social activities.

**James**

James was a 13-year-old male student in seventh grade, attending a middle school in the city where the KLS was located. James was in the advanced class at the Saturday Korean Language School. He was born in the United States while his father was in his doctoral program. When I made my first observation at the KLS, James left a strong impression on me. His distressed emotional outburst captivated everybody’s attention at the school. I could not believe what he did that day, breaking a classroom white board with his fist, which had never happened at the KLS before. Because of his strong rebellion against his teacher and the KLS, I became more interested in this teenaged male student. As this study progressed, I got to know more about him. In his interview, he was lively, energetic, and willing to talk about himself.
**Family Context.** James’s father came to the United States in 1992 with an international student visa status to pursue his doctorate in Environmental Engineering. The family relocated to the current city when James’s father received a job offer as a modeling scientist in the state government. The father highly valued the Korean language and culture and was dedicated to sending his children to the KLS when James was four or five years old. He spent an hour driving his children to the school every Friday evenings, and another hour driving them home; he had done that for two years and a half. James’s father was very aware of how quick and easy it is to lose a heritage language after his children were exposed to the American education system. He had been reminding James to speak Korean at home ever since James started changing his dominant language from Korean to English. The father tried to motivate James to learn Korean; he reminded James that Korea is the country where the father will eventually reside after he retires, and second, learning Korean will benefit James in many ways, such as having a job in Korea in the future if he wants.

James’s mother came to the United States after her marriage in Korea, following her husband who was pursuing his doctorate degree. The mother came with an international student family visa. With this status, she was not allowed to work in the United States. Therefore, she stayed at home supporting her husband as a full-time homemaker and raising their child after James was born. She has a baccalaureate degree in gardening, however, she taught secondary math in an after school program in Korea. After James and his younger sister became teens, the mother went to a community college to be licensed in the geographic information system field. It had been two years since she started working as a geographic information system technician. The mother also
taught at the KLS as a volunteer for a short period of time until she began working full-time.

James had one younger sister who was in fifth grade and attended the KLS, as well. James and his sister spoke English to each other. According to the father, both James and his sister had advanced receptive Korean language skills. Since the siblings were not the same gender, they did not spend much time together at home. They also had other Korean friends through their parents’ social network. All of the four participants—James, Kevin, Elise, and Dana—often gathered at family events.

James’s paternal and maternal grandparents lived in Korea. James’s parents and grandparents kept in contact through international phone calls. The father usually put James on the phone to talk to his grandparents in Korean. James, the first son in the family, had familial attentions and expectations from both paternal and maternal grandparents. In 2011, James and his sister were sent to spend their summer break with their grandparents in Korea.

**Personal Traits.** James was very athletic; he commented that he had enjoyed sports for “his whole life.” His favorite sports activities were: basketball, soccer, baseball, swimming, and taekwondo (a Korean martial art). He was about to start tennis soon and wanted to start football in high school. He commented that he was “less stressed out” when he swam and felt as if time went by quickly. It seemed that his zeal for sports was related to his “anger issues.” James said sports reduced his stress, and also opened a door for making friends at school. James’s violent or extreme verbal and physical behaviors at the KLS will be described in Chapter 4.
In the future, James wanted to become a dentist or a businessman or a banker. Even though he was athletic and liked sports, his father did not want James to become a professional athlete. The father’s rejection of professional athletics as a career was not atypical of many Korean parents. Korean parents value scholarly careers such as teachers, professors, judges, and lawyers, or high paid jobs related to finance. Therefore, James did not hope to be a professional athlete despite the fact that he knew that most professional athletes are paid well. Among three career choices, he wanted to be a dentist because of its higher income. He said, “They get a lot of money. Otherwise, I’d be a surgeon. It would be like 120,000 dollars a year.” However, he did not want to be a surgeon because he did not want to deal with people dying, and second, he was not organized enough to meet deadlines, he said.

Language Choice. James was born and raised in a household where Korean was the primary language. He spoke primarily Korean until he started learning English in elementary school. He spoke English to his parents and sister and occasionally Korean to his parents: he reported that the ratio was 85% English vs. 15% Korean. English was the main medium between him and his sister. He spoke about 98% English to his sister and about 2% Korean when his parents asked him to speak Korean. Despite the parents' persistent request that the children speak Korean to their parents, James still preferred to speak English.

James switched his language from English to Korean when his family was around other Korean families. James felt his code switching was more like automatic, as it happened naturally, depending on which language was used in the context. Even though he felt comfortable speaking Korean, James did not initiate a conversation in Korean with
other people. Instead, he simply answered basic questions put to him by Korean adults in Korean. The only time James approached a Korean adult was when his father’s friend, who was always friendly to James, was around him. James would greet the adult in English and start talking to him in Korean. Another occasion when James switched from English to Korean was when he and his other Korean friends did not want American friends to know what they were talking about. For example, one of their English monolingual friends looked as if he was in a bad mood and then James and his Korean friend would talk in Korean about what was going on with that American friend. Last, his code switching happened when he ran out of words to say either in Korean or in English.

**Literacy Practices outside of the KLS.** Regarding academic literacy including reading and writing, James said his grades dropped in seventh grade and he had a hard time in English and social studies classes. He liked reading action and adventure novels. He recently read *The Hunger Games* and his favorite authors were Susan Colin and Rick Rine. James’s father bought books for James. His father said that James did not want to be left out of conversations among friends at school. If his friends were reading a book and talked about the book, James had to have read the whole series of currently popular books because he could not stand that he did not know about the book. Until fourth grade, James’s mother used to read Korean books to him and he used to ask her questions if he did not understand the story. In fifth grade, his father read Korean books to James and his sister once a week. However, once the parents became busy, they stopped reading books to James. Currently James did not read any Korean books.

James said he did not like writing in general because he could not stay still for a while. He had to keep moving some body part, either his hands or his legs, or he had to
touch something. Even though he did not like writing in either Korean or English, he had to write a story for his sixth grade class in middle school. James wrote a fiction story that he considered the best story he had ever written, based on real characteristics of his classmates: “I wrote a story [about] every single person in my class. So there is like, me, if I face [see] someone’s personality and characteristics and what they would say. There is one guy who always tell girls like this ‘Oh, Audrey, do you want a coffee?’ He would ask it every single day, so I basically in my story they are married.”

Kevin

Kevin was a 13-year-old male student in 8th grade attending the same middle school that James attended in the U.S. southwest. Kevin, like James, was in the advanced class at the Saturday Korean Language School. He was the only child in his family and an avid reader.

Family Context. Kevin’s father came to the United States in 1997 to pursue his doctorate degree at a prestigious university with an international student visa. The father resigned his job at Korea’s largest conglomerate to do graduate study in the United States. After earning his doctorate in Electronic Engineering, the father started working as a senior research scientist at a college, while his wife was pursuing her doctorate in Industrial Engineering at the same institution. According to Kevin’s mother, the father was a very conservative man who believed corporal discipline was necessary for a child when it was needed. The father was a quiet man, so it was the mother’s job to take care of Kevin in terms of education and child rearing.

Kevin’s mother came to the United States to be with her husband. She said it was not an easy decision for her to leave everything including her job behind in Korea.
However, family was the most important thing for her. The mother gave birth to Kevin in 1998 in the United States and she stayed at home as a full-time homemaker. Even though Kevin’s mother followed her husband to the United States, she had planned to pursue her doctorate when Kevin grew old enough. The mother also earned her doctorate in Electrical Engineering. After her completion of her doctorate, she worked as a visiting assistant professor for a year and a half at her institution. However, she had to resign her job to relocate to the southwest where Kevin’s father received a job offer as a research scientist. Now the mother was a homemaker.

**Personal Traits.** Kevin was viewed as the model student by the Korean teachers at the KLS and by some Korean parents in the Korean community. He was so exemplary that many Korean parents complimented his school success and his appropriate manners befitting to Korean culture. One of the most unique things about Kevin was that his mother provided a literate environment since he was little. Kevin’s mother said that she believed it was so important for her child’s education that Kevin be exposed to reading at an early age. She read books to Kevin in Korean when he was a toddler and Kevin started reading books before learning the English alphabet. Kevin had been an avid reader since then. He also learned speed-reading by himself, reading endless books.

In the interview, Kevin said he wanted to be a dentist in the future. The main reason was that the job would give him a high salary. He acknowledged that being a medical doctor would bring more money and fame, but he said he did not have a passion for being a medical doctor. He also believed becoming a dentist would be easier than being a medical doctor, and he firmly said, “I’m going to be a dentist.”
Kevin was an obedient child at home, perhaps out of respect for his parents. James readily listened to his mother after having a conversation with her regarding any matter. For example, James quit playing computer games after his mother talked to him about the importance of spending his time well. He said, “My mom told me, most of the time that I am at the turning point of my life. If I don’t spend it good now, the rest of my life is gonna be bad.” So, Kevin agreed with his mother’s comment and wanted to spend his teenage years wisely. Kevin also gave up the idea of becoming an ambassador, his old dream, because he thought his mother would not like him to do that. He said, “My mom wouldn’t allow me to do that because I could be assigned to Iraq or Iran.” Most of Kevin’s decisions seemed to be made based on his mother’s advice. His statements showed that Kevin valued his mother’s advice and tried to follow her disciplines.

In addition to being docile toward his parents, Kevin also believed that he was influential with his friends. Kevin said that James, his classmate who resisted in the advanced class, improved his manners and attitudes because of Kevin’s kind friendship with James. Kevin said, “I think that I influenced him [James]. So he is better now. I just show him to be kind. I am naturally kind to other people.” Kevin also said that another friend who introduced Kevin to computer games quit playing them because of his influence. Kevin seemed to be proud of his positive influence on his friends.

Regarding his extracurricular activities, Kevin was in the math club, swimming team, Kumon (a method of teaching mathematics), and jazz band. In fact, thanks to his involvement with Jazz band, he played saxophone at the year-end school performance. Next year he planned to take speech and debate, as well as other extra volunteer work, to build a strong resume. Kevin’s extracurricular activities were voluntarily chosen out of
his own interests. Kevin said that he was interested in international relationships, so he wanted to get involved in a volunteer activity to see how the student senate body at school worked.

**Language Choice.** Kevin and his parents spoke Korean at home almost 100% of the time. To him, speaking English to his parents was very unusual and he felt there was no point to speak English since he grew up in a household where Korean was the primary language. He said, “We are all Korean. So like, why speak English?” However, Kevin said there are times he does code switch. He used the term Konglish, which is a mixture of Korean and English. Kevin attributed his advanced Korean proficiency to the fact that he learned Korean when he was very little and his parents spoke Korean all the time. Therefore, Korean was his first language when he was little. Now, Kevin considered Korean to be his second language because he felt more comfortable speaking English than Korean. Despite his language preference for English, Kevin spoke Korean on purpose when he had an argument with his parents, he said. If he switched to English from Korean in order to articulate his arguments, “My parents misinterpret my English. And they get more angry at me.” He thought that his parents might not understand his main point because his parents might misinterpret his nuances in English, so he utilized the Korean language especially when he wanted important messages to get across to his parents.

**Literacy Practices outside of the KLS.** It was more challenging for Kevin to write in Korean than in English. It would take several minutes for him to write in English but 30 minutes to write in Korean about the same topic, even with his mother’s help, he said. On the other hand, he enjoyed writing in English all the time for fun, such as adding
descriptions to drawings he made and writing rules after making up new games with his friends.

Kevin was an avid reader and he saw reading as his greatest strength in English. He commented that he read *Harry Potter* in third grade. Crisp Tower Win, who wrote the *Paragon Series*, used to be Kevin’s favorite author, but after reading all of his series, he became more interested in Benny and Henry. His favorite genre was military fantasy, such as *Star Wars*. Kevin said that he was interested in world wars, which lead him to read more books about world battles and wars. Kevin was capable of reading a thick chapter book in two days, spending three to four hours a day. Reading had been Kevin’s favorite hobby, except for the time when he got into a computer game, Star Craft.

Kevin went to the library once or twice a week, not only to check out books but also to study there. He checked out 10 to 15 books of several series at once after surfing his choice of books, such as *Harry Turtle Dug* and *The Buggers*. He said he read *The Hunger Games* “long time ago,” even before it came out as a movie. Comparing the books and movie versions of the books, he preferred books because “movies skip too much and they alter something for cool.” His favorite movies were *Battle Ship*, *Transformers*, and *Lord of the Ring*.

Kevin used to watch Korean dramas with his father who was interested in historical fiction dramas, especially in the era of the Three Kingdoms of Goguryeo, Silla, and Baekje in Korean history. He said if it was in English, he would probably keep watching it, but he couldn’t understand what was going on and why people were doing certain things. Since he could not get the overall meaning of the story, he quit watching the dramas. Kevin reasoned the main cause of his lack of understanding of the historical
fiction dramas was the context, which was based on ancient times so people were speaking old Korean in those dramas.

*Elise*

Elise was an 11-year-old girl in fifth grade attending an elementary school in the U.S. southwest. She was in the intermediate class at the KLS. She had twin sister, Dana, who was another participant in this study in the same intermediate class at the KLS. They were born in the city where they resided at the time of this study.

*Family Context.* Elise’s father came to the United States at the age of 15 when his whole family emigrated from Korea. He majored in Electronic Engineering at college and started his own business upon his graduation from college. Elise’s family moved to another city when Elise and Dana were kindergarteners, because Elise’s father was going to dentistry school there. After he earned his degree in dentistry, they relocated to the current city in 2011. Elise’s father worked as a dentist. His personal success in becoming a dentist seemed to play an important role in the parents’ child rearing. The family motto was “never give up.” He valued the Korean language and culture and helped the twins with their schoolwork, such as math.

Elise’s mother came to the United States from Korea to learn English as her second foreign language. She enrolled in an ESL language program at a college for a semester and met her husband. Before she came to the United States, the mother had had a job in a Japanese foreign language program at a college in Japan for five years. She considered Japanese to be her first foreign language and English, the second foreign language. The mother had only a high school diploma, unlike the other two mothers of participants who had Ph.Ds. Her zeal for learning another foreign language eventually led
her to the United States where she met her husband. In fact, it was Elise’s mother’s idea that Elise’s father should go to dentistry school, and she supported her family, running a business until Elise’s father finished his degree in dentistry.

The paternal grandparents lived in another city in the United States and the maternal grandparents in Korea. The parents of the twins made an effort for the twins to talk to their grandparents in Korean. The twins had been sent to their maternal grandparents in Korea during two summer breaks and even attended a public elementary school there. The mother commented that it was all for her children not to lose the Korean language and to connect with their grandparents.

**Personal Traits.** Elise was a talkative, outgoing, and lively girl who loved animals, so her dream was to become a veterinarian. During the interview she was willing to talk about herself and to show me her personal belongings, such as books, paintings, and art crafts. Elise was the most talkative student in her class at the KLS, but she was also very observant of those around her. She talked about some other students at the KLS, as follows:

1) Regarding Tom, who was a white American student in her intermediate class: “Tom was practically crazy over them [new words]. He likes Korean.”

2) Regarding James, who was in the advanced class: “I’m pretty sure she [the principal] doesn’t like James, cause like, he threatens teachers and stuff, cause his anger issue gets compulsive…and then there’s always a fact that he’s always like slopping with his friends and stuff like for fun and they start roughhousing. And they always call Alex um, name…it’s like dumb, dumb, dumb, and then like he’s always like mean to Alex and like always rough trying roughhouse him but Alex was like all scared of him.”

3) Regarding Alex, who was in the beginner class: “He’s like, ‘You be quite!’ ‘You shut up!’ Even he doesn’t use it in the right way. Like, ‘You shut up’ I think a little baby would talk like that.

The extracurricular activities that Elise engaged in were arts and crafts, piano, math club, and Kumon. She had a Korean traditional dance class for many years. Her
favorite activity was the arts and crafts in which a Korean female artist teacher taught various artistic skills. Elise wanted to quit piano lessons because playing the piano every day for 45 minutes was painful for her. She enjoyed her math club after school because it was more game oriented. Elise believed she needed more help with her math but Kumon did not help her much. She complained that teachers in Kumon did not teach how to solve math problems, instead they said, “read the direction, compute, and word it.”

**Language Choice.** Despite the fact that Elise’s parents spoke only Korean to her, she spoke English dominantly at home to/with her twin sister and to her parents, except for times when she believed that her mother did not understand her English. She tried to speak Korean to her mother for important matters. In this way, she continued to employ some Korean words when her mother misunderstood anything important. Elise code-switched from English to Korean as a remedial strategy when there was a communication breakdown with her mother. She also spoke Korean to her grandparents, either on the phone or while visiting them. While Elise stayed with her grandparents in Korea, she spoke Korean because they would not understand her English, she said.

**Literacy Practices outside of the KLS.** Elise’s mother read Korean story books to Elise every night when Elise was little, not even a year old, which became a nightly ritual; Elise could not fall asleep unless her mother read a book to her. Elise said that she still could not sleep without reading at night, and once she started reading a book she could not stop reading, “once I start reading a new book, I can’t stop. I can’t stop to sleep cause I’m so into it. So I don’t wanna stop and then my mom comes in at like 10, and goes like ‘it’s time for bed, go to sleep.’ And then takes my book away.”
Elise’s mother took Elise to a library once or twice a week to check out books that Elise wanted to read. She had read most of the books that she wanted to read in her school library. Elise had over 50 children’s books in Korean that her mother used to read to Elise and her twin sister for their Korean literacy development, but after they became teens, the mother donated all the Korean books to KLS. Regarding reading books in Korean, Elise hardly read them, but she said that she tried to read a Korean book about mangos and got half way through the book. Elise was proud of her reading aloud in Korean at the KLS as she said, “I don’t think there’s anybody that can read better than me in the class. So I was like “Ha! Ha!” Elise was confident of her Korean literacy skills.

Like Kevin, Elise was an avid reader. She could finish reading a Percy Jackson book in a day. She liked adventures, mythology, and animal related books in English. Her favorite books were *the Percy Jackson Series*, *The Hunger Games*, and *Chomp*. Elise became absorbed when she read “a really good book” because she was into the story so much that she could not hear the voice of her teacher in the classroom. She became so engrossed in the world of the story that she lost contact with the world while reading an interesting book.

In terms of writing activities, Elise did not like writing stories either in English or in Korean. She said, “I don’t like writing, cause like um, we just have to like, think of it and go back to it, and do it again and again to make it perfect. Get really annoyed and lack patient I’m like ‘Oh, come on!’” For her, writing demanded much more work than reading and she was impatient with editing her working on writing until it was perfect.
Dana

Dana was Elise’s twin sister who was 11 years old in fifth grade attending the same elementary school as Elise, as well as the intermediate class at the KLS. Dana had the same family background as Elise (see Elise’s participant section). Dana considered the family dog to be one of her family members. As Dana and Elise were fraternal twins, Dana was the older twin, and much taller and bigger than her sister physically. She also seemed to be quiet and passive, which is the opposite from Elise, who was talkative and outgoing.

Personal Traits. Dana liked outdoor activities and spending time with her friends. In her interview, I noticed her comments were so simple that I often had to ask her to elaborate. One of her noticeable characteristics was that she did not like doing any extra work. For example, doing Kumon (after school program) was extra work, so she did not like it. Dana said that she liked learning math earlier than her classmates, but she did not want to make an extra effort. She said her teachers at school would teach her eventually so she did not see the point of doing Kumon after school. Dana kept complaining about her Kumon teachers. She said the teachers were “horrible” because they always demanded that Dana sit in front of the classroom, even though she preferred the back seats, and the teachers expected Dana to understand the things they wrote on the white board without explaining them. From her attitudes toward the extracurricular teachers, I could see her resentment. Once Dana felt that doing Kumon was extra work, her view about Kumon was negative.

Dana was not sure what she wanted to be when she grew up. However, she knew that she would not go to dentistry school because it usually takes eight years of schooling.
She was adamant about not becoming a dentist. She said she did not want to spend her life that way. Further, Dana did not want to go to college; instead, she wanted to have a simple and easy life after high school, staying home, relaxing, and watching TV. She said, “I can get a job, but I don’t like those hard ones like doctors, dentists. Like, my dad moved to . . . just because he wanted to go to school there.” Dana acknowledged that doctors and dentists would make a big salary, but she did not want much money. She said, “I care about money, but not a lot.” She knew that she needed money to live, but she did not want to make too much effort to make more than she needed. Therefore, as long as she would be able to support herself at a minimum level, she would be fine with that. It was interesting to compare the boys, James and Kevin, who wanted to have a high salaried job, a dentist, with Dana who did not want to make extra effort to make more money than she needed, content to live an easy life.

Regarding her extracurricular activities, Dana had piano lessons and Kumon. She saw herself as not artistic compared to Elise who liked painting. She preferred to play dodge ball and soccer because she couldn’t stay still. Like Elise, Dana did not like piano lessons because she felt that she was forced to play the piano every day for 45 minutes. She said she would rather play outside with her friends for those 45 minutes. Dana also liked playing computer games with her friends. She said that her favorite hobby was playing computer games online. She played games like Dias and Bombs and various games on her favorite game website, Agame.com. She liked adventures and action games. In her games, she bombed people, killing and burning them.

**Language Choice.** Dana spoke Korean to her mother and English to her father and her sister, Elise. Even though her father was a native Korean born and raised in
Korea for 15 years, Dana spoke English to her father because her father was a fluent English speaker. She chose to speak Korean to her mother who did not feel comfortable speaking English. While she was staying with her grandparents in Korea, she spoke Korean to them and at a public elementary school, and had little difficulty carrying on a conversation.

*Literacy Practices outside of the KLS.* Dana “sometimes” liked reading a book, which suggests that she was not an avid reader. Her favorite books were *The Hunger Games* but she did not have a favorite author. Even though her favorite books were *The Hunger Games*, she did not finish reading all three volumes because she was told the second and third books were boring. She went to the library to check out about five books every two weeks, but only if the books she borrowed were interesting would she finish reading them.

She did not like writing in general. She said, “Well, when you write too much, your hand becomes so hurt. When I write I like go like this, so I kind of like go hard on it. Then I got this bump.” Dana also admitted that she was not good at coming up with ideas for her writing.

Regarding reading books in Korean, Dana used to read children’s books that she referred to as childish. Also, she said she understood much of the stories without any help from her parents. However, as she grew older she rarely read Korean books any more and the last time she read a Korean book was at the KLS because her teacher asked her to read a book and write about it as homework. Dana did not like reading Korean words aloud at the KLS because she was not confident about reading Korean. She would rather read alone. Dana went to Korean websites for surfing and playing games. For Dana,
being online on Korean websites was not a reading activity, maybe because she simply glanced over visuals and clicked any icons that seemed interesting to her. In the interview, she agreed that she read on the Junior Naver (쥬니어 네이버), which is a portal site aimed at children similar to Yahooligans. It has special services such as games—Dongmul Nongjang (Animal Farm), Pany Pang, Puppyred—e-mails, avatars, educational links, quizzes, stories, jokes and a homework helper. Dana went to on-line websites to read reviews and ratings of Korean dramas before she decided to watch them. She said she liked Korean dramas because they were interesting and fun. Dana even shared information about Korean dramas with her Sunday school friends and played a game called Hang Man by saying titles of Korean dramas.

In sum, I have introduced the Saturday Korean Language School site, the two focal teachers, the four student participants and their parents. The fathers of James and Kevin came to the United States for their higher education and they settled down in the United States after completion of their doctoral degrees. The father of the twins, Elise and Dana, came to the United States as a teenage immigrant when his whole family immigrated to the United States. Another thing to notice is the level of education of the fathers: they all had doctoral degrees. However, the mothers had different educational backgrounds, varying from a high school diploma to a doctorate. Although all of the mothers showed great concern for their children’s literacy and academic achievement, only Kevin, whose mother was the one with a doctoral degree, seemed to achieve beyond his grade level. The educational level of mother seemed to influence children’s early literacy environment. The fathers were advocates for maintaining Korean as the heritage
language for their children; also, they helped their children with schoolwork, such as math assignments.

The students had similar and different backgrounds, interests, and personalities. Despite their differences, there were more commonalities among them. They were United States born Korean Americans, the second immigrant generation. All of them were aware of the Korean heritage imposed by their parents, but they viewed themselves as American. Their main identity issue was that their parents wanted them to grow up as successful American citizens while keeping their Korean heritage, the language and the culture. Their identity struggles will be investigated in Chapter 5 in depth.

**Korean Language School Teachers**

The focal students’ teachers were Ms. Song, the intermediate teacher, and Ms. Kim, the advanced teacher. In this section, I introduce the two teachers of the focal students.

**Table 3.7. Teacher Demographics**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Teacher</th>
<th>Age</th>
<th>Residence in the U.S.A.</th>
<th>Year of Teaching Experience</th>
<th>Occupation</th>
<th>Language Use at Home</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Ms. Song</td>
<td>Early 20s</td>
<td>Four years</td>
<td>Six months in West Coast city/ Two years in Southwest city</td>
<td>Undergraduate student</td>
<td>Mostly Korean/ English to her uncle</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ms. Kim</td>
<td>Early 30s</td>
<td>Three years</td>
<td>One year in the Southwest city</td>
<td>Graduate student</td>
<td>English to her husband</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Ms. Song**

Ms. Song was the intermediate class teacher who taught Dana and Elise. She came to the United States when she was 15 years old in tenth grade. She started her tenth grade in an American high school and stayed in her relative’s house. The teacher’s parents sent her to
the United States for a better educational opportunity. The teacher was now a college student majoring in elementary education. Her first experience of teaching Korean was in San Diego for one semester in her high school years. In San Diego, Ms. Song volunteered as a teacher assistant at a Korean heritage language school in the class of young children. It was such a good experience for her that she willingly took a teaching position at the KLS in the present city when one was offered to her. Ms. Song had been teaching Korean at the school for two years and a half. She was going to major in veterinary science until she found the joy and satisfaction of teaching fifth grade students at the KLS, which was unexpected path for her.

Ms. Song lived with her Korean aunt and American uncle. Therefore, at home English was the language for family gatherings. As for language choice, Ms. Song was conscious that she intentionally speaks English, articulating her English words carefully for her American born students. She practiced some difficult English words prior to her class. Ms. Song also utilized code switching to convey content knowledge when she felt it necessary. This teacher believed that her students would not learn much Korean by attending the school once a week, that it was the parents’ role to reinforce their children’s Korean at home as much as possible, and that her students needed to practice more of reading and writing at home with the parents’ guidance. The teacher gave her students weekly demanding homework. Some of the parents complained about too much homework, but at the end of the school year, the parents could see the importance of homework.
Ms. Kim

Ms. Kim was the advanced class teacher who taught James and Kevin. She came to the United States upon her marriage to her American husband in 2010. Ms. Kim completed her undergraduate degree in Korea and was pursuing her master's program. Because of our close relationship, she shared with me her difficulties and struggles with teaching Korean at the KLS and managing her student, James. It was a painful semester not only for her but also for me. She struggled to teach her students ethically, respecting them and encouraging them. The issues Ms. Kim had were not simple and easy to fix, as will be seen in Chapter 4. However, Ms. Kim had a firm belief that her sincerity would be recognized by her students despite their distrusts of learning Korean at the KLS. Since Ms. Kim became principal of the KLS in 2013, she is active than ever, devoting herself to make KLS a better school for Korean American and Korean heritage students.

Ms. Kim implemented various teaching methods in her class. For example, she developed her own lesson texts from content materials. The written texts have themes accordingly depending on the lesson. On my first observation in her class, she was teaching about cougars. It was a long text with following fill-in-blank and closed questions. What animals do cougars usually hunt? Look for cougars’ other names. What are the secretive habits of cougars? Literacy practices are introduced in Chapter 4. Ms. Kim spent several hours in lesson preparation. She also used a video clip in English about cougars from the Internet and had her students watch the video to help them understand facts about cougars. The teacher incorporated any possible resources into her class. There were many occasions Ms. Kim code-switched in class. At times she wasn’t aware that she
used English words in Korean sentences, but other times she was aware of providing English words as translations.

**Data Analysis**

Data analysis began as the first data collection was made. In qualitative research, data collection and data analysis occur simultaneously in a dynamic and interactive process since qualitative research design is not “a linear, step-by-step process” (Merriam, 1998, p. 152). In this simultaneous process, the researcher’s “hunches, working hypotheses, and educated guesses” lead to the next step of data collection while “refining” or “verifying” previous hunches (p. 155).

Yin (1994) warns that analysis of evidence is one of the least developed and most difficult aspects of doing case studies. He suggests two general data analysis strategies: relying on theoretical propositions, and developing a case description. The former follows theoretical propositions that have formed the design of the case study. This strategy helps a researcher to focus attention on certain data and to ignore other data. Employing the lens of sociocultural theory helped me to filter several steps while focusing on social and cultural aspects of the findings. For example, I had the pool of linguistic data from the classroom interactions that I could have paid attention to in order to analyze linguistic features or functions from a linguistics approach. However, even though that was tempting to me, I put that interest aside because that was not one of the purposes of this study. I could have calculated frequencies of CS and quantified the data, but I did not.

The second data analysis strategy is to develop a descriptive framework for organizing the case-study data, based on description of the general characteristics and
relations of the phenomenon contingent to the research questions. I had to filter the data in this study several times. For instance, first I organized this case study focusing on the four student participants based on general themes, then on recurring themes by each participant, and later I conducted a cross-sectional analysis.

Yin (1994) also provides three analytic techniques as part of the general strategy: pattern matching, explanation-building, and time-series analysis. First, the pattern matching technique is to compare empirically based patterns with predicted outcomes. There are three conditions to match patterns with outcomes: first, when the initially predicted results have been found (expected outcomes); second, when some of the theoretically salient explaining conditions can be articulated in empirical findings (rival explanations); last, when the derived patterns are predicted to have enough clear differences with only few variables (simpler patterns). Second, the explanation-building technique is to analyze case study data by building an explanation about the case and to identify a set of causal links. The explanation is made as a result of a series of iterations: first, start with an initial theoretical statement; second, compare findings of an initial case; third, revise the statement; fourth, compare details of the case; fifth, revise the statement again; last, compare to other additional cases. Yin warns that a researcher should keep in mind that the original topic of interest could drift away with this technique. The last analytic technique is time-series analysis. It focuses on relationships and changes of events over time with “how” and “why” questions, and on identifying theoretically proposed sequences of events that are expected to lead to a certain outcome. Yin (1994) comments that data analysis should show the relevant evidence, major rival
interpretations, most significant issue of the study, and expert knowledge prior to the study.

Following Yin (1994)’s theoretical suggestions, I relied on my theoretical proposition—Korean American children’s literacy development is most likely influenced by the social context of the KLS through social interactions as they constructed and negotiated meaning making—in the data analysis. Also key issues addressed in the literature review section such as Vygotsky’s (1986) dynamic interdependence of social and individual development, Perez’s (1998) definition of literacy from sociocultural theory, Ferdman’s (1991) cultural identity, Shin’s (2004) and others’ studies on heritage language maintenance of Korean Americans, and Johnstone’s (2008) and Gee’s (1992) discourse analysis, guided the data analysis to answer my research questions.

In a practical sense, I considered each student as a separate case study, so there were four cases. The two different classroom contexts where data were collected on the four cases are important categories of this study. Therefore, each student in each class session was focused on separately, documenting the cultural and social characteristics of each setting and the student’s interactions within the setting. This allowed me to organize and analyze the data by using “category” or “classification” schemes (Merriam, 1998) and thematic analysis (Shank, 2002), as well as Yin’s (1994) general analytic data analysis strategies and techniques.

Since data were collected to explore embedded literacy practices in Korean and/or English at the KLS, I searched for patterns or recurring themes. As I continuously compared and contrasted the data on each student in each setting, I did categorize or classify data into different topics or themes in order to identify related or different topics.
After categorizing or classifying data, I analyzed the data from each context at the level of discourse analysis. A major analytical method in data analysis was the constant comparative method (Glaser & Strauss, 1967) in order to develop grounded theory. This method enables researchers to approach with an “inductive, concept-building orientation” to their research (Merriam, 1998, p. 159). In other words, data analysis was made by the researcher’s analytic induction as the researcher kept comparing and contrasting instances emerging at the KLS with each student.

To analyze language practices occurring in both intermediate and advanced Korean lessons between the KLS teachers and their students and among the students, I developed a system of analyzing code-switching (CS) to designate which types or kinds of CS were used, based on CS studies (Auer, 1984, 1995, 1998; Myers-Scotton, 1983, 1993; Woolard, 2004), and their functions in classrooms, based on the study of Canagarajah (see Chapter 2). I also defined functions of CS when they were apparent and necessary for data analysis, such as echo CS (see Table 4.1). To better understand the verbal interactions in the classroom instructions, Gee’s (1992) notion of situated meanings and Discourses from the discourse analysis approach were applied as the main analysis tool from the sociocultural perspective.

**Researcher Positionality**

I acknowledge that my researcher positionality, influenced by gender, race, ethnicity, age, social status and marital status, could have influenced the ways in which I understand the Korean American students’ language and literacy practices, their attitudes toward them, their ethnic self-identification, their parents’ language ideologies, and the complex, multifaceted interrelations between and among these. It is important to consider both the
similarities and differences between myself and my research participants (Hopkins, 2007), as well as emic and etic perspectives (Ager & Loughry, 2004; Morris et al., 1999). I am a female, Asian, Korean, and an international doctoral student who has been a teacher at the KLS. Regarding my identities, my ethnic and social identities were stable at the time of this study, which might change later in my life because identities are never static or fixed. I had a firm and strong Korean female international student identity, which allowed me to position myself as an insider of the Korean community with the emic perspective in relation to the ethnicity of the Korean American parents and the KLS teachers. Emic knowledge and interpretations are those existing within a culture, which are “determined by local custom, meaning, and belief” (Ager & Loughry, 2004) and best described by a “native” of the culture.

I also acknowledge that my etic perspective helped me to observe, analyze, and understand my research topics. I was an outsider because I have never had the experiences that the Korean American children and their parents have had in the United States as Korean American. If I were a U.S.-born Korean American who was sent to a Korean School by my parents, I would have better understood the student participants’ experiences in relation to learn Korean as a heritage language, constructing ethnic identity, and socializing in the Korean community in the United States. Also, if I had raised a Korean American child born in the United States, I could have better associated myself with the Korean American parents. Etic knowledge refers to generalizations about human behavior that are considered universally true, and commonly links cultural practices to factors of interest to the researcher, such as economic or ecological conditions, that cultural insiders may not consider very relevant (Morris et al., 1999).
believe having both perspectives of the emic insider and the etic outsider helped me to better understand my research participants, the KLS social setting, and the interrelated social phenomena.
In this chapter, I examine language and literacy practices of the students and teachers at the Korean Language School (KLS). By language and literacy practices, I mean regular and repeated cultural practices involving a mixture of written and spoken language (Barton & Hamilton, 2000) existing in the specific social context of the KLS. According to Barton and Hamilton, literacy practices are what we do with reading, writing and texts in real-world contexts and why we carry these out. The practices connect to, and are shaped by, values, attitudes, feelings, and social relationships. Social relationships are crucial, as “literacy practices are more usefully understood as existing in the relationships between people, within groups and communities, rather than as a set of properties residing in individuals” (p. 8). The authors outlined six propositions about the nature of literacy:

- Literacy is best understood as a set of social practices; these can be inferred from events which are mediated by written texts.
- There are different literacies associated with different domains of life.
- Literacy practices are patterned by social institutions and power relationships, and some literacies become more dominant, visible and influential than others.
- Literacy practices are purposeful and embedded in broader social goals and cultural practices.
- Literacy is historically situated.
- Literacy practices change, and new ones are frequently acquired through processes of informal learning and sense making (p. 8).

In this study, language and literacy practices in the intermediate as well as the advanced classes of the KLS curriculum were identified within the regular Korean language lessons and also in the extracurricular activities at the school: fine arts, music, and dance.
Analysis here of the predominant language practice of code-switching (CS), defined as “the juxtaposition within the same speech exchange of passages of speech belonging to two different grammatical systems or subsystems” (Gumperz, 1982, p. 59), focuses on its functions. CS is analyzed at the micro-textual level of instructional strategies, using the work of scholars in the field of CS, and at a macro-discourse level, employing social-cultural analytic tools. The data came mainly from transcriptions of audiotaped classroom interactions, as well as observations with field notes in extracurricular classes.

**Literacy Practices**

In this section, I introduce the literacy practices that the Korean American students engaged in at the KLS. Considering the social context of the Korean heritage language school, the literacy domain at the school was where academic literacy took place for these students in the medium of Korean; English literacy, also was used widely available in their public schools and in the wider mainstream culture, at the KLS for various purposes. The embedded literacy practices that the teachers implemented for Korean academic literacy development were introduced previously in various excerpts. I divided literacy practices at the KLS into four different domains: the main language instruction using the textbook and/or other teacher-made materials, fine arts, music, and dance.

**Literacy Practices in Korean Language Lessons**

In the advanced and intermediate Korean lessons, the students participated in literacy practices in Korean and English. Some of the salient practices relevant to Korean language literacy are introduced as follows: Mandated textbook series, audio-visual resources, role-playing, English vocabulary as a supplementary aid device, practice for
syntactical knowledge, reading aloud, fill-in-the-blank and closed-answer questions, writing a poem, pencil drawing of World War II, and playing Korean card games.

*Mandated Textbook Series.* “Enopi Korea” was the main textbook series used for Korean language instruction at the KLS. Except for the young children’s class, the other three classes (beginner, intermediate, advanced) used the textbook series. Each textbook in the series had a sequence of lessons organized in units that progressed from a basic level to an advanced level; each class used a different textbook from the textbook series. It was mandatory for teachers to use their textbook each semester and follow each unit sequence. Therefore, it is important to review the components of the textbook series to examine the central literacy practices in which the focal students were expected to engage.

*Table 4.1. Standards of Enopi Korean*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Beginner (4A, 3A, 2A, A)</th>
<th>Intermediate (B, C, D)</th>
<th>Advanced (E, F, G)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• Learning basic consonants and vowels.</td>
<td>• Learning vocabulary and grammar and practicing reading and speaking skills using short stories of various themes.</td>
<td>• Improving all aspects of Korean by studying various expressions and conversations and practicing reading comprehension and writing.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Compound consonants and vowels.</td>
<td>• Developing listening and writing skills to prepare for SAT II Korean.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• The structure of Korean final consonants.</td>
<td>•</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Word exercises.</td>
<td>•</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Sentence structure and practice.</td>
<td>•</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Speaking Korean.</td>
<td>•</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Enopi is a supplementary educational program from the educational company Daekyo, established in 1976 in South Korea. The program consists of Enopi math, Enopi English, and Enopi Korean for kindergarten to 12th grade. The program claims that it is
“based on an educational principle where students learn at their own pace. When a teacher understands the learning needs of a student, the teachings are most effective.”

The authors believe mastery of basic foundational skills in the language is necessary before a student can advance to more complex skills. Among the three different Enopi subject programs, the KLS adopted the Enopi Korean program. The Korean language-learning program is designed not only for second-generation Koreans living overseas, but also for anyone who desires to learn Korean as a foreign language. Figure 4.1 shows the different textbooks of the series: 4A through A for beginner, B through D for intermediate, and E through G for advanced. At the intermediate level, students are prepared for Scholastic Aptitude Test II Korean, which is the Korean with Listening Subject Test as one of the scholastic attitude subject tests. The teachers did not ignore mastering language skills and target lessons in the textbook series. Reading and writing were always implemented as the basic literacy skills in the classes.
Audio-Visual Resources. Even though they were required to use the mandated textbook series, the intermediate and the advanced teachers created their own supplemental lesson materials. Instead of spending entire class sessions covering their designated textbook series, both teachers taught other content, using their own lesson plans. The advanced teacher implemented various teaching methods in her class. She utilized audio-visual resources in English so that her students could gain prior knowledge before she introduced the target expressions or contents in Korean. For example, one day the class watched a video about cougars from natgeotv.com on the Internet. The video was in English and was available as an audio-visual resource so that the students could have the necessary background information about the topic. The students fully focused on watching the video without distractions. After watching the video, the students returned
to their classroom. The teacher reviewed on video some characteristics of cougars and directed the class to read aloud in Korean a handout that she had created that was appropriate to their reading comprehension levels. After reading each passage, the teacher asked the students to answer questions verbally in Korean and write their answers on their handouts. While the students took turns reading aloud, the teacher reminded the class of the video the students had watched to better grasp the lessons. The teacher used Korean most of the time during the discussion of the video.

**Role-Playing.** The advanced teacher also implemented a conversational approach to encourage the students to practice their Korean oral fluency. Many times, the students role-played, pretending to be the characters in their textbook series. One story was about purchasing meat in a market in Korea. James played a customer in the story, engaging energetically in this activity and exaggerating the role, sometimes ad-libbing. He was a good actor, sometimes sparking laughter from his classmates and his teacher.

When the teacher announced that the class would do a role-play exercise using the conversation in their textbook, James volunteered to play the main character, Judy. Judy’s friend, Youngmi, was played by Grace. Kevin picked the last role, that of a supermarket assistant, who was nameless. When the teacher requested that James start his role, James said,

*Sillyeyhapnita. yuksilun eti (laughs) ccokey isssupnita, kka?*
(Excuse me, where is the meat section?)

Because Kevin did not reply to James’s question, the teacher prompted Kevin and then Kevin said,

*Sam pen tonglo kku, kkutey isssupnita.*
(That’s at the end of the third isle.)

Right away, James followed Kevin with his part,

*Youngmiya, etten kokilul cohahani?*
(Youngmi, what kinds of meat do you like?)

Grace followed her role,

\textit{Nanun toayci kokilul cohahay.}  
(I like pork meat)

James ad-libbed,

\textit{Kulehkwuna.}  
(I see.)

The teacher complimented his ad-libbing, saying that Judy must be a kind friend. Later in the conversation at Kevin’s turn, Kevin said,

\textit{Yeltases dalla.}  
($15$)

This is a term used for counting objects not money; instead he should have read \textit{Sipo dalla} ($15$) because in the Korean numeral system, nominal numbers are used for money.

Right after the teacher intervened to correct Kevin’s use of ordinal numbers for the sum of money, James teased Kevin,

\textit{Sip dalla canka, casika.}  
(It is $15$, you bastard.)

Upon his use of Korean slang word \textit{casik} (bastard), everyone in the class laughed hard.

\textit{English Vocabulary as a Supplementary Aid Device.} Both teachers sometimes spoke English to make it easier for the students to understand the lessons. For example, the advanced class teacher typed a handout about the food chain in English, which helped the students learn the subject content. The intermediate class teacher wrote some words in English on the white board, giving translations for the target Korean expressions. For example, she wrote the English words “uncomfortable,” “sun down/get dark,” “spread/echo,” “quiet,” “take off,” and “unavailable,” before she introduced the Korean
translations (field notes on March 10, 2012). Then, she asked the students to say the English words that corresponded to the Korean words that she spoke aloud.

*Practice for Grammatical Knowledge.* The intermediate class teacher asked her class to read questions in the textbook in Korean and to answer them aloud by taking turns. Some questions tested students’ object and verb agreement knowledge (Korean syntax is typically subject-object-verb) and others tested their knowledge of prepositions and the correct use of objective markers. The students looked for the appropriate verbs for corresponding nouns. They also practiced verb conjugation after previewing the sentences through the dictation test. Next, they practiced connecting the names of objects or places with appropriate prepositions and objective markers.

*Reading Aloud.* The advanced class teacher asked her students to take turns reading aloud a Korean sentence in the text. In this way, the students became familiar with phonological awareness and orthographic knowledge. The Korean language has an alphasyllabary writing system that simultaneously represents sound at the level of the syllable as well as the phoneme, so orthography and phonology correspond with high transparency, unlike English. However, the students struggled reading their Korean texts.

*Writing Animal Names in Korean.* The teacher in the advanced class created reading comprehension questions following each Korean reading passage she constructed, and asked her students to write their answers in Korean. The excerpt is an example from Kevin’s work on his handout. He wrote the names of predators that are similar to cougars to answer the fourth question; the Korean words were lions, tigers, cheetahs, panthers, and jaguars. AT also asked the students to name the Korean
synonyms for the English word “cougar.” The students came up with mountain lion, panther, puma, and jaguar in Korean.

Fill-in-the-Blank and Closed-Answer Questions. The teacher in the advanced class handed out a passage in Korean about cougars that included Korean fill-in-the-blank and closed-answer questions that were to be answered in Korean. Examples: “Cougars are ________ hunters. What animals do cougars usually hunt? Look for cougars’ other names. What are the secretive habits of cougars?” Reading comprehension in Korean was necessary.

Figure 4.2. Kevin’s Work on Handout (Excerpt 4.1.6)

Writing Poems. Writing a poem was one of the assignments in the advanced class. The teacher in the advanced class gave her students the option to write in English, which would be easier, and most did. James wrote his poem in English first and then translated
it into Korean with his teacher’s assistance, whereas Kevin wrote his poem in Korean first. His English version is a translation from his poem in Korean. As a meat lover, James chose *samgyupsal* (grilled pork belly) as his topic. His enthusiasm for Korean foods and flavors was obvious enough to reveal a genuine Koreanness. Kevin, interested in international affairs, wrote a poem about World War II.

*Table 4.2. James’s Poem Samgyupsal*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Korean Version</th>
<th>English Version</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>삼겹살</td>
<td>Samgyupsal</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>고기 먹을 때가 제일 행복한 나.</td>
<td>I’m happiest when I eat samgyupsal.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>삼겹살은 내가 제일 좋아하는 고기.</td>
<td>My favorite kind of meat is samgyupsal.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>고기가 지글지글</td>
<td>The meat sizzling</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>냄새가 고소</td>
<td>The delicious smell</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>기름이 팍팍</td>
<td>The oil jumping</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>고기가 익으면서</td>
<td>The meat getting ready</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>줄이 즐즐</td>
<td>The juice leaking out</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>흰색, 회색, 갈색의 조화.</td>
<td>White, gray, brown.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Figure 4.3. James’s Poem Samgyupsal

Table 4.3. Kevin’s Poem World War II

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Korean</th>
<th>English (Translated by Researcher)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>세계 전쟁이 태평양에서 있었어요 태평양에 저일본과 미국</td>
<td>World War II broke out in Pacific Ocean</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>태평양에 저일본과 미국</td>
<td>In the Pacific Ocean, Japan and the United States</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>인구에서도 독일, 영국, 프랑스, 소련이 한국에서 일본이 식민지배</td>
<td>In Europe, Germany, English, France, Russia</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>인구에서도 독일, 영국, 프랑스, 소련이 한국에서 일본이 식민지배</td>
<td>In Korea, Japan colonization</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>전쟁에서 죽은 유대인들과 한국인들 불쌍해요</td>
<td>Jews and Koreans who died in war</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>전쟁에서 죽은 유대인들과 한국인들 불쌍해요</td>
<td>I have pity on them</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>전쟁으로 공산주의가 퍼졌어요</td>
<td>Through wars, communism got spread</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>전쟁으로 공산주의가 퍼졌어요</td>
<td>Through the influence from China and Russia</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>전쟁으로 공산주의가 퍼졌어요</td>
<td>Other nations in the world through the influence from China and Russia</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>전쟁으로 공산주의가 퍼졌어요</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Pencil Drawing of World War II. In addition to writing a poem about World War II, Kevin used a pencil to draw war images on a blank piece of white paper. He sketched airplanes, parachutes emblazoned with the letters “USA,” missiles, battle ships, bullets, and cannons. Kevin’s World War II knowledge was impressive; there was no lesson on WWII at the KLS during my observations. In an upper corner of the paper, Kevin wrote in English, “P-51 (American), A6M-Zero (Japanese), 42-M (Britain), ‘Kate’ Bomber (Japanese), Yak 41 (Russian), B-17 stratofortress (American), B-29 a moveablefortress (American), B-26 superfortress (American), B-52 ultrafortress (American), Messerchismitz (German), and Gaunte Dolfe (German)”—all of which were fearsome fighting machines. Kevin’s drawings showed that his volunteer literacy activity was related to his personal interests and was in English.

Playing Korean Card Games. Another literacy activity the advanced students engaged in was playing with picture cards made in Korea. While the students were waiting for a transition to a music class, Kevin and James played a card game. Kevin,
showing his cards to me, saying, “It’s educational. We need to read Korean.” Instructions for how to play the game were written in Korean on the back of the card package. They said, “There are four different ways to play the cards.” For example, one way is “to flip your partner’s card by hitting it and when it flips you get the card.” When I asked Kevin the rules of the game, he told me in Korean. Even though this game activity did not occur during Korean language lesson sessions, it is important to include it as part of literacy practices of the Korean language lessons because this activity occurred at the KLS as Kevin’s voluntary activity that he brought from home and played with his Korean peer, James, who knows Korean. Definitely, there is a reading practice embedded in this card game.

*Figure 4.6. Korean Card Game*
Literacy Practices in Art

The principal and art teacher prepared art lessons as part of the year-end performance so that students at the KLS could learn about not only traditional Korean paintings but also ten symbols of longevity in Korean. All classes spent one session drawing the traditional Korean paintings sip-jang-sayng (ten-longevity-creature) and these drawings were displayed at the year-end performance. The art teacher, the principal, and other teachers collaborated to help all students draw their own sipjangsayng drawings. Korean literacy lessons as part of the art activity were provided at each classroom level.

Ten Symbols of Longevity. After the art teacher distributed all necessary painting tools, the intermediate teacher wrote ten Korean words on the white board. They were the ten symbols of longevity. She also showed a model painting of the ten symbols: the sun, mountains, water, clouds, rocks/stone, pine trees, mushroom-of-immortality, turtles, white cranes, and deer. The symbols represent Korea’s indigenous spirit-immortal ideology that permeates in Buddhism, Shamanism, Confucianism, folk culture, and other traditions. In Korean culture, people believed a key ideal is to enjoy a healthy life in harmony with nature for as long as possible, in order to attain the highest forms of enlightenment.
Figure 4.7. Dana’s Drawing of Sipjiangsayng
Unfortunately, the teacher did not elaborate for the students on the ten symbols of longevity. She mentioned only briefly in Korean that in the old days in Korea, people believed they would have a long life if they surrounded themselves with those symbols. Even though the teacher did not offer detailed explanations of the traditional paintings, the students at least were exposed to the traditional Korean painting and learned ten Korean words for the symbols of longevity.

**Literacy Practices in Music**

The music teacher and the principal gathered all the KLS students in the lounge. Other teachers handed out music sheets to the students. The students practiced two songs for the year-end performance. While the teacher and the principal directed the students, they spoke mostly Korean and sporadic English. The music teacher explained that the students must pay attention to the music sheets so they would know when to start singing. The
principal encouraged the students in Korean to participate in singing the Korean songs, “You are singers. Have you seen ‘Talent Show’? It’s a kind of ‘Talent Show’.” One of the songs was sung with choreography, so the principal, a professional choreographer, demonstrated each dance movement. The principal explained in Korean what each movement meant, corresponding to the lyrics of the song.

*Reading Lyrics of the Songs.* The students had to master reading the lyrics of the songs in Korean as shown in Table 4.5; become familiar with music notes on the music sheets; practice singing along with music from the Internet; and without music sheets sing two songs in front of guests. *Number Song* was a popular Korean song sung by a Korean actress and young children singers. Even though the lyrics were about love between a man and a woman, the song is popular among young children because the beat is lively and cheerful and its accompanying dance is cute. The second song, *Dream of a Goose*, is popular among all ages in Korea because of its encouraging lyrics for people to do their best to achieve their dreams and overcome hardships. However, it is not clear whether all of the students at the KLS comprehended the meanings of the Korean lyrics of the songs because no one introduced the English translation to the students. The students could have benefitted from having extra sessions to teach the Korean expressions and words in the lyrics, especially for students in the advanced class. Learning the song “Dream of a Goose” with a full understanding of the message could be educational for overcoming students’ obstacles.
Table 4.4. Lyrics of Number Song

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Korean</th>
<th>English Translation (Not given to students)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1 and 2 and 3 and 4 and</td>
<td>1 and 2 and 3 and 4 and</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>일! 초라도 안 보이면.</td>
<td>1! Without seeing you for a second.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>이! 이렇게 초초한데.</td>
<td>2! Restless like this.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>삼! 삼초는 어떻게 기다려.</td>
<td>3! How can I wait for three seconds?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>이야 이아 이아 이아</td>
<td>Ye yah ye yah ye yah</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1 and 2 and 3 and 4 and</td>
<td>4! Love you. I love you.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1 and 2 and 3 and 4 and</td>
<td>5! I will confess my love today.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1! Without seeing you for a second.</td>
<td>6! Meeting you among 60 millions on earth.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2! Restless like this.</td>
<td>7! Is lucky.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3! How can I wait for three seconds?</td>
<td>I love you.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4! Love you. I love you.</td>
<td>Look at me without your eyes off from me.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5! I will confess my love today.</td>
<td>I like you.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6! Meeting you among 60 millions on earth.</td>
<td>Show me your smile every day.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7! Is lucky.</td>
<td>8! Throbbing heart</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8! Throbbing heart</td>
<td>9! Save my heart</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9! Save my heart</td>
<td>10! I will love you even after ten years.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10! I will love you even after ten years.</td>
<td>This heart won’t change forever.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 4.5. Lyrics of Dream of a Goose

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Korean</th>
<th>English Translation (Not given to students)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>난, 난 꿈이 있었죠.</td>
<td>I, I had a dream.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>버려지고 찢겨 남부하여도.</td>
<td>When I was stained, torn apart and left alone.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>내 가슴 깊숙히 보물과 같이 갤적이었던 꿈.</td>
<td>Like a treasure, I kept my dream deep inside of me.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>혹 때론 누군가가 뭐 모를 비웃음 내 뒤에서 흘릴 때도.</td>
<td>Jeers and sneers sometimes I did receive them all behind my back.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>난 참아야 했죠.</td>
<td>But I had to endure.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>참을 수 있었죠.</td>
<td>Yes, I could endure.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>그 날을 위해.</td>
<td>All for that day.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>늘 걱정하듯 말하시죠.</td>
<td>People tell me as if they care.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>“헛된 꿈은 독이라고.</td>
<td>“Dreams are nothing but poison.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>세상은 끝이 정해진 책처럼</td>
<td>Life is like a book with a known ending.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>이미 들이킬 수 없는 현실이라고.”</td>
<td>It’s a reality that can’t be undone.”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>그래요, 난, 난 꿈이 있어요.</td>
<td>Yes, I, I have a dream.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>그 꿈을 믿어요.</td>
<td>I believe in my dream.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>나를 지켜봐요.</td>
<td>Oh, yes, you can watch me.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1, I had a dream.</td>
<td>Like a cold, cold wall, my destiny stands</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
The children’s songs were not popular Korean pop songs. Elise and Dana did not like singing the songs because they considered the songs childish and outdated. The conflict seemed to come from different preferences in song choice. The music teacher and the principal preselected a couple of songs for the students. The students agreed to sing two songs, even though they did not like them, which might be one of the main reasons that the students did not fully participate in their music literacy practices. The music literacy activities also conveyed the teachers’ assessment of the popularity of some Korean songs, without considering students’ opinions and preferences.

**Literacy Practices in Dance**

The KLS students performed the Korean traditional mask dance at the year-end performance. It has a long tradition of use in a variety of contexts: masks were used especially in war, on both soldiers and their horses; ceremonially, for burial rites in jade and bronze and for shamanistic ceremonies to drive away evil spirits; to remember the faces of great historical figures in death masks; and in the arts, particularly in ritual dances, courtly dances, and theatrical plays. The contemporary uses of Korean masks are as miniatures for tourist souvenirs or on cell phone decorations where they hang as good-luck talismans.

*Reading Aloud a Verse for Dancing.* In the beginning of the mask dance, the dance teacher wrote a Korean phrase on the white board. All students standing before the
white board were asked to say the phrase aloud as if they were shouting the phrase out. The phrase was *nak-yang-dong-chen-i-hwa-ceng* (Luoyang east sky pear blossom). Each Korean letter was taken from Chinese letters, 洛陽洞天梨花亭. The phrase was a verse from classic Chinese poetry, verbalized aloud in Korean. Its literal meaning is a gazebo, full of pear flower blossoms, in which Taoist hermits strolled around Luoyang, an ancient sacred area in China. In the traditional Korean dance, the seven-letter verse was recited as a signal of the beginning of the play. However, none of the teachers introduced this cultural background knowledge to the students.

*Memorizing the Verse of the Poem.* In dance literacy, the KLS students were asked to memorize the seven-letter phrase and recite it at the right moment while dancing. Most directions from the dance teacher were in Korean with some English mixed in. The students had to follow the teacher, who was demonstrating the mask dance, and synchronize their dance steps with a group of other students who joined them from the opposite direction.

Dancing was the most challenging activity among the extracurricular activities. The dance teacher and the students had a hard time completing all the moves of the dance. The dancing moves were not complicated, but it was a group dance in which cooperation was crucial for success. Similar to singing, some of the girls did not fully engage in the Mask Dance. The dance required the student dancers to don Korean masks and long dresses.

Without an explanation of the historical and cultural aspects of the dance activity, the teachers did not provide the students with a connection to the values of Korean tradition. Therefore, the students did not have a chance to learn how much China
influenced the traditional Korean mask dance. Rather, they learned the basic elements of costumes: wearing a mask and robes with long sleeves. Even though it was a small part of only a superficial aspect of Korean culture, some parents expressed their satisfaction with the year-end event for their Korea American children.

In sum, the literacy practices the KLS students were engaged in not only focused on reading and writing in the traditional way of learning Korean literacy, mainly emphasizing how to read the written text passively and produce their own written materials actively, but also enabled the students to be part of the KLS community through traditional arts, dancing, and singing. The KLS teachers and the principal as experts of the Korean language and culture made an active effort to socialize the students into the Korean culture. As Gee (2000) stated, literacy was not a singular mode of practices; rather, there were multi-literacies. The students’ individual attitudes toward the literacy activities ranged from enjoying to hating, depending on how they perceived those activities.

**Language Practices**

According to Gumperz (1982), one who employs CS has two different language systems or subsystems. According to this view, Korean American bilingual teachers and students at the KLS had both Korean and English language systems, though in each case it appeared that one language system dominated the other. The KLS teachers, who were born and raised in Korea, tended to use Korean as their main language system while inserting English words. In contrast, the students, born and raised in the United States, depended on the English grammatical system while inserting Korean words, or they alternated between their language systems. CS appeared as the predominant language
practice between/among the teachers and students at the KLS. It played a crucial role for both the teachers and the students, not only for instructional purposes, but also for interpersonal communication purposes as an additional resource to achieve particular interpersonal goals between the interlocutors.

CS can occur either at the intrasentential level—inserting words in a sentence, or the intersentential level—changing languages from one sentence to another (Ariffin & Husin, 2011). In this study, most of the teachers’ CS was intrasentential. For example, the advanced class teacher said,

*Kuntep iken academic-han dane-ka ani-yey-yo.*
(But this is not an academic word.)

However, several occasions of intersentential CS appeared among the students. For example, Kevin said,

*There were three Japanese shooters and um, they shot it down.* Sensayngnim *kulen-ke katha-yo.* (Teachers talk like that.)

**Advanced Class: James, Kevin, and Teacher**

There were a total of three students in the advanced class: James, Kevin, and Grace. Grace was a third grade girl whose Korean proficiency was good enough to be in the advanced class despite her age. Six vignettes and six excerpts are introduced as segments of classroom talk, consisting of discourse turns and CS by the interlocutors in the classroom. Some excerpts are sequential because they were documented during the same class period. Gee (2000) asserted that there is no meaning in language and social practices without context. Therefore, each vignette introduces brief background information about what the class was doing and any necessary and relevant information important for contextualization, as well as when and from which class period each
Vignette 1: Cougars Hiding their Feces

*Prior Context:* James was sullen at the beginning of the class, distracted and disengaged, as usual. He kept texting or playing a game on his cell phone, ignoring his teacher’s request that he stop his disengaged activities. There was tension between the advanced class teacher and James that had started the previous week, after James yelled at the teacher who had asked James to participate in the class. In frustration, he had punched a white board on the wall in his classroom so hard that it broke. It was hard to find any sign of regret from James about his violent behavior of the previous week. In this lesson, the teacher was talking about some characteristics of cougars after the class watched a video in English: cougars hide their prey and feces underground, they are very cautious, and they tend to hide from other animals as solitary predators. When the teacher asked James whether he could find the part of his text (a supplementary material made by the teacher) that he highlighted last week, he answered in English, “What?” The teacher patiently encouraged James to participate in the lesson. Excerpt 4.1.1 occurred after James read the text passage in Korean.
Excerpt 4.1.1 Advanced Class Teacher (AT) and James (March 31, 2012)

1 AT: 

\[
\text{payselmwul-un wuli-ka swipkey yaykiha-myen cepen-ey excrement-TOP we-NOM casually say-if last-time}
\]

\[
yaykihay-ssten ke/
\]

say-PAST thing

(If we said “excrement” casually last time,)

2

\[
wuli maynnal maynnal hwacangsil ka-se hanun ke mwe-ya?/ we everyday everyday bathroom go-after do thing what-COP
\]

(what is the thing we do in the bathroom every day?)

3 James: 

\[
ttong/ (Poop)
\]

4 AT: 

\[
ttong maca/
\]

poop right

(Poop is right.)

5 

\[
swiwun mal-lonun ttong-iya/
\]

easy word-in poop-COP

(The simple word is “poop.”)

6 

\[
kundey ttong-i shit -i-lakoto ha-ko weewee ilen mal-do
\]

but poop-TOP -COP-also do-and like word-also

\[
ssu-cyo?/
\]

use-HON

(But “poop” is also said “shit,” and like the word “weewee,” right?)

7 

\[
kuntep iken academic-han dane-ka ani-yey-yo/
\]

but this -AM word-TOP no-COP-HON

(But this is not an academic word.)

8 

\[
yenge-lo-to wuli academic-han poop daysiney ssunun mal
\]

English-in-also we -AM instead use word

\[
isscanha/
\]

COP

(Also in English, we use the academic word for “poop.”)

CS to Korean for entertainment. James’s utterance in Korean ttong (poop) in line 3 was unusual because he spoke English predominately in the classroom. As a playful
boy, James liked to draw attention to himself whenever possible. His prompt response with the Korean word *ttong* to his teacher’s question drew attention from everyone and entertained the whole class. James might have wanted to entertain the class by answering *ttong* (poop), a word that is not usually used outside of the home. It seems that he made a rational-choice CS, based on the fact that “what ultimately sets linguistic choices in motion is speaker intentions and calculations to optimize rewards [outcomes]” (Myers-Scotton & Bolonyai, 2001, p. 2). When he used an intimate family term in the KLS context, the non-academic word penetrated the realm of the academic class. It could be from the notion of “we-code” (Gumperz, 1982) for in-group activities, allowing increasing intimacy among members of the group to be developed. According to Li (1995), this CS functions to permit group members to say things acceptable only if said by in-group members (Shin, 2010).

*Translation Sensitive CS.* The teacher intended to emphasize that the Korean word *payselmwul* (excrement) in line 1 was the target academic word, even though James’s answer, *ttong* (poop), was correct. In correcting James, the teacher used the English word “academic” (line 7). If the teacher had used the Korean word for “academic,” it would have sounded awkward because it is rarely used in this context. The Korean word for “academic” is used to describe people who are highly educated, rather than to describe vocabulary. Therefore, the teacher’s use of the word “academic” in English seems to be a rational-choice CS that tells about human choices of actions or language choices: People usually do what they believe is likely to have the best overall outcome (Elster, 1989, p. 22, cited in Myers-Scotton & Bolonyai, 2001).
Domain Sensitive CS. The teacher’s English words “shit,” “weewee,” and “poop” (lines 6 and 8) were used to explain and elaborate the Korean target word payselmwul (excrement) by translating the Korean word ttong into English synonyms to compare and contrast academic and nonacademic lexicon. Her translation serves to provide “explanation” through scaffolding, which is one of the characteristics of CS used for content transmission in ESL classrooms.

Vignette 2: Cougars’ Wariness

Prior context: The advanced class teacher asked her students whether they knew another Korean word for “cougar,” and Kevin answered sansaja (mountain lion), while James was playing with his cell phone. To get James’s attention and involve him in the writing activity, the teacher told him to write synonyms for “cougar” in Korean. To that, James said, “What were we at?” The teacher told James to read the next question on the handout, written in Korean. He did so, without difficulty. She waited for the class to answer the questions, and she explained some of the cougars’ characteristics. They include being wary, being stealthy, and burying their excrement and prey. In the following segment, she probes the students’ understanding of the word kyengkeyesim (wariness).

Excerpt 4.1.2. Advanced Class Teacher (AT), James, Kevin (March 13, 2012)

1 AT: mak cautious-ha-ko nam cal trust an ha-ko/ overly -being-and others easily not do-and (Being overly cautious and not trusting others easily and)

   caki wupyen-ey al-ko issnun salam cwung-ey yourself around-LOC know-and COP person middle-LOC (among people [that you] know around you,)

2 kyengkeyesim-i kanghan salam isse-yo?/ wariness-TOP strong person COP-HON
(is there anyone who is very wary?)

3 James: Yes/

4 AT:  etten salam-intey?/
      which person-COP
      (What kind of person is [that]?)

5 James: chinkwu epse/
      friend no
      ([He has] no friends.)

6 AT:  chinkwu eps-nun salam kyengkyeysim-i cum kanghan salam-iya?/
      friend not person wariness-NOM little strong person-COP
      (Is a person who doesn’t have a friend very wary?)

7 James: There is one guy who smells like crap/

8 AT:  ttong naymsayna?/
      poop smell
      (Does he smell like poop?)

9 James: He is tall and brown and uh in another day, we throw an eraser/

10 AT:  Threw mwe hay-ss-tako?/
         what do-PAST-and
         (Threw what?)

11 Kevin: ciwukay-yo/
      eraser-HON
      (An eraser.)

12 James: He didn’t talk/

13 He is too lonely/

14 AT:  Lonely-han ke-lang kyengkyeysim-i kanghan ke-lang talul
         -being thing wariness-NOM strong thing different

         swu iss-eyo/
         can COP-HON
         (Being lonely and being very wary can be different.)

15 Hide-ha-ko caki an-ey issnun yayki-do cal an hay/
      -do-and oneself inside-LOC COP story-too well not do
      ([The wary person] hides and doesn’t share what is inside of him.)
*CS for Occasional English Words to Aid Students’ Comprehension.* The teacher employed the English words “cautious” and “trust” (line 1) to provide the relevant background information about *kyengkyeysim* (wariness) to her students, who may have had a hard time associating the word with wild animals. The teacher seemed to be aware that her students’ Korean proficiency was more communicative and more naturally developed at home, rather than reflecting word usage in academic environments.

*CS for Correction of Students’ Incorrect English.* In line 10, the teacher asked James what was thrown, using the English word “threw” instead of James’ use of the present tense “throw” in English (line 9). She corrected the verb tense in English, from “throw” to “threw.” It appears that the teacher intentionally used the English word to model the right usage of the English past tense because James’s phrase “in another day” indicated the time he wanted to express was the past (line 9).

*Echo CS.* The teacher used the English words “threw” (line 10) and “lonely” (line 14), uttered previously by James (line 9). I term this *echo CS,* which indicates that an interlocutor repeats what a previous interlocutor uttered in the same language it was first uttered, which is associated with participant-related CS: interlocutors are motivated by the language preferences or by the competence of participants (Auer, 1995). Despite the teacher’s conscious efforts to speak Korean as much as possible, she seemed to use these English words that were previously uttered by her students, perhaps fearing her students might not understand her, or to reinforce their efforts to communicate meaningfully in any language, even if it was not Korean.

*CS to Korean without Honorifics.* James code-switched from English to Korean (line 5) but he did not use the honorifics, resulting in a Korean utterance that was brief
and terse. It would seem that the two-word phrase with the object “friend” and the negation “no” would be easy for James to render with his advanced Korean oral proficiency. Young Korean children in Korea do not learn honorifics at an early age; rather, they learn them as they are exposed gradually to the use of honorifics outside of their home, unless parents intentionally teach these to their children at home. For Korean American children, social exposure to honorifics is limited in the host society. Despite the fact that James showed his use of honorifics in interviews with the researcher outside of his class, there was no single classroom observation made of his use of honorifics with his teacher, which suggests his intentional choice of not using honorifics in the classroom context.

_Honorifics Used by the Teacher._ The teacher did use honorific forms occasionally (lines 2 and 14). The use of honorifics by Korean adults to Korean children reinforces their Korean identity, reminding them how to be a member of a community (Han, 2004; Ju, 1998; Shin, 2010). Despite the teacher’s modeling of the use of honorifics, James did not use them while other students complied with these cultural practices. In Song’s (2009) study, her young Korean American child participants avoided their parents’ modeling of Korean kinship terms, revealing the children’s agency as they negotiated conflicting beliefs and cultural ideologies. James may have deliberately not used the honorific _yo_ as a symbol of resistance to his teacher’s authority, or as an indication of his rejection of Korean identity (Gee, 2003). That perhaps indicated James’s decision not to become a member of the Korean community.
Vignette 3: Cougars as Excellent Hunters

Prior Context: After the class watched a video in English about cougars at the computer in the office area, the students returned to the classroom, and immediately James started playing a game on his cell phone. When the teacher noticed this, she tried to persuade James to wait until the break to play his games. It was a tug of war: teacher vs. student. Finally, she reminded him of his promise from a week ago that he would make a greater effort in class. James replied, “Yeah, I am nolyek (effort) very well.” After another vocal tug of war, James almost exploded in frustration. The teacher tried to calm him down, and then she turned her attention to the class and directed the students to the reading passage in Korean she had prepared for them.

The teacher continued to discuss cougars’ physical and habitual characteristics, as well as their unique hunting skills. The class took turns reading aloud a Korean passage on the handout. When it was James’ turn to read his passage, he made an excuse that he could not read because he did not feel well. The teacher allowed James to not participate in the reading activity. He skipped his turn, and instead continued playing a game on his cell phone.

In the following excerpt 4.1.3, impatient for the break, James intervened in the teacher’s instruction. The teacher asked James whether he wanted the class to sing a birthday song since it was his birthday. James rejected his teacher’s offer and the teacher silenced James by admonishing him.

Excerpt 4.1.3. Advanced Class Teacher (AT) and James (March 31, 2012)

1 AT: Deer sanyanghal ttay ettegkey hay-ss-nunci kiekna?/
       hunting time how do-PAST-CV remember
(Do you remember how [the cougar] hunted the deer?)
Deer-ka yeki iss-ko khwuke-ka ceki melli tteleye isscanga/
-TOP here COP-and cougar-TOP there far distanced COP
(The deer is here and the cougar is over there, far away.)

kukentey kuke-lum caki-lum measure cal hay distance/
but that-ACC itself-ACC well do
(But [the cougar] measures the distance accurately.)

[AT reads the passage. Kevin and another student are engaged in the lesson, listening to AT. James plays a game on his cell phone and suddenly says, “Time to rest” in English. The teacher responds to him that it is her job to let him know when to take a break. There are still ten minutes left until the break.]

James: Give us ten minutes rest because we are special/

AT: wuli-nun special-ha-ci/
we-NOM -be-right
(We are special, right?)

James: No! I don’t need that crap/

AT: kulem sensayng-nim-i yayka-nun ke respect-hay-cwe-yaji
then teacher-HON-NOM talk-PRO thing -do-give-IMP
sensayng-nim-do James respect-hay-cuci/
teacher-HON-also -do-give
(Then, you should respect what I’m saying, so I can respect you, James.)

James: Let’s do ten more minutes. [James] turn off [your phone].

CS to English for More Familiar Terms. The teacher used the English word “deer” in Korean syntax (lines 1 and 2), even though there is a Korean word sasum (deer). During the lesson, she used the English word “deer” 10 times in all, without being aware that she was using it (interview on May 25, 2012). It is not clear why the teacher consistently uttered “deer” in English instead of sasum, the Korean equivalent word. I
call this a subconscious use of certain English words as favorite or more familiar words by interlocutors. They may not know why they often use certain code-switched words. It is more or less an automatic reflexive retrieval of a lexical item, which needs more thorough investigation in order to search for frequent vocabulary substitution patterns. Other CS researchers argue that CS can be triggered because of more familiar concepts or terms in another language (Chan, 2003), not necessarily because of lexical gap.

**CS for Content Words.** The teacher inserted the English words “measure” and “distance,” apparently so that her students would better understand the lesson about cougars’ hunting skills (line 3). The two English words were content specific academic words as well as quantitative, mathematical terms. The teacher told me that she did not know that she used those English words. She said,

I try to speak Korean most of the time, almost all the time. I use some English vocabulary for my students’ better understanding. I switch to English words consciously but sometimes I do it without my awareness, for example the English word like “measure,” . . . Personally I think that I need to speak only Korean as much as possible. But actually while teaching, maybe due to my lack of teaching experience, I find switching to English much easier and more effective than sticking to Korean (interview on May 25, 2012).

Therefore, it was not an intentional decision on her part, but apparently was done subconsciously. Why she displayed such a subconscious substitution of lexicon deserves further investigation.

**CS to English for Admonishment.** The teacher expressed her authority as a teacher when James requested a ten-minute break when there were still ten minutes left before the break. The teacher asked James whether he wanted the class to sing him a birthday song. Immediately James said in English (line 7), “No, I don’t need that crap.” The teacher replied in Korean (line 8), but inserting the English word “respect,” seeming to
want to quiet James down and to admonish him for his consistent interruptions in the class. She also used Korean directives (line 10). After the teacher’s firm admonition, James became quiet and returned to his phone to play games, mumbling in English unintelligibly. He did not follow the teacher’s instruction to turn off his phone.

In Shin’s (2010) study, Korean American Sunday school teachers code-switched from English to Korean, using directives to construct asymmetrical power relations (Goodwin, 1990, cited in Shin, 2010) between them and their Korean American students. The use of directives in the Korean language reveals social hierarchy grammatically and lexically. A Korean heritage language teacher referred to herself as sensayngnim (Song, 2009). In this study, the teacher socialized her students into the proper term of address by using the term sensayngnim (teacher) to refer to herself (line 8). The advanced class teacher positioned herself as a teacher at the KLS, using not only directives but also her status-reinforcing expression with nominal honorific suffix—nim. He (2003) states that many language socialization researchers, however, have pointed out that children or novices do not just follow imposed social and cultural norms or expectations as passive recipients of socialization. James ignored the asymmetrical linguistic and sociocultural markers provided by his teacher, which can be an indicator of his resistance to learning Korean or perhaps to attending KLS. The relationship of these behaviors to his ethnic identification will be discussed in Chapter 5.

**Vignette 4: Cougars’ Hunting Skills**

*Prior Context:* The lesson continued with the topic of cougars as skilled hunters that know how to move in the shadows, measuring the distance between themselves and their prey. James seemed to be tired and impatient with the lesson and started counting
minutes, looking at the time on his phone and waiting for the break. The teacher said if
the students didn’t finish the lesson, there would be no break. James said in English,
“You are crazy, aren’t you? Are you on cocaine?” The teacher responded to James in
Korean, “What on earth are you talking about?” James responded in English, “You are a
treacherous man, aren’t you?” The teacher simply ignored the comment. Later, James
began singing Jingle Bells.

Excerpt 4.1.4. Advanced Class Teacher (AT) and James (March 31, 2012)

1 AT:  
kihoy-nun wuli-ka sanyang-hal ttay ku sanyangkam meki
opportunity-NOM we-TOP hunting-do when that game prey

Deer-lum ttak capaya toynun ku swunkan-ul malhanun keya/
-ACC just catch should that moment-ACC talk thing
(The right moment means the opportunity to catch the deer when we are
hunting prey.)

2  
ku chance-lul malhanun ke-ya/
that -ACC talk thing-COP
(We are talking about the chance.)

[James sings as he counts the remaining class time and the teacher encourages James to
focus on the lesson.]

3 AT:  
kulayke lihoy-lul nohchici anh-ko sanyangkam-ulm
so opportunity-ACC miss not-and game-ACC

Right time-ey ttak macchwe-ce timing-e cal capnun ke/
-when rightly set-and -at well catch thing
(Catching prey at the right time without missing an opportunity.)

4  
ku-kel yaykiha-nun ke-yey-yo/
that-ACC talk-PRO thing-COP-HON
(We are talking about that.)

5 AT:  
kulayse yenge-lonun akka opportunity conqueror ileh-key
so English-in earlier this-like

yaykihay-sse-yo/
talk-PAST-HON
(So in English we said “opportunity conqueror” earlier.)
[James sings Jingle Bells.]

6 AT: James-ya kumanha-ca/stop-IMP
     (James, let’s stop it.)

7 James: OK, I will stop here/

8 You said kumanhay/stop
     (You said stop it.)

*English for Revealing Rebellion.* James became more impatient and his unbridled comments about his teacher became more insulting. His comments toward his teacher were unbelievable, not only because the KLS is a context where Confucian cultural influences could not be ignored by the teachers, but also because James did not keep the basic boundary of respect a student must have toward a teacher, regardless of culture. His rebellion was obvious; he was playing a power game. His negative attitudes toward learning Korean and the KLS will be examined in further detail in the following chapter.

*CS to Korean for Manipulation.* In line 8, James proclaimed that he would stop participating in the lesson because of his teacher’s request (in fact, the teacher meant that he should stop singing). He was using CS as a ploy to avoid taking part in the lesson. James manipulated the teacher’s suggestion so as to stop participating in the lesson. His contention was that as a student, he was supposed to obey his teacher’s command. James’s Korean imperative *hay* (do) was used differently from the teacher’s suggestive imperative *haja* (let’s do). Even though James knew what his teacher’s intention was, he appears to be playing a power game with his teacher by manipulating the Korean imperative.
Vignette 5: Cougars’ Prey

Prior context: As a continuation from Excerpt 4.1.4, the teacher continued her lesson on reading. Ignoring James’s contentious behavior, she asked her students to write the answers in Korean to the reading comprehension questions she read to them.

Excerpt 4.1.5. Advanced Class Teacher (AT), Kevin, Grace, and James (March 31, 2012)

1 AT:  

\[\text{i ben, khwuke-ka cwulo sanyang-hanun tongmwul-un akka uli two number cougar-NOM mainly hunt-doing animal-TOP early we} \]

\[\text{dwu kaci yaykhayssten ke kiekna-yo?/} \]

\[\text{two thing talked thing remember-HON} \]

(Number two, what are the animals that cougars mainly hunt, two things we talked about earlier, do you remember?)

2 Kevin: Squirrel/

3 AT:  

\[\text{hankwukmal-lonun mwela kelayssci? da-/} \]

Korean-in what-as say squ

(What is it in Korean? Da-)

4 Kevin: dalamcwi/  

(Squirrel)

5 AT:  

\[\text{kudaum-ey kasi ppyoccok ppyoccok naon ke mwe-la kelayssci?/} \]

next-at fur thorny quill having thing what-as said

(Next, what was the thing with quills?)

6 Kevin: Porcupine/

7 AT:  

\[\text{hankwukmal-lonun kiekna-yo syeppencay cwul ko-?/} \]

Korean-in remember-HON third line po-

(Do you remember in Korean, in the third line ko-?)

8 Grace: kosumtochi/  

(Porcupine.)

9 AT:  

\[\text{kosumtochi maca-yo/} \]

Porcupine right-HON

(Porcupine is right.)

10  

\[\text{han-pen ssepwa-yo/} \]

one-time write-HON
(Write [it] once.)

11 James-ya akka patio-eyse pwassten tongmwul-un ilum-i mweya?/
   VC earlier video-from saw animal-TOP name-NOM what
   (James, what is the name of the animal we saw from the video?)

12 deer naon-ke-canga kuchi?/
   come-thing-COP right
   (The one with deer. Right?)

13 James: You are killing me/

14 AT: kuke hankwukalm-lo mwela-kulay?/
   that Korean-in what-say
   (What is that in Korean?)

15 killing me-la kulay?/
   -as say
   (Is it called “killing me”?)

16 James: Yes, you are/

CS to English Due to Slow Retrieval of Target Words. Early in the class, the
teacher asked whether the students knew the names of specific animals, including one
with quills (lines 5-7), referring to a porcupine. Kevin answered her with the correct
answers in English (lines 2 and 6). When the teacher asked for the students to produce the
names of these animals in Korean, Kevin responded with one lexical item (line 4) and
Grace with the other (line 8). Therefore, it could be assumed that Kevin knew the Korean
word for his English response (line 2), but instead he chose to provide his response first
in English. Kevin was able to respond to the same question in Korean, which is an
important discourse evidence of his proficiency and preference in his two languages. In
this interaction, Kevin and Grace (U.S. born Korean American students) responded
reasonably to their teacher’s lesson interaction, but James’s response was entirely
aggressive and resistant.
CS to English for Breaking Asymmetrical Power Relations. In Excerpt 4.1.5, the power game between the teacher and James continued. The teacher tried to include James in the lesson (lines 11 and 12). She asked James to provide the name of an animal that cougars hunted. However, James responded to the teacher with annoyance, saying, “You are killing me.” James might have thought he won the power game after this angry utterance, because the teacher did not respond to him, and instead moved on to the next question. The teacher responded to him in lines 14 and 15, asking James how to say, “You are killing me” in Korean. She inserted the English expression “killing me,” uttered by James, to highlight James’s inappropriate response (line 15), as well as to assert her authority as teacher refusing to acknowledge James’s backtalk. The teacher’s use of the English word, “deer,” appeared again in line 12 (See more discussions in Excerpt 4.1.3.).

Vignette 6: Other Predators Similar to Cougars

Prior Context: After taking a break, students came back to the class. James did not stop playing a game on his cell phone or listening to music. The teacher admonished James several times to pay attention to the class. When she made sure everyone was ready to listen to her, she reviewed what she had talked about in the previous class. After reviewing some of the facts about cougars, she asked the class about other predators similar to cougars.

Excerpt 4.1.6. Advanced Class Teacher (AT), Kevin, and James (March 31, 2012)

1 AT: Grace-ka saja-lako kulay-sse-yo/-NOM lion-as say-PASS-HON (Grace said lion.)

2 Kevin: I said saja/ lion (I said lion.)
3 AT: twul-ta saja-lako kulay-sse?
two-both lion-as say-PAST
(Did two of you say lion?)

4 Kevin: She said holangi/
tiger
(She said tiger.)

5 I said saja/
lion
(I said lion.)

6 AT: alasse holangi/
see tiger
(Tiger, I see.)

7 James-do hana/
too one
(James said one too.)

8 James-nun akka black puma?/
-NOM earlier
(James said black puma earlier.)

9 James: No, I don’t want them/

10 AT: yey-ka mwe-ka isse?/
example-NOM what-TOP COP
(What are some examples?)

11 Grace: Cheetah/

12 James: Cheetah/

13 AT: chitha alasse chitha/
cheetah see cheetah
(Cheetah, I see cheetah.)

14 Kevin: Leopard/

15 AT: tto isse-yo?/
another COP-HON
(Is there another?)

16 Kevin: Leopard/
17 James:  *The leopard’s gone too, cheetah could beat you/*

18 Kevin:  *Leopard is stronger/*

19 James:  *We can totally outrun you/*

20 Kevin:  *Leopard is stronger/*

21 AT:  *swis! swis!/ (Sh! Sh!)*

22 James:  *Our attack can destroy you, because it’s a sneaky attack, yeah you will/*

23 Kevin:  *Cheetahs don’t have an attack/*

*CS for Acknowledgement from Teacher.* Kevin inserted Korean animal names in English sentences: *saja* (lion) in lines 2 and 5 and *holangi* (tiger) in line 4. This showed that Kevin’s CS was participant related or situational in that he used the Korean word *saja* (lion) from his teacher’s statement (line 1). Also, this could display rights and obligations (Myers-Scotton, 1988), as Kevin quickly reminded his teacher that it was not Grace but he who uttered *saja*, one of the expected Korean words the teacher used in lines 2, 4, and 5. The teacher gave Grace credit because she thought Grace uttered the Korean word *saja*. Without hesitation, Kevin pointed out in English that he had provided the Korean word *saja*, wanting acknowledgement from the teacher.

*CS to Korean as an Echo.* While Kevin’s CS (line 2) echoed his teacher’s use of a Korean word (line 1), the teacher inserted the English words “black puma” (line 8) in the Korean syntax, echoing James’s use of these English words in an earlier response, not in this interaction. Their uses of CS were different in grammatical structure as well as function; however, the English lexical items were the same. As Kevin used the Korean word *saja* (lion) from the teacher’s previous utterance, the teacher also used the English word “black puma” from James’s earlier utterance.
English for Imaginary Play. James and Kevin took the chance to play an imaginary play with personified animal names in English (lines 16 through 23). James acted as if he were a cheetah and Kevin a leopard in their imaginary play. They were animals chasing each other in an imagined wilderness. James employed combat words: “beat” (line 17), “outrun” (line 19), “attack” (line 22), “destroy” (line 22), and “sneaky attack” (line 22), whereas Kevin responded to James with factual information about the animals, avoiding emotional or personal connections to the game. Kevin, a model student, was only moderately engaged in the game, seemingly aware of the impingement on the boundaries between sanctioned classroom behavior and temporary playful behavior.

In summary, the advanced class teacher’s CS was mostly intrasentential since the context was the Korean language class. According to the interview with the teacher (May 25, 2012), she tried not to use English in her class. “I try to speak Korean most of the time, almost all the time,” she said. Her use was instructional in that most of her CS from Korean to English was intended for delivering lessons, such as content transmission with parallel translation, explanation, reviews, and evoking students’ responses. Her English use was for classroom management (admonishing her students), conversational (requesting missing information), and participant related (repeating what her students said in English in order to confirm their correct answers or to assist her students’ comprehension).

James’s CS from English to Korean was unusual or marked due to his infrequent use of Korean. It was mostly from rational choice CS, since it seems his CS came out of his intention and purpose to achieve his outcome. For example, James managed to reveal
his humor, to attract attention, and to negotiate with his teacher. It is noteworthy that James did not use Korean honorifics and manipulated his CS in order to resist his teacher, as discussed in Excerpt 4.1.4, otherwise he was persistent in speaking English, though his English displayed non-standard grammar. For example, in a class interaction not included here, he said, “We get gun shoot them, yes, they do.” He spoke English to challenge his teacher.

Kevin’s CS showed his advanced language proficiency in both Korean and English. His CS in the early observations was mostly discourse related: he provided answers to his teacher and sought verification from her that his answers were correct. It is necessary to point out that the classroom atmosphere in the earlier vignettes was intimidating and tense due to James’s violent resistance. That influenced the classroom atmosphere tremendously. Therefore, it was not abnormal for Kevin to be inactively laid back in the classroom discussions. As the semester progressed, James’s resistance became less violent, at least physically. In that less tensed atmosphere, Kevin became more relaxed, playful, and active in the classroom talk. As he participated more, he practiced more CS.

**Intermediate Class: Elise, Dana, and Teacher**

There were a total of five students in the intermediate class: Elise, Dana, Kathy, Young, and Jaewon. Elise, Dana, and Kathy were in fifth grade, Young in third, and Jaewon in sixth grade. All students were Korean except for Jaewon who was a white male student. Kathy and Elise were close friends, spending time together after the Korean Language School (KLS). Dana and Jaewon were good friends, texting messages to each other. Eight excerpts are introduced. Compared to the advanced class, students in the intermediate
class were engaged in other activities in addition to reading and writing. The intermediate class teacher devoted some time for origami, dictation quizzes, and painting. The atmosphere in the classroom was so relaxed that the students were chatting to each other during the lessons.

**Vignette 1: Reviewing Korean Target Words**

*Prior Context:* The students were back in the classroom after break. The students were talking and laughing, as usual. The teacher calmed the class down by reminding the students that they would make origami after reviewing some Korean target words. First, the teacher asked if the students knew the English word for the Korean word *kebwukhada* (uncomfortable). Without hesitation, Elise answered in English, “Turtle,” which is *kebwuk* in Korean. Because of the resemblance of the first two syllables of *kebwuk* and *kebwukhada*, it seems that Elise thought the teacher was referring to turtles. After introducing “uncomfortable” in English, the teacher announced to the class that from that moment, speaking English was prohibited. The teacher reviewed six Korean target words; she expected her students to provide the meaning of each given Korean word in English. The students answered whatever they thought was the correct meaning in English, and the teacher confirmed by providing each English translation orally. The teacher wrote the six English words (but not the Korean words) on the white board. Although the teacher asked the students to speak Korean only (line 1), she immediately asked them to provide English translations as an indication that they knew the meanings of Korean words.

*Excerpt 4.2.1. Intermediate Class Teacher (IT), Elise, and Students (March 10, 2012)*

1 IT:  

ca ca yenge ssu-myen macayaji/  
well well English use-if physical punishment
Well, well, if you speak English, you deserve a physical punishment.

ca kudaum twupencay cemwulessupnida hay-ka cemwulta/
well next second get-dark sun-NOM get-dark
(Well, next, the second one “to get dark,” “sun gets dark.”)

Elise: Setting?

IT: hay-ka cemwulta/
sun-NOM get-dark
(Sun gets dark.)

Students: Sun down.

IT: Uh, sun down (in an exaggerated American accent) sun down (in a Korean accent)

ilako ha-ko kulikwu get dark lako ssusey-yo/
as do-and and as write-HON
(Uh, “sun down,” let’s say “sun down” and write it as “get dark.”)

Students: Cannot do it/

IT: kunikka halsuepse kuntey cannot do it kunikka halsuepse/
so unavoidable yet so unavoidable

kuntey meaning-un com macnumdey cengmal exactly-nun
but -NOM little right really -in

unavoidable/
(So “unavoidable,” well, the meaning of “cannot do it” is right more or less but its exact meaning is “unavoidable.”)

CS with an Exaggerated American Accent. The teacher commented that she was not aware that she pronounced some English words with an exaggerated American accent. However, she said that if she did not speak English using an American accent, her students would not understand her. She said,
If I do not pronounce English words correctly, my students do not understand me. It is like native English speakers do not understand Koreans well when they speak English. My students started learning and speaking English at an early age in the United States, so if I stress an accent in the wrong syllable, they often do not understand me. They respond me like, “What?” “What?” “What did you say? (interview on June 1, 2012)

Her exaggerated American accent was pronounced subconsciously (in the interview, she said she did not know her English was exaggerated in American accent) as she tried to enunciate her English words for her students to understand her English. This was an interesting phenomenon that this Korean language teacher committed herself to render her English in a manner like how she thought a native English speaker would utter the word or phrase.

*Echo CS.* The teacher’s echo CS (lines 6 and 9) repeated her students’ English expressions. It was instructional to use their English utterances in order to relate the concepts expressed in English to the Korean target expressions. In line 10, she used the English words “meaning” and “exactly” intentionally to help her students better comprehend the slight difference in the meaning of the expressions “cannot do it” and “unavoidable.” In Excerpt 4.3.2, the teacher’s CS was mainly for content transmission.

*CS to English as Warnings.* Despite the teacher’s warning not to speak English, the students spoke English anyway. The teacher warned the class that if they spoke English, they would be physically punished (line 1). That warning is not acceptable in mainstream American schools since corporal punishment is not legally permitted. The teacher who was raised in Korea where corporal punishment is acceptable thought the warning would be effective, even though she did not intend to actually enact it (interview on June 1, 2012).
Vignette 2: Making Origami One

Prior Context: After the class went over the target expressions in the textbook, the teacher passed out paper for origami—the Japanese craft of folding paper to make models of animals, people, and objects. It was the second period of the class, so she seemed to allow her students to have some relaxation and fun by spending two thirds of the second class making origami. The students were busy cutting out the origami sheets along the dotted line of each animal figure on the sheet. They began discussing the text they found printed on their origami sheets.

Excerpt 4.2.2. Intermediate Class Teacher (IT), Dana, Elise, and Kathy (March 10, 2012)
1 Dana: Why does it have Chinese?
2 Elise: We cannot finish it today
3 IT: It is OK
4 We can finish it next time
5 Elise: ike da Japanese-yey-yo? this all -COP-HON (Is this all in Japanese?)
6 IT: ani-ya, ike yenge-ya/ no-COP this English-COP (No, this is English.)
7 Kathy: Teacher, what do we do?
8 Elise: I can’t do it
9 Dana: Just do it, stop complaining
10 Kathy: Wow! I want a turtle
11 Elise: kulayse ike da Japanese-yey-yo?/ so this all -COP-HON (So, is this all Japanese?)
12 IT: e ani iken yenge-ya
(Uh, no this is English.)

13 Elise:  _Ay/_

14 IT:  _yenge ani-ya?/_
   English no-HON
   (Isn’t it English?)

15  _iken iken yenge/_
   this this English
   (This, this is English.)

16 Kathy:  _What about mine?/_

17 IT:  _ike yenge/_
   this English
   (This is English.)

18 Dana:  _yay-nun-yo?/_
   this-NOM-HON
   (What about this?)

_CS as Participant Related._ Dana’s first English utterance was a self-interrogation (line 1), the second was an admonishment of her twin sister in English (line 9), and her last Korean utterance was a question for her teacher (line 18). Dana’s CS (line 18) was both participant related (Auer, 1995) and rights and obligations (Myers-Scotton, 1988) because she partially followed the classroom rule of “no English” that the teacher set. However, Dana spoke English to her sister even though the rule was still in effect. Considering that, Dana seemed to have more participant-related CS: English to English dominant speakers (her sister), and Korean to Korean dominant speakers (the teacher).

_CS to English for Interpersonal Relationships._ The teacher code-switched to English (lines 3 and 4), which violated her classroom rule to not speak English. Aside from that violation, it was a natural CS for the teacher, which occurred after Elise’s complaint (line 2). It was discourse related in that the teacher wanted to relate to Elise in
English, comforting and encouraging her because she was behind the other students in making origami. When Elise asked the teacher in Korean (lines 5 and 11), the teacher code-switched to Korean accordingly (lines 6 and 12).

**Vignette 3: Making Origami Two**

*Prior Context:* When the teacher showed her model origami to the class, the students hooted at it. Kathy said, “It looks like a hamster. That’s disgusting.” Upon the teacher’s response, “It is not disgusting,” the entire class started laughing. Her reply to Kathy was playful, indicating that she would allow the class to have this playful and funny moment. Elise exclaimed, “Disgusting!” which evoked another round of laughter. The teacher code-switched to Korean, telling the class that they could have a cute origami if they would not give up making their origami. She started making another origami and some students complained that it was hard to make origami.

*Excerpt 4.2.3. Intermediate Class Teacher (IT), Elise, Dana, and Kathy (March 10, 2012)*

1 IT: *sunsayngnim chelem cepese*/
   teacher like fold
   (Fold like me.)

2 Elise: *Look how much I need to cut/

3 Dana: *Look at mine/

4   *I wouldn’t go in there/

5 IT: *ca kwaynha chenchenhi hay/*
   well OK slowly do
   (Well, it’s OK to make this slowly.)

6 Elise: *sunsaynim na-man elyewe-yo/
   teacher I-only difficult-HON
   (Teacher, I am the only one having difficulty.)

7 Kathy: *You should pick something simple like me/

8 Dana *This is a dragon/
9 Elise:  *You are lucky you got that/

10  *Look at mine/

11  *It is hard/

12 Dana:  *Look at mine!/ 

13 IT:  *ike cincca swiwun ke-ya dalun aytul ke pota/this really easy thing-COP other kids thing compared
(Yours is really easy compared to other kids’.)

14 Elise:  *sunsaynim no way!/ 
teacher (Teacher, no way!)

15  *ye ki ccallun kes-to eleywe-yo/here fold thing-too difficult-HON
(This folding here is difficult, too.)

16 Dana:  *sunsayngnim etehkey hay-yo?/ 
teacher how do-HON (Teacher, how do you do this?)

17 IT:  *ike-lum yay-lang pwuchinun keya/this-ACC this one-with put thing
(You put this with this one.)

18 Kathy:  *I’m done, teacher. I’m done with the second one/

19 IT:  *o!/ (Oh!)

20 Dana:  *sunsayngnim ike pwuchye-yo?/ 
teacher this put-HON (Teacher, did you put this?)

*CS for Encouragement.* Elise started complaining in English about the origami task (line 2) and Dana stopped Elise, her twin sister, saying how complicated her origami was, as well (lines 3 and 12). Unlike in Excerpt 4.2.2, here the teacher encouraged them in Korean. In these vignettes, there didn’t seem to be consistency in her CS. However, it
might be possible that her choice of language for students’ encouragement was flexible: one time it would be effective at an interpersonal level in English and other times less effective. As the origami session turned time-consuming, more students started complaining. Therefore, she used the classroom language, Korean. In that way, the teacher could show how serious she was about the origami session.

Term of Address in Korean. Dana and Elise not only used honorifics to address their teacher all the time but used the term of address in Korean to their teacher. The twins called their teacher sensanygnim (teacher) in lines 14, 16, and 20, which is the way that Korean students in Korea address teachers in an honorific manner. In line 1, the teacher addressed herself as sensanygnim (teacher), as teachers in Korea position themselves with social identity as teachers, instead of using the first person pronoun. In that way, they bring up their social position to emphasize the social hierarchy. This shows a remnant of Confucianism; the legacy from the Joseon dynasty remains a fundamental part of Korean society, shaping the moral system and social relations between the old and the young (Rozman, 2002). According to Song (2009), terms of address also imply “sociocultural meanings such as social roles, positions, and relationships between interlocutors” (p. 213). This is another indicator of their socialization of students, by which the KLS teachers modeled the appropriate terms of address to constitute appropriate social relationships between themselves and their students at the KLS. When students used the expected term of address, sensanygnim (teacher), they complied with their roles as students and acted according to the Korean social norms promoted by the Korean Language School context.
CS to English as Participant Relations. Elise and Dana spoke English to each other and/or to Kathy (lines 2 through 4 and 7 through 12). They did not insert any Korean words in the English syntax; Elise employed intersentential CS (lines 6, 9, 14, and 15). Their CS seemed to depend on the language their interlocutors spoke as participant-related CS (Auer, 1995). Dana and Elise spoke Korean to their Korean teacher and English to other English-speaking classmates.

Vignette 4: Dictation Test One

Prior Context: The teacher directed the class to focus on the textbook series, the main textbook series used for Korean language instruction at the KLS, to cover the given lesson. There were many interactions between the teacher and her students. She employed a typical IRE (initiation, response, and evaluation) classroom instruction format (Hall & Walsh, 2002). The teacher initiated classroom interactions, asking her students to read a sentence or specific words. In response, her students read aloud, and then the teacher gave them “positive or negative” or “corrective” feedback. Then, in the following segment, the teacher allowed her students to spend some time reviewing some Korean sentences for a dictation test.

Excerpt 4.2.4. Intermediate Class Teacher (IT), Young, and Elise (March 24, 2012)

1 IT: ppalli po-ko ssusey-yo/
      hurry look-and write-HON
      (Hurry, look and write them down.)

2 Memorize-hasey-yo/
     -do-HON
     (Memorize them.)

3 Young: We can’t memorize/

4 IT:   ike poko-isse/
      this look-PRO
Elise: Are we gonna do origami today?

IT: Uh, if we have time/

kulenikka yeki-se cał ha-meyn toyci/
so here-in well do-if matter
(So, if you study hard here that is good for you.)

yeki-se yeyuypalu-meyn elmana kibwun-i coha/
here-in polite-if how feeling-TOP good
(If you behave politely here, how good it is for you!)

Elise: It will be helpful here/

It won’t help us get an ‘A’ at school/

IT: kuntëy naczungëy naczungëy tayhakko yamëy yekise
but later later college go-when here-at

tanyesstanun ke poye-cwu-myen second language an tuleto toy/
went thing show-give-if not take alright
(But, later, later in college, if you prove that you went to [KLS], you
do not have to take a second language.)

CS to English for Instruction. The teacher spoke in Korean (line 1) and inserted
the English word “memorize” (line 2) as intrasentential CS, adding the Korean ‘do’ verb
after the English verb. Even though the English verb has its equivalent Korean word, the
teacher used the English verb. Her intention might be instructional to make sure her
students understood her direction. Young responded to the teacher, “We can’t
memorize,” (line 3), confirming that she understood her teacher’s direction in mixed
English and Korean (line 2). Young might have intended that they could not memorize all
of the Korean sentences on that day. The teacher replied to Young in Korean, “Keep
looking at this,” ignoring the complaint, indicating that her students needed to try to
memorize the sentences for their dictation test.
CS to Korean for Assuring Students Complete Given Tasks. To Young’s English statement (line 3), the teacher did not code-switch to English (line 4). However, she did CS to English (line 6) after Elise either asked a question or made a statement in English (line 5). It is necessary to look at the messages the teacher received from the two students, and the teacher’s intended message back to each individual student. The statement Young made was about her own capability to do the requested assignment. The teacher replied in Korean to Young, indicating that all of the students needed to make an effort to memorize the target sentences, regardless of their personal feeling about the task.

CS to Korean for Emphasizing Expected Student Manners. In contrast, the teacher simply answered in English (line 6) to Elise’s question (line 5), and then code-switched back to Korean (line 7). The teacher’s intention in her Korean statement was to make sure that her students behaved appropriately and were polite at the KLS, as it would make them feel good about themselves. Elise contended in English that it might help them feel good at the KLS, but it would not help them earn an A at a regular American school. Elise appeared to view what she did at the KLS as unrelated to her public school grades. The teacher explained in Korean some benefits of coming to KLS (line 11), inserting the English phrase “second language,” which can be seen as CS to English for more familiar terms (See more explanations in Excerpt 4.1.3). Frequently, the English phrase “second language” is used as a borrowed phrase among Korean Americans.
**Vignette 5: Dictation Test Two**

*Prior Context (continuation):* The intermediate class teacher asked the students to review and practice their Korean target expressions for a dictation test, while some of the students were chatting.

*Excerpt 4.2.5. Intermediate Class Teacher (IT), Elise, Dana, Young, and Kathy (March 24, 2012)*

1 IT: ca kyeysok pwa swuta ttelci malkwu/
well continuously look chatting do stop
(Well, keep paying attention, no chatting.)

2 Elise: Teacher, why don’t you put them all together and then?/

3 IT: ppalli hay ppalli hay ne Young to ppalli sse/
hurry do hurry do you too hurry write
(Hurry, hurry, Young, you hurry to write, too.)

4 Ready?/

5 Dana: yenphil kkakke elrey-yo/
pencil sharpen come-HON
(I will be back after sharpening a pencil.)

6 IT: Are you ready?/

7 Young: I am not ready/

8 IT: I will give you one minute/

9 Kathy: One minute? I have to finish it in one minute? Oh, my gosh!/

10 IT: com te sikan-ul cwulkey i pwun/
little more time-ACC give two minutes
(I will give you two more minutes.)

11 Kathy: That’s it?/

12 Elise: I just need one minute now/

[Kathy and Elise speak English to each other, asking for a sharpened pencil. The entire class becomes noisy. IT stops the girls from chatting.]
IT: *coyonghi hasey-yo!/*
quiet do-HON
(Be quiet!)

icey-pwuthe hankwukmal ssusey-yo/
now-from Korean use-HON
(From now on, speak Korean.)

*an ha-myen swukcey han cang ssik nakapnita/
not do-if homework one page each come*
(If not, I will give you one-page homework for each time [you don’t speak Korean].)

14 Elise: *What?/* (In a soft voice)
15 Kathy: *What?/* (In a harsh and loud voice)
16 IT: *Speak Korean. If you don’t, I will give you lots of homework/*
17 Elise: *ahh/* (yells)
18 IT: *Korean, OK?/*
19 il pen kileyo/
one number long-HON
(Number one, it is long.)
20 sicak-hanta sicak-hanta/
start-do start-do
(I will start. I will start.)
21 Elise: *na ciwukay epse-yo/
I eraser no-HON*
(I do not have an eraser.)

*English for Drawing Attention.* The teacher hurried the class to practice the Korean sentences so that she could give the class the dictation test. Elise was about to suggest an idea (line 2), but then the teacher intervened and stopped her (line 3), asking her students whether they were ready for their dictation test in Korean. And then the teacher code-switched to English (line 4) in the simple interrogation, “*Ready?”* and the complete interrogation, “*Are you ready?”* (line 6). Since Young said she was not ready,
the teacher continued speaking English. The teacher’s CS to English (lines 4, 6, and 8) appears to have been participant-related to make her students prepare for the dictation.

*Korean for Appropriate Behaviors.* The teacher code-switched to Korean (line 10), replying to Kathy who complained that a minute was not enough time for her to practice for a dictation test. The teacher requested the students to be quiet and to speak Korean in the classroom (line 13). She said if they spoke in English, extra homework would be given, but the students did not follow their teacher; instead they spoke English constantly.

*English for Assurance.* Elise and Kathy said, “What?” in English (line 16). The teacher code-switched to English right after them (line 18) to reiterate what she had said in Korean. Elise said, “Ahh!” in the English express (line 19), and then she code-switched to Korean (line 23). The teacher made sure that the class understood her Korean directions by asking in English “Korean, OK?” (line 20), thereby trying to assure her students’ comprehension after giving them directions in Korean. She elaborated in Korean on her directions and consequences, yet she translated to English to let the class know what she had said earlier in Korean. The teacher seemed to know that her students’ response was not a question of asking her for a clarification of her statement; rather, it was a complaint about her request that they not speak English. The teacher seemed to code-switch to English in response to the students’ complaint to reassure them about the classroom rule: no English. Her strong command in a short expression with only two English words (line 20) was so emphatic that there were no complaints after that.
Vignette 6: Dictation Test Three

Prior Context (continuation): In Excerpt 4.2.6, the class continued on with the dictation test. The teacher had one more sentence left for the test.

Excerpt 4.2.6. Intermediate Class Teacher (IT), Elise, and Kathy (March 24, 2012)

1 IT:  
   hana te isse/
   one more COP
   (There is one more.)

2  
   ani hana te namasstakwu/
   no one more left
   (No, there is one more left.)

3  
   One more sentence left/

4 Elise:  
   Why is that left?/

[Elise complains to her teacher’s comment that there is one more sentence left for the dictation test. Elise seems to misunderstand that the dictation test is finished, so she requests why there is one more sentence left.]

5 IT:  
   Because you wrote this sentence here/

6  
   You are supposed to write there not here/ (Points the location on the sheet with her finger.)

[The teacher corrects Elise that Elise should have had another blank line for the last word for the dictation test.]

7 Elise:  
   (Laughs)

8 IT:  
   cip hanchay-lul palkyenha-yesssupnita/ (Reads a sentence)
   house one-ACC find-PAST
   (I found a house.)

9 Elise:  
   What?/ (In a soft voice)

10 Kathy:  
   What?/ (In a loud voice)

11 IT:  
   kitalye/
   (Wait.)
CS to English as Concurrent Translation. At first, the teacher spoke in Korean, “There is one more,” (line 1) and then said, also in Korean, “No, there is one more left,” (line 2). After that, she code-switched to English (line 3) so as to translate her Korean comment (line 2). She made a slight change from the first statement to the second, so her students would not complain about having one more sentence for the dictation test.

CS to English as Triggers for Students’ CS to English. The teacher’s CS to English (line 3) provided an opening for her students to speak English. Elise asked her teacher why there was one more left (line 3). It seemed that Elise thought the test was over. In line 4, the teacher started speaking English, pointing out Elise’s mistake on her test sheet. Admitting her mistake, Elise laughed.

CS to English for Requesting Information. Kathy and Elise said, “What?” in English (lines 9 and 10) after the teacher said a sentence aloud. Whereas the expression of “What?” in the previous Excerpt 4.2.5 from both Kathy and Elise (lines 16 and 17) indicated their uneasy feeling following the teacher’s command (lines 14 and 15), here it appears to be a request that their teacher say the sentence again.

In sum, the intermediate class teacher used English for instructional purposes with an exaggerated American English accent, for classroom management to give warnings of the possibility of enacting corporal punishment, for interpersonal relationships with her students, and for urging her students to complete given tasks. The teacher code-switched to Korean in order to emphasize appropriate student behaviors at the KLS and to stop complaints from her students. The teacher’s flexibility in and accommodation with CS provided a classroom environment in which students freely shared their opinions and thoughts. Dana used English to communicate with her sister, Elise, and other classmates,
whereas she used Korean to her teacher with honorifics and a Korean term of address. Dana spoke Korean to her teacher in order to request guidance, and English for admonishing her twin sister, Elise. Dana’s use of Korean honorifics and an appropriate term of address to her teacher indicate that there was no resistance toward her socialization in Korean culture. Especially, Dana’s constant and persistent use of Korean to her teacher was noteworthy; it seemed that Dana utilized her CS based on her judgment of which was her interlocutor’s strongest language. Unlike Dana, Elise spoke both English and Korean to her teacher and only English to other classmates. When Elise spoke Korean to her teacher, she always used honorifics with an appropriate address term. Elise spoke English mostly for classroom discussions and for requesting information of her teacher. Elise was an active participant in the classroom talk, connecting her personal thoughts to the contents in the lesson, whereas Dana was more withdrawn.

Table 4.6 summarizes the KLS student participants’ and teachers’ code-switching functions and usages in relation to their language socialization (Ochs & Schieffelin, 1984) at the KLS.

*Table 4.6. CS Functions and Usages in the Advanced and Intermediate Classes*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>Teachers</strong></th>
<th><strong>Advanced Class</strong></th>
<th><strong>Intermediate Class</strong></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Translation sensitive CS.</td>
<td>CS with an exaggerated American accent.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Domain sensitive CS.</td>
<td>Echo CS.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>CS for occasional English words to aid students’ comprehension.</td>
<td>CS to English for Warnings.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>CS for correction of students’ incorrect English.</td>
<td>CS to English for interpersonal relationships.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Echo CS.</td>
<td>CS for encouragement.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Honorifics used by the teacher.</td>
<td>CS to English for instruction.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
To conclude this chapter, it is crucial to point out that the Korean American students’ language and literacy practices at the KLS intertwined the Korean and English
languages. Excerpts of language practices show that CS is embedded throughout reading, writing, speaking, and listening in the intermediate and advanced classes. Those practices are part of meaning making, not as a separate, discrete practice but as a combined ongoing act of multifaceted practices.

Another important aspect of language and literacy practices at the KLS is that students were pressured by teachers toward Korean enculturation. In other words, it was not culture blind; the teachers brought their own ethnic and cultural perspectives imbued with their Korean ethnic identities to their students. Also, the students’ attitudes and perceptions about the Korean language in general are portrayed clearly through their linguistic formality and language choices. All of the students were in the process of constructing their ethnic identities through negotiations, revealing acceptances, rebellions, and accommodations. According to Garrett and Baquedano-Lopez (2002), many language socialization scholars (Bhimji 1997, 2002; Capps & Ochs, 1995; Jacoby & Gonzales, 1991; Ochs & Capps, 2001; Ochs et al., 1989; Rhymes, 1996) emphasized that “children and other novices actively use their developing knowledge not just to co-construct but sometimes to resist and reframe their participation in socializing interactions” (p. 346). So far, we have seen how the KLS students were socialized both to use language, and also through the use of language (Schieffelin & Ochs, 1986). In the following Chapter 5, students’ ethnic identity and parents’ language ideologies are elaborated in relation to their attitudes and perspectives, in order to explore and postulate the social agents’ various responses to their social contexts and the main influential factors on them.
CHAPTER 5

Ethnic Identity and Language Ideology

In this chapter, I discuss the Korean American students’ ethnic self-identification in relation to language and literacy practices at home, and more importantly at the Korean Language School (KLS), and their parents’ language ideologies. The data were derived mainly from the interviews with the students and their parents. Considering the superior status of English versus Korean in construction of and negotiation of ethnic identity in the United States, attrition of the Korean heritage language is a serious issue in Korean immigrant communities in the U.S. society where Korean is one of the heritage languages rapidly losing its status and usage. Therefore, this chapter examines issues of Korean American students’ identity and their parents’ language ideologies regarding English as a dominant societal language, as well as Korean as the heritage language and its maintenance. This chapter revisits the participants’ perspectives on Korean and/or English language and literacy practices as related to their children’s ethnic self-identification.

Ethnic identity, defined as “part of an individual’s self-concept which derives from his knowledge of his membership in a social group (or groups) together with the value and emotional significance attached to that membership” (Tajfel, 1981, p. 255), consists of various components (Phinney, 1990). Taking an eclectic approach, those components are social identity, self-identification, the sense of shared values and attitudes (White & Burke, 1987), and attitude toward one’s group (Parham & Helms, 1981; Teske & Nelson, 1973).
Language ideology is defined as “the cultural system of ideas about social and linguistic relationships” (Irvine, 1989, p. 225), and as a set of “beliefs about language articulated by users as a rationalization or justification of perceived structure and use” (Silverstein, 1979, p. 173). Since language is a symbolic resource (Bourdieu, 1991), ideas or beliefs about power relationships in different communities may produce, distribute, and validate certain linguistic resources through language ideologies (Jeon, 2007). Language ideologies, in fact, may contribute to the legitimization of existing power relations through which some linguistic resources are validated while some are invalidated in a society (Fairclough, 1995). Perspectives on language and ethnic identity of four Korean American children and their parents’ beliefs about English and Korean in relation to social and linguistic capital are introduced in the following section.

**James:** “I mostly consider myself American because I find more pride in America than Korea.”

Through different experiences at different times and in contexts with different people, James’s self-identification wavered. James’s identity indicators from his discourse, behaviors, and attitudes, as well as his parents’ influence on them, are discussed in the following section.

**Self-Perceived Identity in Relation to Majority Students**

James looked back on his primary years at school as being isolated from mainstream students. He said,

> When I first came to xxx [the current city] for elementary years, I’ve got moved off. But, um, like 5th grade, I started getting a litter more, um, more, actually in 3rd or 4th grade I started getting involved in my friends’ sports . . . And then 5th too, and then 6th grade and 7th grade, I’m kind of on the top . . . And then, one of those bottom bullies . . . When I got in 7th
grade, because they usually think Asians kind of weak, mostly Asians, even Koreans (interview on May 27, 2012).

He felt that Asian students were considered weak and easily bullied by female American students. He described the perceived prejudice of the mainstream students thusly,

So most Americans think or see us like oh, he can’t bully me, . . . or strong enough, even the girls in America they start bullying me. Even the girls in American [American girls] start bullying me but see like once you get into fight, maybe more bullying kids or you get a fight. I get detentions. I got three detentions so far (interview on May 27, 2012).

As a strategic reaction to prove his schoolmates wrong, James started getting into fights with bullies. Three detentions followed as a consequence, but he seemed satisfied with the persona he had created. Later, he believed he had become one of the most recognized Asian bullies in school.

James believed his classmates perceived him differently after he started getting involved in physical fights with other students:

So I got into fights and then, I started getting to the top. Then they started getting different opinions of me, and most Asians are better now. We are now, there are three strong Asians. Actually there are four . . . two of them are Vietnamese, one Chinese, and one American, I mean, one, I’m Korean. So there’s Vietnamese, Chinese, and Korean (interview on May 27, 2012).

James referred to the White American students as “they” and to the Asian students as “we,” which differentiated him from the dominant group while homogenizing himself into the minority group of Asian students and later he referred himself to as “American” then corrected it to “Korean.” Early in his school life in a new school, James viewed himself as an estranged other (Pieterse, 1997) who did not belong to any group of students. He was “ethnikos”—Greek for others—which refers to a distinct, separate
ethnicity or ethnic group of people, whereas the mainstream students were “ethnos”—Greek for *people*—which refers to the mainstream group of people. Later, he included the other Asian students in the category of *other* (ethnic group of people), as he became one of the top bullies; he established a membership in the Asian ethnic group. For James, ethnic identity was categorized not by language but by race, based on his Asian physical appearance.

In the previous excerpt above, James first identified himself as an Asian with a firm discernment of his race. But he instantly identified other Asian students’ ethnicity as Vietnamese and as Chinese, and he referred to himself as “one American,” and then corrected it to “Korean.” This slip could have shown James’s unstable ethnic identity, as well as his “wannabe” American identification, even though he was born in the United States. It also could have indicated a conflict between James’s ethnicity and the identity he sought.

James made two attempts to fit in with groups of students. His initial efforts were related to gaining stature through bullying in order to become allies with Asian bullies, and his belated efforts were made after he was accepted as one of the tough Asian students. The second attempt was with the dominant athletic clique is noteworthy: “I have a lot of friends. They are pretty much popular. There is one group. They are all baseball players and soccer players.” Belonging to both groups, Asian bullies and White athletes, is an essential indicator of James’s social identity at school. James wanted to assimilate into the White dominant group, while keeping his Asian racial identity but abandoning his Korean ethnic identity. This is asserted by three observations: his negative attitude
toward his ethnic group, his rebellious attitude toward learning the Korean language or attending the KLS, and his intentional choice to speak English almost exclusively.

Regarding the KLS in general, James had a negative attitude, using explicit words such as “hell,” “horrible,” “boring,” and “not a regular school” when he was asked about the KLS. When he was asked if he would like it if it were not boring, he answered, “It doesn’t feel like a regular school . . . All of my friends are hanging out [on Saturdays].” He viewed the KLS as a school that only minority students might attend, which means majority students would not. He wanted to be identified with the majority group, not only at the regular school but also in other social settings.

Excerpt 5.1. J=James, R=Researcher (May 27, 2012)

J: In America, nobody’s going to school, so I feel like…
R: Why should I?
J: Why should I, then?
R: Oh, I see that. What about your friend Kevin? He’s your friend, right? He goes to the Korean Language School, too.
J: But it’s not majority, majority of kids.
R: So, you think going to the KLS is something like only minority kids would do that.
J: Yeah.
R: So, maybe you want to fit into the majority kids.
J: Yeah.

James identified not only himself but also Kevin as a minority. In his mind, majority American students do not attend a school like the KLS on Saturdays, yet another characteristic that differentiates him from the majority and accentuates his minority identity. His desire to be included in the majority was such an obsession that he did not like to engage in ethnic social practices. In Erikson’s (1968) theory of ego identity formation, James as an adolescent was actively exploring for a desired identity. His notion of identity, however, did not align with a two-dimensional model that says that
one can fit comfortably and independently into both the ethnic culture and the dominant culture (Phinney, 1990). Rather, his notion of identity was that of a linear, bipolar model—conceptualizing an identity along a continuum from strong ethnic ties at one extreme to strong dominant ties at the other. James seemed to assume that weakening his Korean ethnic identity would strengthen his identity with the dominant group, and vise versa.

**Ethnic Identification Contingent upon Language Use**

James said, “I am 85% American and 15% Korean.” There is a consistency between the ratio of James’s self-identity and his use of the English and Korean languages. He said, “[I speak] English, probably 85% and another 15% I speak Korean.” He said he spoke Korean 15% of the time and identified himself as 15% Korean. He also said, “Actually, you know no one I speak Korean. Probably say once in a while in different situations.” This shows a nonseparable relationship between language and identity. Also, this ratio represents James’s linear concept of identity construction. His quantification in the ratio of his identity could have been near 100% American and 100% Korean—if he had strong identification with both groups. Being born in the United States but raised in a household where Korean was the primary language, James spoke primarily Korean until he started learning English in elementary school. Attenuating his embryonic Korean proficiency, English became the dominant language he preferred, and only occasionally did he speak Korean to his parents.

James would code-switch to Korean for a private matter when he was talking with his Korean friends about American, English-speaking students. He talked about a situation in which he would code-switch to Korean at his secondary school,
xxx [his Korean female friend] has a boy friend [American], OK? So, maybe he is depressed or something and then she is like, “아, 왜 이렇게 그래? (James, what is wrong him?)” I am like, “몰라. (I don’t know.)” And then, he just looks angry and depressed. We are like, backing off from him. And then, she is like saying, “애 건들지 마. (Don’t bother him.)” (interview on May 27, 2012)

Speaking Korean enabled him and his Korean friend to talk freely about their English monolingual friends at school. Jorgensen (1998) emphasizes the function of code-switching (CS) into the minority language for solidarity among minority members. James’s CS into Korean revealed his minority ethnic identity, which was restricted to private spheres in order to exclude other English-only speaking students, and express solidarity with his Korean friends at the same time.

**Self-Identification Contingent upon Contexts**

When he was asked in the second interview about his identity, James’s self-identification of 85% American was not consistent. After a pause of about eight seconds, he said, “Um, sometimes neither, because when I’m in American environment, I consider myself Korean, and Korean environment, consider me American.” Based on Hall’s (1996) argument, James’s identity was not unified or singular but was multiple. He, however, after being asked to elaborate on his answer, said, “I don’t know. Well, I mostly consider myself American . . . Because I find more pride in America than Korea. Because, because America has so much more money, more rich, more better. They have more land.” As one’s identity is never fixed, James’s perception of his own identity also was going through a change, from 85% American to neither American nor Korean. He associated his identity with regions where he was located, where he either lived or temporally sojourned, even though James was an American citizen. In the United States, he
identified himself as a Korean, while in Korea he saw himself as an American. The most thought-provoking statement James made expressed his intentional willingness to associate himself with the United States as an American because the United States, compared to Korea, offered greater financial and geographical resources because of its affluence, global military power, and continental size. James seemed to believe that he had an option: He could be Korean or American. His inclination to be an American was stronger than to be a Korean. James wanted to be recognized by members of the mainstream society as an American and be accepted by them into their society (Gee, 2005).

**Self-Exposed Korean Identification**

As the least engaged student in his KLS class, James consistently spoke English, the discouraged language at the KLS. Despite his advanced, receptive Korean skills, James intentionally verbalized in English, making very few attempts to speak Korean at the KLS. His unwillingness to be part of Korean school activities may have been due to his belief that full engagement in the Korean language lessons would only accentuate and reinforce his Korean ethnic identity. James’s Koreanness, however, could not remain concealed, such as when he tried to be funny and make himself the center of attention. For example, James’s utterance *ttong* (poop) in Excerpt 4.1.1 is noteworthy because of its colloquial, non-academic usage as well as because of its linguistic function in relation to James’s social membership at the KLS. Most of the time, he was not engaged in the lesson and instead was distracted with his cell phone, which was his intentional disengagement. In this instance, while playing games on his cell phone, he understood his teacher’s question and answered it correctly by uttering *ttong* (poop), which is evidence...
of his advanced Korean listening skills in Excerpt 4.1.1 in line 3. His linguistic choice of
the word *ttong* was decoding James’s in-group membership (Li, 1995, cited in Shin,
2010) with the notion of “we-code” (Gumperz, 1982), which increases intimacy among
Korean American students in the classroom (see extended discussion in Chapter 4).

The word *ttong*, used in the Korean household when Korean parents attend to
their young children, indicates James’s early-childhood language socialization. Language
socialization refers to the process by which “children and other novices in society acquire
tacit knowledge of principles of social order and systems of belief through exposure to
and participation in language-mediated interactions” (Schieffelin & Ochs, 1986, p. 2).
James must have learned the connotation to which the word *ttong* refers; Korean parents
use the word with a rising intonation as a question to determine their child’s need of
excretion, and through this language-mediated interaction, children later utter the word as
a signal for the need to use the bathroom.

Terms of address convey and emphasize social roles, positions, and relationships
between interlocutors (Brown & Gilman, 1960; Muhlhausler & Harre, 1990). James’s use
of the Korean terms of address, *sensayngnim* (*선생님* / teacher), to his teacher was never
observed at the KLS. Interestingly, however, he used it several times and another Korean
title address term *kwancangnim* (*관장님* / head master) in his interview with the
researcher. When he was asked how he felt about the year-end performance, he said, “I
had a fight with xxx [the intermediate] 선생님 (teacher).” To another question about
language use at Taekwando, his extracurricular activity, he said, “Actually it was in
English mostly. But the 관장님 (head master) knew that I was Korean, since then he
started [speaking] Korean.” This shows that adult linguistic input and modeling play an
important role in socializing children into specific ways of speaking (Schieffelin & Ochs, 1986). James’s Korean language socialization is revealed in the way that he used the appropriate terms of address in Korean on some occasions. His failure to use these honorific terms with his KLS teacher is likely, then, to be a conscious choice on his part, and a form of resistance.

James also wrote a CS poem about *samgyupsal* (grilled pork belly), one of the most popular Korean foods among Koreans. As a meat lover, James chose *samgyupsal* as the topic for his poem. His enthusiasm for Korean foods and flavors revealed an aspect of his genuine Koreanness. He wrote:

*Excerpt 5.2. James’s Poem in English*

Samgyupsal
I’m happiest when I eat Samgyupsal.
My favorite kind of meat is Samgyupsal.
The meat sizzling
the delicious smell
the oil jumping
the meat getting ready
the juice leaking out
white, gray, brown.

Not only through the Korean language, but also through Korean ethnic food, James was naturally socialized into and exposed to typical Korean diets that have been passed from generation to generation.

Last, James commented that he used to watch some Korean dramas at home, adding that he did not watch them anymore. He listed the Korean dramas he had watched: *미남이시네요 (You are Handsome), 꽃 보다 남자 (Men over Flowers), 김탁구 (Takku Kim)*, and *런닝맨 (Running Man)*. He said he understood the Korean dramas 98%. On a few occasions he could not understand some words and then he asked his mother. James
was naturally exposed to the Korean dramas at home because of his mother who watched them frequently in the living room. James said that he did not intend to watch Korean dramas in the first place, but he ended up watching them anyway. He said, “Whenever I see something on TV or computer, I just stand and watch, but maybe two minutes and then after two minutes, I sit down. I start watching . . . I have been watching the last five episodes [of Running Man] so far.” This displays James’s advanced Korean listening skills. He was proud of the fact that he could understand most of the Korean expressions in the Korean dramas. That shows his Korean ethnic identity.

**Deconstructing Asymmetrical Power Relations**

Being defiant, James did not use the Korean honorifics when he code-switched from English to Korean at the KLS. Not using honorifics could indicate less Korean proficiency or a lack of respect for Korean adults. If it were the former, James’s Korean proficiency must have been embryonic, like that of children. Young Korean children tend not to use honorifics in casual conversation with their parents as a symbol of intimacy. But on other occasions of parental discipline, children tend to use honorifics even at an early age. During a private conversation, James also used Korean honorifics toward the researcher, which proved that he acquired the socially expected, appropriate language use in Korean. Thus, his decision not to use honorifics toward his classroom teacher suggests his intent to deconstruct asymmetrical power relations between himself and his KLS teacher.

As a consistent effort to dissociate himself from Korean lessons, James did not participate in the lessons most of the time; he played on his cell phone throughout the lesson, prompting his teacher to redirect him to the class work. Since it was a tug of war
between James and his teacher, he frequently verbally defended himself in English, saying to his teacher things such as, “No, I don’t need that crap.” “You are crazy, aren’t you?” “Are you on cocaine?” “You are treacherous, man, aren’t you?” “You are killing me.” James’s English word choices have derogative connotations. He hurled them at his teacher without hesitation and always in English. James’s language use in English, it seems, was intended to cause conflict that would result in detention or expulsion. In the interview later, James’s teacher said she assumed that James was defiant because he wanted to be expelled from the KLS.

His inappropriate, belligerent comments to his KLS teacher could perhaps be seen as a discouraging side effect of his parents forcing James to attend the KLS when he saw associating with the heritage language school as an obstacle to his desire to associate with the majority culture. If bilingualism and multilingualism were perceived as an additive asset by the host society (Grosjean, 1992), cases such as James’s likely would not exist. Even though James was stigmatized as a villain or troublemaker at the KLS, he also could be considered a victim who would continue searching for his true identity, wondering about his stance in the dominant society.

**James’s Parents: Korean is important but English is a priority.**

James’s parents invited me to their house for the interview. The two-story home was in a community in a respected school district. I interviewed both of James’s parents; I interviewed the father first and the mother joined in later. It took two hours and 45 minutes all together. The interview was in Korean, transcribed, and translated into English. The parents were willing to contribute to this study; the father was more eagerly participating in the interview than the mother. The father became so talkative that the
interview lasted much longer than I expected and the mother became interested in our talk and later participated in the interview.

**Relationship with James**

Regarding interactions and relationships with the children, James’s mother felt a gap between her and her children when they argued. The mother felt she had to use English when her children pretended not to understand her Korean during an argument. She spoke English so that her children could not pretend to not understand her. However, as her children moved up the grades, they started learning more difficult vocabulary and the mother worried about her lack of comparable vocabulary. The mother said that her children seemed to use English as their linguistic weapon in order to win in their battles with her. As the mother, she did not want her children to look down on her due to her lack of English skills, such as non-standard English pronunciations. James pointed out her non-standard or mispronunciations after a parent-teacher conference and he evaluated her English after meetings with his teachers. The mother felt that at school meetings her children became more aware of her ethnicity, Korean. She felt that her children might wish their mother were a white American. She said her children never said these things, but she felt them anyway. Especially when James was not in a good mood or was mad at his mother, he brought up her Korean accented English as if to show off his own English.

**Parenting**

James’s mother said that James did not like speaking Korean in public places when he started attending school. He rejected speaking Korean right after he went to elementary school; he was much younger then, but still old enough to tell the difference between Korean and English. At that time, he started to recognize that not only his appearance but
also his language was different from the mainstream Americans and he told his mother to speak English, not Korean. However, after he visited Korea, his attitudes toward the Korean language changed. Also, James’s parents told their children that speaking two languages meant being smart and “if you are not smart, you can’t speak two languages. Look at Americans, they speak only one language, English. Compared to them, we are capable of speaking two languages, which should be highly recognizable.”

Both parents commented on their concerns about rearing their children. The mother said that she was worried that she could not express herself 100% to her children due to her lack of English skills. “That might be the main reason caused me to be obsessed with teaching my children Korean,” she said. James’s father also was worried about parent-child communication; as James grew older, influenced by American value systems, the father was concerned that their different cultural value systems would prevent open and honest communication. The mother pointed out that the communication gap was not caused solely by speaking different languages, but by James’s growing process of becoming an adult. James used to say to her, “You don’t understand me,” which gave her a shock. The mother said that James was going through his critical puberty stage, and because of that, no matter what she said to him, he would not listen to her. She said all parents and children have conflicts when the children go through that stage:

*Excerpt 5.3. M=Mother, F=Father, R=Researcher (May 27, 2012)*

M: I used to fight with my mother a lot when I was young. I think it is the same thing. I don’t think it is because of language.
R: Well, right, even though you have the same language, Korean, and had a conflict with your mother. I wonder what if your children did not learn Korean.
M: If they didn’t, it would be worse. So I think we are lucky that we can communicate with each other in Korean.
F: Oh, it came to my mind. Some children gave up communicating with their parents just because their parents cannot speak English.
M: I think they will look for more friends who can understand them.
F: I have heard that kind of stories a lot.

At first, James’s mother did not blame her conflicts with her son on language, but later she agreed that if they did not share the same language to communicate with each other, things could be worse. Both of the parents seemed to assure themselves it was the best thing that they kept teaching their children Korean. The mother said,

What we pursue is to plant Korean identity and pride of being Korean to my children with an understanding. But it is our dilemma whether we should teach them to grow up as Koreans or as Americans. I think merging these two is the best solution, but I am not sure how much I should do from both Korean and American sides. That’s the most difficult thing that makes us worried. Not only us but also other first generation parents always talk about this, when we gather. We often have an argument due to different opinions. All the parents are worried about their children’s identity, all of them (interview on May 27, 2012).

As James’s parents mentioned, many immigrant Korean American parents have challenges, concerns, and worries about their child’s education. They all want their children to grow up with an American identity, as well as a Korean identity. Their biggest concern is communication breakdowns and comprehension gaps with their children because of different ways of thinking and different value systems. James’s parents wanted to have healthy and smooth communication either in their language, Korean, or in the children’s language, English. The mother was worried that her children might look down on her because her English vocabulary was lacking compared to the more advanced vocabulary they learn at school. She even felt that she should study more English vocabulary on her own.
The father said he had several main purposes for teaching his children the Korean language. The first was to inculcate Korean identity in his children. The father explained the importance for his children to develop a Korean identity:

Many people talk about identity without much its consideration. Well, the identity issue for my children is so important. First of all, they are Koreans as their parents, both the mother and the father. I had studied in the United States and it has been 10 years since I started working in the United States. I have witnessed many things in my work place. I have coworkers from India and have known some of their children who work on Wall Street as a banker in the mainstream society. Some work for Lehman Brothers after graduating from good universities and many others work in the very famous industries. They have told me that it was not challenging for them to get hired in those companies. But the real challenge comes from the invisible glass ceiling in the process of promotions to become the main executives in the companies (interview on May 27, 2012).

James’s father believed that there is an invisible ceiling that keeps immigrants from getting promoted into higher positions in popular companies. For example, he said, in Lehman Brothers, non-Jewish people cannot be promoted, regardless of their ethnicity.

The father also mentioned that his children could have the same challenge in mainstream U.S. society. So if they do not have a strong identity as a Korean without an understanding of its culture, they will be frustrated when they meet those challenges to advance to higher positions. The father believed that if his children had a distinct Korean identity, they would be more flexible in dealing with those challenges and overcoming them. The father emphasized that there is racism in the mainstream society, therefore it is important for his children to know who they are in the society.

James’s father said that the second purpose for teaching Korean to his children is to better communicate with them:
[Because] I was not born in the United States, if my children cannot speak Korean at all, I would have challenges in rearing them. I have worries about my children. I need to be able to use details in English with describing words to talk about those worries to my children. [But] we Koreans have limitations in doing that in English. Well, we have limitations in technical expressions in English. But the real challenge is about emotional expressions when we have a serious conversation over worries. It is the matter of English, but also is sentiment. They need to know the sentiment of Korean people so they can understand what I say to them when I use describing words in English. No matter how proficient I am in English, unless my children understand Korean people’s sentiment or Korean culture, it is really hard for me to make them understand my points. My children were born in the United States, so they speak English and they do not have an understanding of Korean culture or its sentiment. Because they do not understand Korean culture, I see conversational breakdowns coming to us despite my efforts when we have a real important conversation (interview on May 27, 2012).

James’s father was very aware of the importance of maintaining the Korean language in order to develop his children’s Korean identity and to have serious/important conversations with them. He pointed out that because his cultural background was different than his children’s, he had difficulties, challenges, and worries about rearing his children in the United States. The father also shared stories that he heard from other immigrant parents, who had small private businesses and were capable of speaking only business related English. They experience conversational breakdowns with their children. Because of those challenges, the father sent his children to the KLS and to Korea so that they could learn not only the Korean language, but also Korean manners and Korean people’s ways of thinking. The father hoped that his children would have a better understanding of Korea as a result of these efforts. His efforts to encourage Korean language and literacy maintenance in his children can be seen in the fact that he had to leave his office early on Fridays to take his children to the KLS.
James’s father believed that James understood the importance of learning Korean and why he had to learn the language, because of the father’s constant reminder about speaking Korean at home. James’s father told his children that he would go to Korea to live after his retirement as a strategy for reminding his children about learning Korean:

I keep telling my children that I will go to Korea one day. That is one of my strategies that I use to give them a pressure to speak Korean at home. I said, “Once I move to Korea and live there, you should speak Korean to me when you visit me in Korea.” And, I said, “Even though you were born in the U.S., if you speak Korean well, you can study or work in Korea. If you work in Korea there are many benefits to you. So it is a great benefit for you to speak Korean well.” Then, James fully understands what I am saying (interview on May 27, 2012).

The father said that he did not explain to his children why they needed to learn Korean when they were little. However, as James was growing up, the father started telling James that James needed to speak Korean well, this was the reason the father tried to send James and his younger sister to Korea at least once a year whenever he could afford it. The father called that a strategy he used to motivate his children to speak Korean.

James’s father also pointed out the important role James’s grandparents in Korea play regarding the children’s Korean maintenance. James’s grandparents used to call James’s father and remind him to make sure that James speaks Korean well and knows Korean manners. As James became older, his grandfather asked James to call him at least once a week. Due to different time zones and their own busy schedules, it was hard for them to talk on the phone that often, but the father said that the grandparents expected James to call them and when they were on the phone, the grandparents talked to James about Korean culture, Korean people’s manners, and the purpose of learning Korean. The grandparents seemed to have a strong familial bond with their grandchildren.
It has been two years since James was last sent to his grandparents in Korea to live with them during summer break. The father said it was a great opportunity and an important thing for James to meet his grandparents, uncles, and cousins, and to get to know who they are. The father believed that it was much more powerful and effective for James to see his family members in Korea than to hear about them. James also met with his cousins and spent time with them. It was a good immersion environment for James to speak Korean to his extended family members who did not speak English. In fact, James’s father observed James’s attitudes changed after he visited Korea during two summers; before visiting Korea, James was so proud of being American and looked down on Korea, saying he did not want to visit Korea. James’s father said, “James told me that the United States has the most powerful military forces in the world, so he considers himself as American. Korea’s military is not strong so he doesn’t like Korea.” However, James’s views on Korea changed after he visited Korea and he realized that Korea was a wealthy country. The father said it was all possible, thanks to James’s uncle who was a director in a big company running three big businesses of his own. He had a big luxurious house and expensive imported European cars. James’s uncle could afford anything James wanted to have in Korea. Since then, James started to like Korea and hoped to visit Korea again, and even said he would not mind living in Korea.

James’s mother also agreed that sending her children to Korea was the most effective way to infuse Korean identity into James:

Two years ago, we sent our children to a Korean public elementary school for them to experience what it was like. They did not learn much Korean, but they learned about Korean children at school. They gained a lot from their first visit to Korea. They became proud of being Korean and not shameful about having their Korean blood in their body. It was a turning point for James to realize and to accept his Korean identity in his heart.
from the stage of not knowing what Korean meant to him and from his sole identity of American. In their second visit to Korea, we hired a private Korean tutor to teach my children how to read and write everyday while they stayed in Korea. They improved their Korean literacy a lot at that time (interview on May 27, 2012).

James’s parents planned to send their children to Korea again in the near future. That shows the parental support for the children’s Korean language and identity. It seems that the parents relied on the KLS solely for the Korean language and identity maintenance when James and his sister were much younger. However, like Dana and Elise’s parents, they started applying a more active and effective strategy by sending the children to Korea where they attended a Korean public school where they could be immersed in Korean language and culture. Also, having an extended family gathering in Korea seemed to provide James a good sense of what it is like living in Korea and who Korean people are, which helped him to accept his Korean identity.

**Expectations for their Children**

James’s father expected James to associate himself more with his Korean identity. The father said, “James used to say that he is 100% American. But his identity has been changed in two years. He knows that he is Asian after he experienced racism in his school.” According to James’s father, if James did not doubt his American identity, he would not talk about being mistreated at school due to racism. The father said that James ended up having an argument with two white boys in his school, thinking they were treating him unjustly out of racism.

James’s father expected James to make more friends with White students, as many as possible, rather than African American or Mexican students. James’s father said that when he recommended that to James, James accused his father being racist.
However, denying that he was a racist, the father told James that as long as his friends, who were African Americans or Mexicans, did well at school, it was acceptable to make friend with them. The father also said to James, “statistically nine out of 10 African American students were good at sports and barely one out of 10 went to college . . . generally African American students did not study well, so they did not go to college.” The father expected James to be friends with those who did well at school. Even though James’s father denied being a racist when he talked about whom James should make friends with, to James he sounded like a racist. This could have influenced James’s views on people of color (White, Asian, and African Americans) and his own ethnic identity—valuing White over other ethnic people.

James’s parents said English education was a priority over Korean education for their children’s future careers in the United States. The mother said,

English education is a priority over Korean education. There is no doubt about that. My children must survive in the United States. They need to stand on their own feet, even though there is no guidance from us in the future. They should be able to live as leaders in the higher social class with self-confidence. That’s why they need to learn the American culture and about American people first. They must excel in the United States, so they can live as leaders. Therefore, English education is a priority (interview on May 27, 2012).

James’s parents seemed to have high expectations for James and his younger sister. Whereas the father used to say to his children that he wanted them to become medical doctors, the mother expected her children to become leaders in the mainstream society. It was hard for James’s parents to deny English as a priority over Korean for their children in the United States, due to their high expectations for their children’s future careers. His mother envisioned James as a future leader in mainstream society, whereas his father
expected James to become a medical doctor. They could not think of their children’s future without English.

In sum, James’s father sent his children to the KLS, as well as to Korea, for them to learn not only the Korean language but also Korean manners and ways of thinking. He noted that he had difficulties, challenges, and worries about raising them in the United States because his cultural and linguistic backgrounds differed from those of his children. He was more concerned with his children’s Americanized cultural value system as James grew older and was more influenced by the local American cultural values and norms, which might prevent them from having open and honest communication with him. Overall, neither parent neglected the importance of maintaining Korean as part of their children’s Korean identity, as well as for a medium of communication between themselves and their children.

James’s mother had to speak English when she argued with her children, who pretended not to understand her Korean. Therefore, she already felt insecure about being understood in English. However, the more her children’s English vocabulary advanced, the more concerned she was about her own vocabulary. As in a number of case studies and surveys on immigrant children cited in Zhou (1997), James’s mother feared that her comparative lack of proficiency in English might cause her children to look down on her and challenge her parental authority. James even occasionally pointed out her mispronunciations of common English words. Her lack of confidence in holding a serious conversation in English, in fact, became a trigger that prompted her to send her children to the KLS. “That might be the main reason that caused me to be obsessed with teaching my children Korean,” she said.
The perception held by James’s father of cold realities in mainstream society became a major factor that imbued and reinforced James’s Korean identity. The father believed that mainstream society has an invisible glass ceiling that prevents minority people from achieving leading executive positions. He also believed his children were Koreans, as were he and his wife. The ethnic identity the father imposed on James was different from James’s own identity. The father’s perception about identity construction was static, inherent in his genes. If your parents are Korean, you are Korean. This also was influenced by his belief that racism exists in mainstream society, so once a minority, always a minority. He believed that while a minority might land a good job in a major company and therefore feel accepted by mainstream society, he never would become an executive—because of the glass ceiling. This was contradictory to James’s mother’s expectation that James would become a leader in the United States. The father believed that his children’s minority identity would never change, so if they grew up lacking a strong Korean identity and failed to learn the Korean language and culture, they risked being frustrated when they met challenges in the American workplace and as they strove to move through the ranks. According to James’s father, developing a well-rounded, distinct Korean identity was the only way for minorities to have more doors open to them and to overcome the challenges they were sure to face.

James’s self-identification as more American than Korean was different from his father’s identification of James as Korean. James might have been influenced by his father’s perceptions and beliefs about the limitations faced by an individual of minority status. His father was actively searching for a route to enculturate James with Korean language and culture, believing that a failure to establish a strong Korean identity would
mean he would be nobody in the United States. It is doubtful that James willingly accepted his father’s belief about minority status and the obstacles that would arise due to his minority status. Rather, it seems that James was searching for his own paths to assimilate into the mainstream society, as he strived for upward mobility by first being recognized as a tough, Asian bully and then by joining the White dominant athletic clique. Zhou (1997) found that anomalous trends among so-called model minority, Asian American youth joined many gangs despite their suburban, middle-class family backgrounds and exceptional academic achievement was anomaly. James’s socialization into the host society by first becoming a member of a bully group in order to gain recognition by White peers is anomalous.

Kevin: “We are all Korean. I know I have to be bilingual.”

In contrast to James’s struggle with his identity formation/construction, Kevin seemed to accept his Korean identity as part of his self-identification, despite the fact that he never provided a percentage calculation of his self-identification. He realized and adopted his bilingual identity as a result of being a Korean living in the United States. He was viewed as a model student by the Korean teachers at the KLS and by some parents in the Korean community. He was so exemplary that many Korean parents complimented his academic success and his appropriate manners as befitting the Korean culture. Kevin’s positive Korean identity seemed related to his positive, confident ego development that was boosted by his academic success. Unlike James, who struggled with English language arts in secondary school, Kevin was an academic achiever who earned a reputation as a model student in the Korean community. Kevin’s identity indicators from his discourse,
behaviors, and attitudes, as well as from his parents’ influence on them, are discussed in the following section.

**Self-Identification in Relation to Other’s English**

Kevin, born and raised in an English-speaking country, pointed out in the interview that his parents’ English had a heavy Korean accent. His parents did not pronounce the letters “l” and “r” correctly, Kevin said, so they sounded “all weird.” However, Kevin acknowledged and respected his parents’ higher education, because both had Ph.D.s. “They actually know more vocabulary than me, because they are both doctorate,” he said.

From this, it can be said that Kevin had keen, critical observations about the English proficiency of Koreans, which indicates Kevin’s ownership of English. He never quantified or expressed his identity clearly as an American, like James did, but it can be inferred that Kevin, who felt much more comfortable speaking English as if it were his native language, revealed that he was qualified to judge others’ English proficiency. That shows Kevin’s view of American English as the norm and standard, and thus he perceived his parents’ English to be nonstandard. For James and Kevin, English was not viewed as a plural language that “embodies multiple norms and standards . . . as a multinational language, one that belongs to diverse communities and not owned only by the metropolitan communities” (Canagarajah, 2006, p. 589). Nevertheless, Kevin acknowledged his parents’ advanced vocabulary from higher education, which might have also influenced his compliance with his mother.

**Self-Identification in Relation to the Korean Language**

Kevin and his parents spoke Korean at home almost all the time. To him, speaking English to his parents was very unusual, and he believed there was no point in speaking
English to them since he grew up in a household where Korean was the primary language. “We are all Korean,” he said, “so, like, why speak English?”

Excerpt 5.4. K=Kevin, R=Researcher (June 18, 2012)

K: In home, I speak Korean all the time.
R: All the time, 100%?
K: Yeah.
R: What about your parents?
K: My parents speak Korean 100%.

Even though Kevin code-switched and mixed English and Korean at home from time to time, his language choice of Korean at home was prominent. His self-identification as Korean compelled him to speak Korean at home. Even though he spoke Korean to get his message across to his parents, he felt more comfortable speaking English. Despite his preference for English, Kevin admitted that when he argued with his parents or discussed important issues, he spoke Korean. He postulated that his parents would not understand his argument in English, not because they did not understand his English but because they might misinterpret his nuances in English.

Unlike James, Kevin spoke Korean with honorifics to Korean adults. He knew that Korean was the language he had to speak to adults in places such as at the KLS, at the Korean Catholic church, and at home with Korean visitors. He felt uncomfortable speaking Korean to other Korean adults because he had to use honorifics such as yo. Kevin did not want to be considered rude by Korean adults and he knew that using honorifics was essential because Korean people are sensitive to respect. He was aware that using honorifics in Korean conveys unequal status between adults and children. “It’s not like English, you start out as equal. In Korean, you start out as [either] a child or adult,” he said in the interview. Thus, he knew how to use correct terms of address and

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reference depending on whom he was speaking to. This correlates with his well-behaved manners and positive attitudes at the KLS. Bankston and Zhou’s (1995) study indicated a significant correlation between native language fluency and ethnic identity; in the same way, Kevin’s advanced Korean language knowledge and fluency seemed to index his Korean ethnic identity.

**Self-Identification in Relation to the KLS**

Kevin’s Korean identity was well aligned with his enjoyment of attending the KLS. He also respected his teacher’s unusual self-controlled temper toward James’s unacceptable behavior at the KLS. His impression of James’s violent behavior at the KLS was, “Well, in Korea I [would] never see something like that. If you did that in Korea, you are dead. Like they call your parents and they beat you with a baseball bat or something.” For Kevin, the KLS was a place where students should behave according to Korean manners and customs. It would be unheard of for students at a school in Korea to exhibit an emotional outburst. According to Kevin, Korean students would not dare do that because of the corporal punishment their parents would administer. He identified not only himself but his classmate, James, as Koreans who should behave like students in Korea because he and James faced the same corporal punishment discipline by their Korean parents. He believed that he and other Korean students at the KLS should behave in ways acceptable to Korean adults in accordance with Korean cultural values. His willingness to adhere to Korean cultural values indicates his “belonging” (Gee, 2005) to the Korean society in which he lived as an English-Korean bilingual in the United States.

Kevin said he enjoyed the year-end school performance at the KLS.
Excerpt 5.5. R=Researcher, K=Kevin (June 18, 2012)

K: The performance was fun.
R: What about the preparation?
K: But I felt no one really worked well singing and dancing.
R: Did you enjoy practicing?
K: Oh, yeah. But no one really tried that [singing]. No one sang. James sometimes . . . Dancing, like no one did anything. Little kids, some of them didn’t even know what we were doing.
R: Right.
K: And then the other ones thought they were so cool for this.
R: Did you enjoy the preparation?
K: Singing? Other people didn’t sing [then] it would be weird if you just sing.

As the oldest student at the KLS, Kevin was so aware of what was going on with other students during the preparation of the year-end performance, unlike the other student participants who complained about the performance. Kevin had a critical view of other students who were not participating. He said, “it was just for the show to be prepared,” and he would not mind participating in the show next year if he had to.

Self-Identification in Relation to Others

Based on his past struggles with attending a weekend Korean heritage language school and with pressure caused by overloaded schoolwork, Kevin sympathized with James’s defiance at the KLS. Kevin used to be like James, he admitted, always asking his parents why he had to do extra schoolwork if the KLS was not compulsory. Kevin realized that he had to accommodate his circumstance, which included being bilingual due to his parents’ Korean identity. “I think each Korean Asian, actually Asian, Chinese, Japanese, Korean kid that lives here, they go through the same thing,” he said in his interview. According to Kevin, his Asian friends had the same issues and struggles about being overloaded with work. The experiences that Kevin and other Asian students faced originated from their Asian parents’ educational zeal for their children. Unlike earlier
Korean American immigrants, recent immigrants strive not only for mainstream education but also for heritage education—as a result of learning about the negative ramifications of heritage language loss experienced by earlier immigrants (Wong Fillmore, 2000). Kevin understood the immigrant parents’ passion for both heritage education and mainstream education as characteristics of Asians, saying, “I know I need to be bilingual.” He lumped all Asian students into an identical group because of the similar parental pressures they faced, as well as their situated social contexts (home, ethnic churches, ethnic communities, and ethnic social gatherings) that expect them to be bilingual. Hence, this finding confirms the argument that identity is socially defined as a social product (Holland et al., 1998).

In his interview, Kevin told me that after James’s outburst (breaking the whiteboard) at the KLS, his parents made James kneel down and they hit him. Kevin said,

I think that just made him more confused. Because he thinks he didn’t do anything wrong. He’s just a little bit confused now. He’s Ok now, but he was scary. I think he just doesn’t like homework over the weekend. And I used to be like this . . . over the summer we go to parents [and say] “공부 안 시켰는데 왜 나 해야돼? (There is no homework, then why should I study?)” I used to be like that, too (interview on June 18, 2012).

He had felt that it was not fair that he had to study over the weekend when other American children did not, so he ended up yelling at his parents.

Excerpt 5.6. K=Kevin, R=Researcher (June 18, 2012)

R: Did you show your anger to your parents?
K: Yeah.
R: Did you do something?
K: I yelled at them.
R: Oh, do you think it was part of your puberty stage too?
K: I don’t think that’s [because of] puberty. I think that’s just a sense of why I am doing this.
R: Uh-huh.
K: Like, I am the same person like everyone else. So why do I have to do that?
R: So what happened when you yelled at them?
K: Well, I got in trouble obviously.
R: Did you get hit?
K: Yeah, I got hit.

His sympathy toward James came from Kevin’s own struggles with his identity formation, which showed that his identity had been shaped and changed through time. He resisted his parents—evidence of his own effort at negotiation, as Excerpt 5.6 shows. Such resistance resulted in corporal punishment at the hands of his father. After that, Kevin began to accept his situation and the reality that he must become bilingual and study hard. He considered accommodating to his parents’ demand to be a measure of maturity, which made it easier for him to accept his being bilingual and a studious student. This adaptation can be a result of socialization in his Korean household under his Korean parents’ discipline.

**Self-Identification in Relation to Code-Switching and Other Artifacts**

From classroom observations and transcripts of his discourse in class, Kevin’s CS was mostly intersentential, which means he did not mix lexical items from both Korean and English in one sentence. He also spoke Korean without missing subtle particles, *Excerpt 5.7. In Kevin’s Advanced Korean Class*

21 Kevin:  
*holangi-nun yeyneytul an moke-yo/*  
tiger-NOM these not eat-HON  
(Tigers do not eat these.)

22  
*Human eats everything/*
He argued that tigers do not eat all animals, asserting that tigers cannot be at the top of the food pyramid because they are not the No. 1 predators. Later, he said in English, “Human eats everything.” Kevin’s language choice of English and/or Korean played an important role in his language socialization while he was speculating, challenging, and negating the language expert’s (his teacher’s) language practices. His fully developed, advanced Korean and English skills allowed him to switch with great flexibility to either language. The more he participated in classroom discussions, the more he utilized CS into Korean. This supports the work of Milroy and Li (Milroy & Li, 1995; Li et al., 1992) about the relationship between ethnic index and patterns of language choice.

Kevin wrote a poem in Korean devoid of translation from English about World War II:

Excerpt 5.8. Kevin’s Poem in Korean and in English (Translated by Researcher)

한국에서 일본이 식민지배
전쟁에서 죽은 유태인 들과 한국인들
불쌍해요
옛날에 있던 싸움들이 궁금해요

In Korea, Japan colonization
Jews and Koreans who died in war
I have pity on them
I am curious about wars in the old days

He especially revealed his sympathy toward Jews and Koreans who died in World War II and pointed out the Japanese colonization of Korea in the early 18th century. His curiosity about the history of war in general, in fact, motivated him to read war history books. It can be inferred that Kevin might have been seeking his Korean identity by learning about world history. The topic of his poem might be based on his personal interests as well as on his ethnic relation to Korea.
Lastly, when Kevin voluntarily played a Korean picture card game at the KLS, he displayed his self-identification as Korean. The Korean card game Kevin brought from home was not as popular as *Yu-gi-oh*, a Japanese card game in the United States. Kevin and James were playing the Korean game at the KLS, where playing Korean games was appropriate. But it came from home, so he likely used it in his own home in his spare time. Playing the game, he believed, was appropriate at the KLS. “It’s educational. We need to read Korean,” he said. His association to his Korean ethnic identity was revealed through the Korean picture cards at the KLS.

**Kevin’s Parents:** Korean language and literacy was essential for developing a Korean identity.

Unlike other parents, Kevin’s mother chose to be interviewed in the public city library where Kevin borrowed books, read them, and did his schoolwork. Kevin’s father was at work and therefore could not participate in the interview. The library was near Kevin’s house in the same school district where this study’s other participants lived. During the recorded interview, we spoke Korean, and then I transcribed the interview and translated it into English. The interview lasted approximately 90 minutes.

**Early Korean Literacy at Home**

Kevin’s mother valued the Korean language at home and enacted it as the family language. She even pretended that she did not understand Kevin’s English and asked him to repeat himself in Korean. To her, English was Kevin’s preferred language. His English education was not something she worried about. She attributed Kevin’s advanced English language skills and literacy to his early Korean home literacy environment where he naturally developed a love of reading.
Kevin’s mother did not teach Kevin the alphabet in either Korean or English when Kevin was a young child. Instead, she read to him Korean books and focused solely on reading, providing an environment where he could read in peace and quiet, even as a young child. She attributed Kevin’s advanced language skills and literacy to his ability to read at an early age. As a youngster, he was surrounded by books and truly enjoyed turning page after page. Kevin’s advanced reading skills became apparent during the summer after second grade. It was amazing that he could read chapter books, she said:

Kevin went to school a year earlier at the age of five, and that worried me a lot because his less fully developed maturity could make it hard for him to follow school instructions. I borrowed many different kinds of books for him and let him pick up any book he liked. I found that he was interested in dragons. He read books about dragons until he finished his second grade. During summer break, I took Kevin to the library every day. One day, I thought I should motivate Kevin to read chapter books, so I picked up a thick chapter book about dragons in big fonts and gave it to Kevin. It was the first chapter book he read. After that, he became confident about reading any chapter books. When Kevin entered third grade, his teacher told me that his reading skills were at a sixth grade level (interview on June 18, 2012).

Kevin’s mother valued her child’s ability to read at such a young age over his early knowledge of other subjects, such as math.

**Parenting**

Kevin’s mother disciplined Kevin to be self-reliant and mentally mature. Eventually, she began sharing with Kevin issues and challenges facing the family:

Before I didn’t share family issues with Kevin, but now since he is old enough to understand what I am saying, I told him, “Since we are minority in the United States, education is the only way for you to survive in this White-dominant society. You must have a good job to survive in the United States.” I also shared unpleasant stories with him. Usually parents tend to conceal any bad news from their children, but I started sharing with Kevin last year. For example, I told him about how hard it was for me to search for a job. I truly believe that my child needs to know that life is not easy. Even though it is a second-hand experience for him, he needs to be exposed to this hardship early so that he knows the real world, and
through knowing reality, he can be mature and devote himself to study out of his own commitment, not because I push him to study hard (interview on June 18, 2012).

It seems that most of the discipline Kevin faced at home came from the mother. She spent more time than her husband did with Kevin at home and therefore tended to talk to him about almost everything. She was a nagger and talker, she said, telling Kevin the same thing over and over so that he might remember it and realize that her words were important lessons he would value as a grownup.

According to Kevin’s mother, Kevin became eloquent with his expressions in English, which gave him confidence in debate by the time he was in eighth grade. However, his verbal skills also had him challenging his mother when it came to parental discipline at home. For her, Kevin’s back talk was too much, contrary to Korean culture.

“Children are not supposed to talk back to parents in Korea,” she exclaimed. She compared children growing up in Korea and ones in the United States, saying:

Kevin tends to talk back to me. As you know, children are not supposed to talk back to parents in Korea, but Kevin does that a lot. But children growing up in the United States talk back to their parents. Korean parents have a hard time with that. I try to hold myself, to calm down when Kevin talks back. But when it gets to be too much, I lose my mind and explode and tell Kevin to stop his back talk. I think that comes from our different cultures. As I remember, I never talked back to my parents. But Kevin talks back to me, nitpicking small things. Kevin gets scolded a lot because of that. We are Korean so it is not easy for us to change and to accept that kind of behavior. I wouldn’t think American parents would accept all that back talk from their children, either. It is hard to discipline children (interview on June 18, 2012).

Because Kevin was influenced by American culture, she said, it was a struggle to discipline him even though she said Kevin was respectful to his parents. She understood Kevin’s Americanized verbal behaviors, but she, having been socialized in Korea in
parent-child relationships, could not accept his habitual back talk. To her, such behavior was not acceptable. She was well aware of her child’s American social environment that influenced him to talk and act like an American boy.

**Korean Language and Identity**

Kevin’s mother, however, refused to give up disciplining Kevin like she was raised in Korea. She expected Kevin to behave like a Korean. Here, we see a parent’s imposed identification of a child who once rebelled against attending a heritage language school. She believed that it was mandatory for her to develop Kevin’s “Koreanness.” Kevin’s mother told him to speak Korean at home. Sometimes, she would pretend not to understand his English. Despite her efforts to convince him to speak only Korean at home, Kevin could not express himself in Korean all the time. The mother also told Kevin that he must speak Korean well because he is Korean, as well as American.

Kevin’s mother said she wanted to inculcate Kevin with his Korean identity.

We wanted to inculcate Korean identity into Kevin. He is American so he should have an American identity, but I don’t care much about that. But because Kevin is growing up in the United States, he needs to develop his Korean identity. As he goes into his puberty stage, I feel it is hard for me to communicate with him. He gets emotionally complicated nowadays. So, it gets hard when we try to explain our emotions, even in Korean. I feel it is hard to communicate about this emotional part. It is a recent thing. I never felt this before. I don’t know whether it is because of the language difference or the age gap between us (June 18, 2012).

Kevin’s mother started teaching Korean to Kevin because she wanted him to have a Korean identity. She also mentioned that parent-child communication was not her concern before, but recently she felt there was a gap between her and Kevin in communication. She was not sure whether that gap came from their language difference or age difference.
*Expectations for her Child*

Kevin’s parents expected him to attend either a dental school or medical school. At first, they encouraged him to attend a dentistry school but later urged him to become a medical doctor. “I tell Kevin to have a higher goal if he really wants to become a dentist,” the mother said. “He should be good enough to go to a medical school, and then it is guaranteed that he can go to a dental school. People usually reach lower than their goals. So I tell all these things to Kevin.” It was the parents who influenced Kevin to want to become a dentist. The mother said she and her husband did not especially care about which university he might attend. Rather, attending any university at all was what was important, as long as it had a medical program. Kevin’s mother believed Kevin would be successful and would earn respect as a result of his educational achievements, overcoming obstacles Kevin might face as a minority, such as racial discrimination in mainstream society.

In sum, Kevin’s mother believed Kevin would develop his American identity naturally without intentional efforts because the social context in which he was growing up is that of the United States. Kevin’s Korean identity would not develop naturally, as his American identity might. In her view, the formation of his Korean identity needed parental support. Kevin’s mother also believed that having a professional job would help him overcome the obstacles of being a minority, and therefore, educational achievement would be the only way for him to become a professional, such as a dentist or medical doctor. Like James’s father, she acknowledged that racial discrimination exists in mainstream society, so she told her son: “Since we are minority in the United States, education is the only way for you to survive in this White-dominant society. You must
have a good job to survive in the United States.” Kevin’s mother, not his father, was the
dominant influence on such matters. Kevin must be prepared for the consequences of
discrimination, she said. Kevin seemed to understand the wisdom of his parents’ advice.
Kevin viewed being bilingual as an asset whereas James saw it as an obstacle in
mainstream society.

**Elise: “I am 65% American and 35% Korean.”**

Elise, the most observant, critical student among the student participants, revealed the
most positive associations with Korea and toward learning the Korean language but
quantified her identity as only 35% Korean. She spoke English at home as her preferred
language. She was always active and energetic in the Korean lessons, making
connections to the lessons as she brought different views and ideas to the class.

*Self-Identification in Relation to Birthplace*

Elise identified herself as 65% American and 35% Korean. She gave herself nearly a
double portion of being American based on her place of birth and residence; she was born
in and lives in the United States. Because her parents are Korean, she also considered
herself Korean. To her, association with a birthplace seemed to matter in relation to self-
identification. She mentioned that Korea is not where she was born and raised and that
she had visited only a few times. Her summertime visits provided little connection to her
Korean roots. Korea, for her, was only a distant land where her grandparents lived and
where her parents were born and raised.

*Excerpt 5.9. R=Researcher, E=Elise (May 24, 2012)*

R: OK. What do you think about learning Korean?
E: Oh, I guess it’s okay.
R: It’s okay. Why do you think you have to learn Korean?
E: Uh, because my mom’s like how are you gonna speak with your grandma (unintelligible)? How are you gonna talk to friends in Korea? I’m like, I’m not sure about friends in Korea. She’s like you are Korean. You should speak Korean.
R: So what do you think about the fact that your mom saying you’re Korean? Do you see yourself as Korean?
E: Um, I see myself as an American Korean.
R: Ameri, oh, Korean American.
E: Yeah, but I was born in America.
R: Right.
E: I was born in America and my parents are Korean so,
R: You feel like half Korean
E: More of [[American than Korean.
R: American than Korean]].
E: Oh, yeah.
R: If you quantify, you know what the quantify means right?
E: No.
R: Like if you number with percentage, how many percentages do you think you are Korean and American?
E: Uh…maybe 65.
R: 65 American?
E: Yeah.

**Positive Association to Korea**

In retrospect, Elise energetically described the fun she had in Korea. In the summer of 2011, while staying with her grandmother, her mother sent her to a public elementary school to gain firsthand experience about Korean culture and language. She enjoyed her visit in Korea thanks to tasty street food, fancy but inexpensive stationary, attention from other Korean students, and the fact that everything was within walking distance. Elise enjoyed the elementary school. Despite her lower Korean language and literacy skills, she liked her teacher because she gave less demanding schoolwork and was more generous to girls than boys. She ended her description of her time in Korea with one word: “Awesome!” Her visit to Korea seemed to give her a positive attitude about learning the Korean language and Korean culture at the KLS, which was evident as Elise was attentive to her teacher most of the time and was engaged in activities in her class.
Self-Identity Exposure in Relation to English

Despite the fact that Elise’s parents spoke only Korean to their children, English was the language Elise spoke most of the time at home to/with her twin sister, Dana, and parents. When her mother did not understand her English during important matters or arguments, Elise spoke Korean—as a remedial strategy for communication breakdowns. Unlike Kevin but similar to James, English was the language Elise spoke to her parents. Since language and identity are so intertwined, Elise’s decision to speak English is significant and deserves exploration in relation to her self-proclaimed 65% American identity.

Not only at home, but at the KLS, Elise used English exclusively; she did not speak Korean even when she shared her opinions about Korean culture or new trends in Korea. While the intermediate students were learning how to use action verbs—such as putting on and off apparel or jewelry—she asked in English, “Who would wear shoes inside the home?” To Dana’s immediate reply of “Americans,” Elise simply stated, “I hate (unintelligible).” She hated the practice of wearing shoes at home. Socialized in the Korean culture, Elise did not wear shoes at home. It offended her Koreanness. On another occasion, Elise asked her teacher, “Why do Koreans air gay talk? It was annoying.” This time, her comments were irrelevant to the lesson. To her, “gay talk” referred to effeminate mannerisms and speech patterns. So, her question could be restated as, “Why do Korean broadcasting stations air people talking like gays?” Even though it was not clear where her anti-gay attitude came from, Elise’s statements seems to suggest that she has been influenced by anti-gay discrimination of gay men in Korea. Gay men in Korea are ostracized. This is perhaps another aspect of the influence of Korean culture on Elise’s worldviews in relation to homosexual issues.
**Imposed Korean Identity**

Elise felt either persuaded or forced by her mother to take part in various extracurricular activities (piano, fine arts, fan dance, Kumon, and the KLS), some of which were not enjoyable to her, but she could not quit. The main reason she was learning Korean was, “Because my mom’s like, how are you gonna speak with your grandma? How are you gonna talk to friends in Korea? She’s like, you are Korean. You should speak Korean.” Elise’s mother rattled off valuable reasons to persuade Elise to understand the importance of learning Korean. But Elise did not fully agree with her mother, instead saying, “I’m not sure about friends in Korea.” Elise’s mother tried to tie her daughter to people in Korea in an effort to motivate her to speak Korean, which is an indicator of parental influence on a child’s identity formation. The mother’s efforts did not seem to be entirely successful. Even though Elise seemed not to buy into the necessity of learning Korean to communicate with her friends in Korea, her socialization in her home was being influenced by her parents’ Korean ethnicity.

**Imposed Family Identity**

The twin’s parents had a family motto: “There is no quitting in this family.” Elise understood, and to her this motto meant that her parents wanted her and her sister to be smarter than anyone else. However, this motto was too demanding. Elise seemed to be overwhelmed. Piano. Math club. Fine arts. Applied art. Korean traditional fan dance. Kumon, an after-school program. Learning Korean at a Korean language school. Quitting, after first starting an activity, was not an option. Elise suspected that one of the reasons her mother insisted she never quit was so that her mother had free time to herself.
This made Elise less willing to accept the family motto. In her mind, the motto was only an excuse for her parents to have more free time.

**Dana: “I am American, sometimes Asian. I feel left out because I’m like Asian.”**

Dana was more withdrawn compared to the other student participants. Unlike Elise, she did not initiate conversations, and even after she was asked questions, her responses were terse. However, in relation to her self-identity, it was apparent that she was in a pre-adolescent stage, sensitive about perceptions of and acceptance from others. Dana behaved as a big sister at the KLS, being responsible for taking care of her younger twin, Elise. In Korea, older siblings are expected to be and are held accountable for their younger siblings’ misbehaviors outside of home—for the sake of family face. Dana played that role at the KLS. Her identity construction and formation are examined in the following section.

*Self-Identification in Relation to the Majority*

In the interview, Dana’s mother identified her twin daughters as Korean Americans. Like James, Dana identified herself sometimes as American and sometimes as Asian. Her view of her identity was neither simple nor clear; she seemed to be in the process of searching for and constructing her identity. She related her American identity to the English language, her dominant language, and to the United States, the place of her birth. Dana felt left out from majority students due to the small number of Asian students—three—in her fifth grade class. The White American students were the majority. She included herself as one of the few Asian students, while differentiating herself from the majority group. Even though she identified herself as an American and sometimes as an Asian, her Asian identity made her feel isolated. One time, some of her public school classmates
would not let her join them in a work group, which made her feel left out. “Well, there
are too many people [in our group],” they told her.

_Excerpt 5.10. D=Dana, R=Researcher (May 24, 2012)_

R: Sometimes Korean. So why do you see that way?
D: Because mom, see like I’m a Korean and American. I speak mostly
English and, I go to English school. I wasn’t born in Korea.
R: In America.
D: Yeah, and then but I feel left out becoming because I’m like Asian.
R: Oh, at school you mean?
D: Yeah.
R: Is it because kids treat you differently?
D: Umm
R: Like teachers treat you differently? What is the thing make you feel
like left out?
D: Because like, there’s like, only two, me and a different girl, who is
Asian.

_Self-Identification in Relation to Others_

For Dana, the language she spoke was participant related. As a well-balanced bilingual
speaker, she spoke Korean to her mother because her mother was not a fluent English
speaker, and she spoke English to her father and sister. Her father was a balanced
Korean/English bilingual, and Elise was an English-dominant speaker. In Korea, Dana
carried on conversations in Korean with people living there, such as her grandparents at
home and classmates and teacher at her public elementary school.

When she spoke Korean to other Korean adults at the KLS, Dana always used the
appropriate honorifics and the Korean term of address, _sensayngnim_ (teacher), to her
teacher. Like Kevin, Dana seemed to acknowledge the function of the nominal title that
encodes “social relationships between people in terms of age, social status, kinship, and
in- and out-groupness” (Song, 2009, p. 215).
Self-Identification in Relation to English Ownership

Like James and Kevin, Dana also passed judgment on non-native English speakers’ English. She commented on her KLS teacher’s English, “[Her English is] horrible and sometimes hard to understand . . . She usually gets, says wrong.” Also, she complained about teachers at Kumon who spoke English as a second language. “They use somewhat different kinds of language,” she said. She meant the teachers spoke English with unique accents. Dana seemed to have “ownership” (Norton, 1997) of standard American English, which meant she could discern the difference between standard American English speakers and nonstandard English speakers. To her, speaking English with an accent was not standard American English. This indicated Dana’s self-identification as American in relation to her ownership of English and her disparagement or criticism of Korean identity.

Self-Identification in Relation to the KLS

Unlike Elise, Dana did not like attending the KLS because she said it was boring and class was held on Saturdays. Attending a school on Saturdays meant extra classwork and homework. Not only that, singing songs and dancing for the year-end performance were “for babies . . . stupid . . . boring,” she said. Dana reluctantly took part in the singing and dancing practices. She said that she participated in activities that were fun and interesting. The main reason that Dana did not like KLS was that she thought it was boring. To her, the KLS was a bother.

Self-Identification in Relation to Artifacts

Dana, unlike Elise, enjoyed watching Korean dramas on the Internet and surfing Korean websites such as Junior Naver. She usually read reviews and ratings of dramas before
deciding to watch them. She seemed to have a strong bond to artifacts about Korea and Korean culture, another indicator of her Korean identity.

**Imposed Korean Family Identity**

As with Elise, for many years Dana was forced to learn the traditional Korean fan dance despite her wish to quit. The twins’ dance performance was even broadcast on TV news, which embarrassed Dana. Not only did she not enjoy the performance, she felt bad about being forced by her mother to dance in front of many people. Dana asked her father to let her quit the fan dance, but he reminded her that quitting was not an option. Like Elise, Dana seemed to have a grudge against her parents, partly because they forced her to learn things she did not enjoy. According to the twins’ similar comments, it was obvious that their parents were trying their best in their own way to imbue their children with Korean tradition and culture—and the twins did not appreciate this. Unlike James and Kevin, the twins’ objections to their parents never went beyond grumbling.

**Parents of Elise and Dana: Speaking more than one language promises greater opportunities.**

For the parent interview, I visited the home of the twins, Elise and Dana. The house was located in an affluent community of mostly Korean Americans. This particular community is one that many parents choose, in part because of the quality of its public schools. The mother invited me to the house for the interview; the father could not participate due to his job in a different city. The house had two stories: the first floor had a big living room, kitchen, and bathroom, and the second floor had three bedrooms and an office. The interview took more than an hour.
English Language Supports

The twin’s mother said English was critical for socialization in mainstream society. The twins spoke the Korean language until they were exposed to English at a day care center. The mother was concerned about the twins’ English development and their socialization into mainstream American society. For her children’s socialization in English, the mother sent her children to a Montessori day care center, to a large American church, and to Sunday school at a Korean church where mostly English was spoken. The mother said, “It was hard for me to take care of the twins by myself and I thought they needed to adjust to American society because they only spoke Korean at that time. I wanted my children not to shy away from other mainstream children.” Until now, the twins have participated in many other extracurricular activities in English such as art, piano, dance, and Kumon. The mother strived for her children’s successful socialization into mainstream society.

The twins’ mother also realized that her children became aware of English as the dominant social language when they entered kindergarten. It was Elise who demanded her mother not speak Korean on the playground and added, “It is embarrassing when you speak Korean.” Such moments were unforgettable for the mother. When that happened, her mother snapped at Elise, “There is no reason for being ashamed of speaking Korean. [Because] I’m Korean and you are Korean.” Elise’s mother inculcated her daughters with her Korean ethnic identity and tried to deflect Elise’s belittling of the Korean language.

Korean Language Supports

According to the twin’s mother, the Korean language must be the home language. The parents of the twins observed that without parental support to maintain their mother
language, children easily lose their heritage language. That’s the story of the father’s relatives living in the United States. The father is the fourth child in his family, and his three siblings immigrated to the United States together and live in other big cities. However, the father observed that his nephews and nieces spoke only English and lost their mother language, which meant they no longer could communicate with their Korean grandparents in Korea. That’s why the father was determined to speak only Korean at home, as well as to send the twins to the KLS.

The parents of the twins believed that visiting Korea was necessary for their children to maintain the heritage language. The parents sent Elise and Dana to a Korean public school in Korea during the summer of 2011, after they finished fourth grade in the United States. When the children were little, they were sent to Korea to attend a private kindergarten, but after fourth grade was the first time they attended a public elementary school in Korea. Even though they spent only two months in the Korean school, the parents believed the time was well spent. The mother said her children would go to Korea again to attend a summertime public school soon after their summer break started in the United States this same year.

*Early Korean Literacy at Home*

When the children were very young, the mother started reading Korean books to her children. The mother said,

I started reading to my children when they were not even a year old yet. I received a collection of 50 children’s books as a gift from Korea. I read to them every night. And later my children could not fall asleep if I didn’t read to them. Even now, they cannot fall asleep if they do not read a book. I had to read to them every night, until they could read to themselves (interview on May 24, 2013).
Reading was not an activity the mother enjoyed herself, but she took her children to the library at least once a week and sometimes everyday. While the children would choose the books they would read, the mother would pick up a magazine to glance through and spend time waiting for her children to read as many books as possible. So the trip to the library was strictly for the children. The mother believed that early exposure to literacy contributed to building Elise’s zeal for reading: she read before going to bed and after getting up in the morning.

While encouraging her children to speak Korean, the mother also was concerned about her children’s English development and their socialization into mainstream American society. They did not learn or speak English until they entered day care. The mother knew of the status of English as the dominant societal language and that English was critical for socialization in mainstream society. So, to promote her children’s acculturation into the English dominant society, she sent her children to public institutions or organizations for full immersion into English.

Regarding Korean maintenance, from their infancy the mother immersed her children in a Korean-literate home environment. Even before the girls were a year old, she read Korean books to them. A bedtime story in Korean became a ritual—the twins could not even fall asleep without it. Later, by the time they could read English books themselves, the mother took them to the library at least once a week or sometimes everyday. The mother believed that the girls’ early exposure to a literacy environment contributed to building their zeal for reading; Elise read before going to bed and after getting up in the morning. Being raised in their Korean-literate home environment reinforced the twins’ Korean proficiency, which enabled them to communicate with
Korean speakers at the KLS and in Korea. However, after the twins started reading books in English, their mother stopped reading Korean books to them and their exposure to Korean books was discontinued.

A story of heritage language loss by their family members compelled the twins’ parents to be more determined to maintain the Korean language and identity. That was the impetus for them to speak only Korean at home, as well as to send the twins to the KLS. The parents had a strong dedication to and expectation for their children learning Korean; they never skipped sending their children to a Korean school. For the mother, the main reason for her children to learn Korean was for better communication, not only with her, whose English proficiency was not advanced, but with their grandparents in Korea who did not speak English. The Korean language was the essential bridge for the twins to be connected to their roots in Korea.

The mother’s view of her children’s ethnic identification was based on their Korean somatic characteristics. She said, “My children look Korean and therefore must speak Korean.” The father also believed that his children would look “stupid” if they could not speak Korean. The parents valued multilingualism; they believed speaking more than one language could expose the children to greater opportunities in a worldwide economy. Early home literacy practices, imbuing the twins with Korean culture and identity, as well as the parents’ strong Korean identity for themselves and for their children, played influential roles for the twins’ Korean identification in regards to the Korean language and the appropriate use of honorifics.

In sum, the student participants as pre-adolescents were searching for, constructing, negotiating, and researching their social and ethnic identities. Their ethnic
identities were endowed to them from due to their Korean ethnic background. However, it was not an easy or simple task for them to accept their imposed Korean identity as if it were the truth. They were somewhat influenced by their parents’ constant discipline of Korean traditions and values, but they also seemed to actively search for justifications of their given identities. As West (1992, cited in Norton, 1997, p. 410) asserted, “Identity relates to desire—the desire for recognition, the desire for affiliation, and the desire for security and safety.” The students identified themselves in relation to recognition from and affiliation with the majority group of White students, while resisting or conforming themselves to an affiliation with the Korean community and while seeking security for their future via a professional career. At the same time, the parents constantly reminded their children of their Koreanness in an effort to build Korean identity, to secure communication in Korean, and to pass down their heritage. However, as we saw earlier, not every student conformed to their parents’ discipline. Table 5.1 summarizes the parents’ perspectives on the Korean and/or English language and literacy based on their interviews.
Table 5.1. Parents’ Language Ideologies

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Language</th>
<th>James’s Parents</th>
<th>Kevin’s Parents</th>
<th>Parents of Elise and Dana</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| **English** | - A priority over Korean for education.  
- For professional career (dentist/medical doctor)  
- My children’s linguistic weapon | - For professional career (dentist/medical doctor)  
- Early home literacy | - Critical for socialization  
- For professional career (dentist) |
| **Korean** | - Early home literacy  
- For better communication  
- Essential for Korean ethnicity identity due to the invisible glass ceiling  
- Visiting Korea to reconnect with grandparents | - The home language  
- Essential for Korean identity | - Early home literacy  
- For better communication  
- The home language  
- Visiting Korea to reconnect with grandparents |
In the previous chapters, I examined the Korean American students’ language and literacy practices and their attitudes toward these practices at a Korean Language School (KLS) in the southwestern region of the United States. In this chapter, I discuss some of the significant findings and potential implications of the main research question and three sub-questions. The main question is: How do Korean American children engage in meaning-making through language and literacy practices either in Korean and/or in English in the Korean Language School? The sub-questions are:

1. What language and literacy practices, either in Korean and/or in English, do the Korean American children engage in at the KLS?
2. What kinds of attitudes do they express verbally and nonverbally toward those language and literacy practices at the KLS?
3. What factors inside and outside of the KLS might have influenced the children’s experiences?

I will first address the sub-questions in order to build my response to the main research question.

**Sub-Research Question 1: What language and literacy practices, either in Korean and/or in English, do the Korean American children engage in at the Korean Language School?**

In the Korean Language School, all of the Korean American student participants were put into a unique social context by the Korean language teachers and their parents, where
they were expected to engage in “a set of social practices” focused on the Korean language and culture (Barton & Hamilton, 2000). The specific educational institution of the KLS contextualized a set of Korean social practices as being purposeful, embedded, and historically situated for the children. Language and literacy socialization is intended to enable the students not only to produce well-formed referential utterances and writings, but also to learn how to use language and literacy “in socially appropriate ways to co-construct meaningful social contexts and to engage with others in culturally relevant meaning-making activities” (Garrett & Baquedano-Lopez, 2002, p. 342).

Developing mutuality between adults and novices is a fundamental aspect in language socialization. However, there was no mutual agreement between the children and parents concerning Korean language and literacy development at the KLS.

The literacy practices that the Korean American students engaged in at the KLS can be grouped into four domains: Korean language and literacy instruction, art, music, and dance. The main literacy domain in the KLS was academic literacy during Korean instruction, but English also was used for various purposes. In the Korean language and literacy instruction, the mandated textbook series played the most important role in the students’ literacy development. However, the KLS teachers felt the need for supplementary lessons. They implemented various instructional resources, such as audio-visual resources, role-playing, English vocabulary as a supplementary aid, practice for grammatical knowledge, reading aloud, fill-in-the-blanks and closed-answer questions, writing a creative poem, pencil drawings of World War II, and playing Korean card games.
In the extracurricular art, music, and dance activities, the Korean American students were expected to engage in some literacy practices while engaged in learning Korean traditions and customs. In art class, they were exposed to 10 symbols of longevity. In music class, they memorized the lyrics of two Korean songs without translation into English. The students also learned a Korean traditional mask dance, saying aloud the Chinese verse of the classic poem while dancing. Through these extracurricular activities, the literacy practices the KLS students were engaged in not only included the traditional way of learning Korean literacy by emphasizing how to read the written text passively and produce their own written materials actively, but also traditional arts, dancing, and singing enabled the students be part of the KLS community. The KLS teachers and the principal, as experts of the Korean language and culture, made an active effort to socialize the students at the KLS into their “Koreanness.” The students’ individual attitudes toward the literacy activities varied, from enjoyment to hatred and boredom.

Code-switching (CS) was examined as the prominent language practice utilized in the Korean language and literacy lessons, not only among the students but also by the teachers, sometimes intentionally and many times subconsciously. Despite the teachers’ determination to speak Korean as much as possible, they code-switched to English as a natural language practice, mostly for Korean instruction and classroom management. The Korean address term sensayngnim (teacher) and honorifics were modeled and enacted by the teachers in the KLS as an index of group membership or social identity (Ochs, 1993). The teachers’ and students’ language practices with CS are shown in Table 6.1.
Table 6.1. CS Functions and Usages in the Advanced and Intermediate Classes

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Teachers</th>
<th>Advanced Class</th>
<th>Intermediate Class</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Translation sensitive CS.</td>
<td>CS with an exaggerated American accent.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Domain sensitive CS.</td>
<td>Echo CS.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>CS for occasional English words to aid students’ comprehension.</td>
<td>CS to English for Warnings.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>CS for correction of students’ incorrect English.</td>
<td>CS to English for interpersonal relationships.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Echo CS.</td>
<td>CS for encouragement.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Honorifics used by the teacher.</td>
<td>CS to English for instruction.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>CS to English for more familiar terms.</td>
<td>CS to Korean for ensuring students complete given tasks.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>CS to English for content words.</td>
<td>CS to Korean for emphasizing expected student manners.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>CS to English for admonishment.</td>
<td>CS to English for drawing attention.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>CS as parallel translation.</td>
<td>CS to Korean for appropriate behaviors.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Students</td>
<td>CS to Korean for entertainment.</td>
<td>CS to English for reassurance.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>CS to Korean without honorifics.</td>
<td>CS to English as concurrent translation.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>English for revealing rebellion.</td>
<td>CS to English as triggers for students’ CS to English.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>CS to Korean for manipulation.</td>
<td>English words for elaboration.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>CS to English due to slow retrieval of Korean target words.</td>
<td>Term of address in Korean.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>CS to English for breaking asymmetrical power relations.</td>
<td>Participant-related CS.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>CS to English for requesting information.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
• CS for acknowledgement from teacher.
• CS to Korean as an Echo.
• English for imaginary play.

In order to see how each function of CS by the teachers and the students is used in English and Korean, Table 6.2 and Table 6.3 are reorganized from Table 6.1, focusing on the functions of CS in English and Korean.

*Table 6.2. Teachers’ CS Functions in English and in Korean*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>English</th>
<th>Korean</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• Elaborating.</td>
<td>• Honorifics.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Scaffolding while translating.</td>
<td>• Expected student manners.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Occasional words to aid students’ comprehension.</td>
<td>• Requesting appropriate behaviors.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Correction of students’ incorrect English.</td>
<td>• Content words or phrases.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Repetition of student utterance.</td>
<td>• Echoing students’ Korean</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• More familiar or easily retrieved words.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Academic content words.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Admonishing.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Concurrent translation.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Exaggerated American accent/ pronunciation/ intonation</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Echoing students’ English</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Warnings.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Interpersonal relationships.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Encouragement.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Drawing attention.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Triggers for students’ CS to English.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Elaborating.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Assuring students’ comprehension.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
The teachers used CS into English for instructional purposes, such as elaborating, scaffolding, aiding comprehension, correction, familiar or easily retrieved terms or concepts, concurrent translation, exaggerated American accent and pronunciation, instructing, and making assurance. The teachers used CS into Korean for social relations, such as modeling honorifics, echoing, interpersonal relationships, and encouragement. Among the CS functions, only Korean was used for appropriate behaviors, honorifics, and expected student manners. The teachers’ CS to Korean for requesting appropriate behaviors usually occurred after English in order to emphasize the seriousness of their request. They used CS in both English and Korean back and forth for classroom management, such as admonishment, warnings, emphasis, attention, and assurance.

CS into English was different. The students, all of whom spoke English as their dominant language, did not need translation into Korean for better comprehension. Rather, Garrett and Baquedano-Lopez (2002) assert that novices are expected to recognize and display emotions in culturally defined ways as the basis for the socialization of morality, so it can be assumed that the KLS teachers who speak Korean as their dominant language spoke Korean in the KLS classrooms to reveal emotions and affections in order to construct the moral order in culturally defined and relevant ways, according to local KLS norms and preferences.

The teachers in the KLS utilized both Korean and English to verbalize content words or phrases and to explain academic concepts. The irony is that even though Korean was the expected language of communication at the KLS and students were constantly reminded of this fact, the teachers felt they had to employ English for better understanding of content materials. Many times, their CS to English was intentional, not
because they did not have any appropriate Korean equivalents due to a lexical gap (Baker, 2001; Gibbons, 1987; Grosjean, 1982), but because they felt English was required to increase student comprehension. How and to what extent KLS teachers’ CS influenced positively or negatively students’ Korean language acquisition and maintenance are crucial questions that need to be examined in another study. Ironically, the teachers did not follow the school’s Korean only language rule, and thus the students did not, either.

The KLS students spoke mostly English during the Korean language instruction sessions, and they code-switched to Korean when requested by their teachers most of the time. Their CS was mostly participant related. Table 6.2 summarizes the KLS students’ CS in Korean and English, even though the functions of CS varied by student.

Table 6.3. Students’ CS Functions in Korean and in English (See Table 6.1 for more details)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Korean</th>
<th>English</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• Entertainment.</td>
<td>• Rebellion.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Devoid of honorifics.</td>
<td>• Due to slow retrieval of Korean target words.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Manipulation of directives.</td>
<td>• Breaking asymmetrical power relations.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Earning acknowledgement.</td>
<td>• Arguments.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Echoing.</td>
<td>• Imaginary play.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Emphasis.</td>
<td>• Requesting information.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Arguments.</td>
<td>• Complaints about tasks.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Term of address.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Participant relations.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

CS to English occurred during emotional outbreaks of rebellion against teacher authority or rejection of asymmetrical power relations. It was also utilized due to slow retrieval of Korean target words; for example, Kevin retrieved quickly an English word, though he had previously produced its Korean equivalent. For English-dominant speakers, CS to English was an easy and comfortable means to engage in imaginary verbal play, as well
as to request information and to engage in discussion. Korean was used for entertainment by saying the Korean infantile word “poop” in an academic lesson, manipulation of teacher’s suggestive command, correcting teacher’s misunderstanding, echoing teacher’s Korean, and arguing for teacher’s acknowledgement.

Kevin’s CS was mostly intersentential—use of one language at the sentence/clause level, then switching to the other language in the next sentence/clause. As mentioned in Chapter 4, his CS showed his full competence in both languages. For Dana and Elise, their CS was mostly participant related, that is, if their interlocutor was a Korean-dominant speaker, they switched to Korean, and then to English, their preferred language, with their classmates. James, a dominant-English speaker, code-switched to Korean occasionally for entertainment and manipulation, but used English to rebel and break asymmetrical power relations. While the other three Korean American students used the expected Korean address term sensayngnim (teacher) and honorifics, James hardly addressed his teacher for any purpose during the classroom interactions, either in Korean or in English, and his use of Korean honorifics was not observed in the classroom. Interestingly in his interview, he used the Korean term to address other teachers in the KLS, and he used Korean honorifics to me during his interview. As language use with CS can signify social roles and relations to other social members, all students used Korean honorifics and appropriate address terms toward Korean adults—in James’s case, outside of his classroom. James’s decision not to use Korean honorifics and address terms toward his teacher during the Korean lessons supports Silverstein’s (1997) claim that membership in a speech community varies among members with different degrees of sharedness.
Sub-Research Question 2: What kinds of attitudes do the Korean American students express verbally and/or nonverbally toward those language and literacy practices in the Korean Language School?

The students’ attitudes toward the language and literacy practices that are examined in the previous question have implicit and explicit connotations, as revealed during the Korean language instruction in the KLS. Among the four participants, James became the most rebellious student toward the KLS. Language uses and engagements are deeply connected with identity and language ideology, which are examined in the next section of the third sub-research question.

As we saw earlier, James could not control his emotional outbursts, breaking a school whiteboard with his fist during my first classroom observation. In my interview with him, when asked what triggered the outburst, he simply said he did not remember well what caused him to act that way. But he said his morning that day had started poorly. He said that first he was not in a good mood and he was hit by his mother in the car on the way to the KLS. It seemed that James made his teacher, whom he characterized as “too nice,” a scapegoat for his frustrations and angers. No consequences followed James’s rebellion against his teacher, which reinforced his undesirable behavior in the classroom.

James did not use Korean honorifics or Korean address terms toward his teacher. He spoke English to her to break the student-teacher asymmetrical power relations. Not only at the KLS, but also on other occasions when he met other Korean adults, he said, “Sometimes I just start a conversation, I go to him and ‘Hey, bro!’ or something like that”
(interview on May 28, 2012). The expression “Hey, bro!” could have been used for
closeness toward the Korean adult. However, it can be assumed that he was creating a
different relationship with the Korean adult by using the expression, not following the
conventions or expectations at the KLS or broader Korean community. Thus, his KLS
social membership was not established, which corresponds with his self-identity
perception. His outrageous attitudes were conveyed not only physically, but also verbally.
After the first incident of punching the whiteboard, according to Kevin, James received a
severe reproach from his parents. Also, James’s mother arranged a three-party meeting
with James, his mother, and his teacher. His mother tried to persuade James to understand
why learning the Korean language and culture was important for him for his future.
However, James did not seem to agree with his mother.

James’s physically violent rebellion subdued after that early incident and then
never was observed again, but his verbal rebellion became more violent and severe, as
follows: “You are crazy, aren’t you?” “Are you on cocaine?” “You are a treacherous
man, aren’t you?” He even acted out, playing on his cell phone and singing “Jingle Bells”
during class. The times James was fully engaged were when he did a role-play, sang
Korean songs in music class, danced the mask dance, and wrote a poem. He even
encouraged other KLS students to participate in singing the songs aloud and dancing.
Acknowledging that the exploration of complex and multifaceted causes of James’s
outrageous attitudes toward the KLS and his teacher is beyond the scope of this study,
possible factors influencing his negative attitudes are discussed in the next question.
James verbally described his justifications for his negative attitudes toward the KLS: the poor school facility and its poor school environment, inadequately trained KLS teachers, ad hoc school rules, and meaningless school performances. James, for whom his perceived reputation and social identity as a member of the majority were so important, might dislike the fact that he belonged to that poorly resourced ethnic school. One interesting finding was that the popular trends among majority students at his public middle school were very important to him and he tried to participate in them. For example, he wanted to read the trendy books that other students read. That was part of his self-effort of deconstructing and reconstructing of his social identity.

Unlike James, Kevin’s behavior was appropriate to the KLS social context in which using appropriate Korean honorifics, being polite, and having a positive learning attitude were expected and encouraged by the teacher of this social community. Kevin’s verbal and nonverbal attitudes were well aligned with his Korean ethnic identity—speaking Korean at home. During the Korean lessons, he was the most attentive student, answering his teacher and following all directions. Kevin’s use of intersentential CS increased as the topic of the lessons became more relevant to his interests; the length of his Korean sentences grew, revealing his profound content knowledge of current social events and world war history, as well as his proficiency in spoken Korean. To my surprise, he showed me his Korean card game made in Korea and said, “It is educational. We need to read Korean.” His attitude showed me that he knew what the KLS teachers expected of him and he knew how to meet their expectations. Kevin was well known as a model student in the Korean community, and his behavior met the expected cultural model.
For Kevin, the KLS was a place where he could meet friends his age, and as long as at least one student his age attended the KLS, he would enjoy going there. Unlike James, he enjoyed the year-end school performance in the KLS and did not mind practicing for it, “It was just for the [year-end] show to be prepared,” he said. As an adolescent, his peer group was important for his social interaction. Kevin’s positive attitude toward learning Korean language and literacy seemed to be associated with his strong positive self-esteem (Crocker et al., 1994). Kevin also emphasized that he read the Harry Potter novels when he was in third grade. He perceived himself as an influential person to his friends; he said James behaved better because of his own embracing, kind, and sympathetic attitude toward James. Kevin, in fact, said he once behaved much like James. As a Korean American, Kevin could relate to James’s struggle with his dual or multiple identities. Overall, Kevin had a strong Korean ethnic identity that included an awareness of the necessity of becoming bilingual.

While Kevin and James revealed one-way attitudes, either positive or negative, toward their Koreanness, Dana and Elise were in a two-way spectrum between positive and negative with multi-directional attitudes, as shown in Table 6.5. The twins did not reveal any negative attitudes during the Korean lessons. Dana was engaged in her lessons, following her teacher’s directions, whereas Elise was more actively engaged in the lessons than Dana, raising her hands to answer the teacher. When they spoke Korean to the teacher, they both used honorifics and Korean address terms. Sometimes, they complained to the teacher about how difficult making origami was or about time constraints and that they needed more time to complete a given task. The twins never failed to follow the teacher’s directions in class and they turned in homework on time.
However, as revealed in their interviews, Dana did not like attending the KLS because it was on Saturdays and because she was forced to sing songs and dance for the year-end performance, which were activities for “babies, stupid, and boring.” She did not even participate in practicing for the year-end performance; she was with the other students while practicing singing and dancing but she merely followed the KLS teachers’ instructions. At the KLS, Dana’s social and ethnic identity issues were not evident in relation to her minority status, as with James. She simply did not like the KLS due to the extra work on Saturdays and the childish songs and dances. However, she felt left out as an “Asian” at her public school.

Elise, who with Dana previously attended another Korean school in a bigger city in another state, compared that school with the one in the current city. Elise considered the Korean school in the other city to be a “real school” because classes were held in a regular American school building. Therefore, she considered the KLS to be too small compared to the other Korean language school. Elise liked her current KLS once she was there, but “sometimes” she did not like having to attend class on Saturdays. In other words, she indicated she would enjoy the KLS if it were not on Saturdays. Even though she did not reveal any negative attitude toward learning Korean in the KLS, she was very critical of the year-end performance. She did not find any value or meaning in the year-end performance. “It’s useless,” she said. In fact, not having the year-end performance would make her like the KLS much more. She also said that all of the performances were useless because they would not help her on a job application because people would not care whether she knew how to dance Korean traditional dances. Her complaints were that the KLS did not provide students with useful resources they would use in their lives.
In summary, James revealed the most extreme negative attitudes towards the language and literacy practices in his advanced class, making his “too nice” teacher become a scapegoat for his frustrations and angers. His code-switched Korean utterances without Korean honorifics appeared to be another indicator of his rebelliousness, while also breaking the student-teacher asymmetrical power relations. Even though James had his own justification for his negative attitudes toward attending the KLS, his verbal rebellion was extremely violent and severe, as we saw in his direct quotes. Unlike James, Kevin’s behavior was appropriate to the KLS social context. He used Korean honorifics, was polite to his teacher and other Korean teachers, and had a positive learning attitude. These positive attitudes were well aligned with his Korean ethnic identity and his positive self-esteem. Last, even though in their interviews Dana and Elise revealed negative attitudes toward the year-end performance, they did not reveal any negative attitudes during the Korean lessons; instead, they were actively engaged in the language and literacy practices in their intermediate class. Except for the fact that the KLS was held on Saturdays, they seemed to enjoy attending the KLS.

Sub-Research Question 3: What factors inside and outside of the KLS might have influenced the children’s attitudes and behaviors in the Korean Language School?

In response to the second sub-question, I discussed the students’ attitudes based on my classroom observations and student interviews. The classroom observations were what the students actually revealed verbally and nonverbally, whereas the student interviews were what they thought, believed, or perceived at this stage of development, and what they were willing to reveal to me. In this section, I discuss the third sub-question of possible factors that influenced the students’ attitudes and behaviors through adolescent
ethnic identity construction, self-esteem, young adolescent developmental stage, and parents’ language ideologies.

**Self-Identification**

In the previous chapter, I examined the students’ self-identifications and found that all of the Korean American students revealed different attitudes, from extremely negative to positive, toward the KLS. Table 6.4 summarizes each student’s multiple self-identification based on self-report in their interviews.

*Table 6.4. Students’ Multiple Self-Identification (NPG=Not Percentage Given)*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Korean</th>
<th>American</th>
<th>Self-Identification</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>James</td>
<td>15%</td>
<td>85%</td>
<td>“Um, sometimes neither, because when I’m in American environment, I consider myself Korean, and Korean environment, consider me American.” “I mostly consider myself American because I find more pride in America than Korea.”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kevin</td>
<td>100%</td>
<td>NPG</td>
<td>“We are all Korean.”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Elise</td>
<td>35%</td>
<td>65%</td>
<td>“I am 65% American and 35% Korean.”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dana</td>
<td>NPG</td>
<td>NPG</td>
<td>“I am American, sometimes Asian. I feel left out because I’m like Asian.”</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Table 6.5. Attitude Spectrum toward the KLS*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Attitudes (Observation)</th>
<th>Kevin</th>
<th>Elise</th>
<th>Dana</th>
<th>James</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>&lt;= Positive</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Negative =&gt;</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Table 6.6. Ethnic Identification*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Identity (Interview)</th>
<th>100%</th>
<th>35%</th>
<th>15%</th>
<th>0%</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Kevin</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Elise</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>James</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
In Tables 6.5 and 6.6, the students’ attitudes at the KLS and their Korean ethnic identity are in tandem. For Kevin and James, their attitudes correlated with their Korean ethnic identity. Despite Elise’s positive attitudes at the KLS, her Korean identity percentage was lower than 50%. For Dana, it is not clear-cut; because she did not quantify her ethnic identity, it is not available to compare the two aspects. Her ethnic membership was not an “all or nothing” phenomenon (Turner et al., 1994). The findings of the four Korean American students’ varied memberships (ethnic identities) and attitudes, either negative or positive, strongly support the argument that memberships “of ethnic and racial groups vary widely in their sense of belonging to a group and in their evaluations of the group” (Phinney, Cantu, & Kurtz, 1996, p. 167).

**Self-Esteem**

One way to extrapolate a possible factor that might influence the students’ behavior toward the KLS norms and expectations is to consider their self-esteem. Research on social identity and self-esteem supports correlations between these (Crocker et al., 1994). Elise and Kevin revealed high self-esteem. Elise was proud of being an avid reader and the best student in her KLS class, saying, “I’ve read most of the books [in the school library] . . . I don’t think there’s anybody that can read better than me in the class [at the KLS].” She, in fact, amazed me by connecting new information to her background knowledge and by being opinionated about other KLS students based on her keen observations. Kevin revealed high self-esteem as an avid and fast reader, a good debater, and a positive influence on his friends. He earned the reputation of being a model student who excelled academically. Because of his excellent academic achievement, his parents
were asked to consult with other Korean parents. For Kevin and Elise, their high self-esteem might be correlated with their positive Korean identity.

Dana and James revealed low self-esteem. Dana did not like reading or learning new things. While her academic achievement data was not available, she did not reveal confidence in any subject matter. Instead, she revealed how much she disliked math in the Kumon center. She said, “Extra work. Like they will teach you at school [later]. I don’t like to do that (Kumon).” James, who struggled at school, received two detentions in seventh grade, which his parents did not know about. He was aware of all of the expectations of his parents, KLS teachers, and his American schoolteachers, but it seemed that he was afraid to disappoint them because of his low academic achievement in school. He struggled with English language arts and social studies, which demand high academic vocabulary and reading and writing skills. I observed that his English skills were below his grade level. For example, he said, “I speak American,” by which he meant English and “We get gun shoot them. Yes, they do, like people ask poachers,” by which he meant, “People can use guns to shoot them [animals]. Yes, they do, like people who hire poachers [for hunting animals].” Therefore, his insecurity about his academic success given the academic expectations imposed on him could have influenced him to behave abnormally at the KLS.

For James and Dana, negative school experiences of racial discrimination they felt from the White majority students might have influenced their low self-esteem, as well as their negative Korean identity. According to Jajfel (1981), how an ethnic group is viewed by society affects how the group views itself. If an ethnic group is viewed negatively by a host society, the members of the ethnic group may view themselves negatively. Phinney
et al. (1996) assert that this is in accord with early studies on self-esteem among ethnic group members. It can be assumed that membership in a disadvantaged or lower status group would result in lower self-esteem, which entails negative social membership. This is consistent with the stories of James and Dana.

**Young Adolescent Development**

Parenting of young adolescents (age 11-14) has been shown to be more challenging and stressful due to the rapid developmental changes that occur during this period and to the rising importance of peer group norms (Laursen & Collins, 1994). The four students studied here belong to the age group of young adolescents: Kevin and James were 13, and Dana and Elise were 11.

This fact likely influences Kevin’s mother’s compliant about Kevin’s back talk with endless questions. Kevin, as the oldest student, a few months older than James, seemed to be in the settled plateau stage in his identity struggles with learning Korean. He once rebelled against his father, but now seems to understand and accept his social position as a Korean American whose parents firmly believe he needs to be bilingual in Korean and English.

James, a few months younger than Kevin, seemed to be in the most complex, challenging, and turbulent identity development stage. He said, “It feels like emotion changing . . . Emotion makes up and like turns up from happy to sad. I can turn happy to angry really fast.” Even though his extreme attitudes surprised and worried the KLS teachers, the KLS staff, and other Korean parents, and it would be beyond the scope of
this study to scrutinize all possible causes of his attitudes and behaviors, his identity construction and formation stage must be taken into account.

The twins, Dana and Elise, as the youngest participants, did not reveal any negative attitudes toward their teacher in the classroom, even though Dana said she did not like attending the KLS. Dana, who was more introverted, perhaps struggled inwardly, due to her quiet and calm personality. As Holmbeck et al. (1995) caution, the rapid developmental changes in young adolescents may affect the parent-child relationship by increasing irritability and the negative emotionality of the adolescents, which might have influenced the young adolescents’ attitudes toward the KLS and Korean adults.

**Parents’ Language Ideologies**

The Korean American parents’ language ideologies might be another crucial factor in their children’s positive or negative attitudes at the KLS. James’s parents prioritized English over Korean for their children in the United States; this suggests that they may have communicated the same thing to James many times. The father emphasized that having a professional career and developing a well-rounded, distinct Korean identity were the only ways for James to have more doors open and to overcome the challenges he was sure to face in the host society. In other words, James must develop native-like English language and literacy skills and the Korean language and Korean identity. James, who did not do well academically at school, could have felt pressured by his parents’ language ideology.

For Kevin, his mother’s enactment of Korean as the home language and her claim of not understanding Kevin’s English likely influenced Kevin to accept his mother’s
home language. The mother did not prioritize English over Korean because of Kevin’s advanced English language and literacy skills, and also because Kevin could not be sealed off from American cultural values and views. Thus, inculcating Kevin with a Korean identity was a more important and mandatory task for her. Like James’s father, Kevin’s mother also believed that having a professional job would help him overcome the obstacles and discrimination of being a minority, and therefore, educational achievement would be the best way for him to become a professional.

The two families of Kevin and James were in the Korean social network, sharing necessary information about living in the United States. That is, James’s father and Kevin’s mother disciplined their children in a similar way. However, a major difference between the parents of the two families was whether to prioritize English over Korean. James, who was still in the process of mastering academic English skills, still had to overcome English language issues, whereas Kevin did not. If Kevin’s English mastery was as limited as James’s, Kevin’s mother might have emphasized English over Korean. This parental pressure and high expectations for James may not completely explain his complicated abnormal behavior at the KLS. However, his low academic achievement in relation to English mastery could have burdened and destabilized his emotional and psychological stability in his social and ethnic identity formation. James told me about an accident that drew him into a physical fight with an older student in his public middle school.

I know he is strong. He can beat up high schoolers. And I was like, I don’t care if he’s stronger than me, because at that time I was angry. I get stronger and store up so much force, way more stronger when I’m angry. Because now I can beat up anyone when I am angry. So then I feel like I have more power than usual. So I started fighting him. But then the nurse comes over, breaks us up, kicks us to stop . . . There was a pushing
involved but I didn’t hit him because the nurse came in right before I was punching him. There were nine to 10 people holding me back from punching him. So then I was, I still was looking forward and just . . . It feels like emotion changing. You know how (unintelligible). Emotion makes up and like turns up from happy to sad. I can turn into that. I can turn happy to angry really fast . . . I don’t get angry. I just get angry at someone starting fight something like that (interview on May 28, 2012).

Dana and Elise’s parents held the strongest Korean identity and preference for Koreanness. Their mother even wanted the twins to marry Korean men who could speak Korean. The parents also sent the twins to a public school in Korea for two summers so that they could be exposed to and immersed into authentic Korean language and literacy education. For the twins, if they could not speak Korean, they would look “stupid” because of their Korean appearance. The parents valued multilingualism; they believed speaking more than one language could expose the children to greater opportunities in a worldwide economy. Early home Korean literacy practices that imbued the twins with Korean culture and identity, as well as the parents’ strong Korean personal identities, seemed to play influential roles in the twins’ Korean identity in regards to acquiring the Korean language and the appropriate use of honorifics. In the next section, the main research question is answered through revisiting the previous sections of the three-sub research questions.

**Main Research Question: How do Korean American children engage in meaning-making through language and literacy practices, either in Korean and/or in English, in the Korean Language School?**

By discussing the three sub-questions, it is possible to reach a better understanding of the main research question concerning how the four Korean American adolescents engaged in meaning making through language and literacy practices in Korean and in English at
the Korean Language School (KLS). The Korean American students’ engagement in language and literacy at the KLS occurred through both English and Korean. I, as a former KLS teacher, always wondered what the most effective and strategic way to teach Korean to students in the KLS would be, and how much English would be acceptable in Korean lessons. It is often believed that learning English in non-English speaking foreign context requires full immersion in English in the classroom, discouraging the use of the first or native language. I applied that concept to the KLS context where Korean was the target language and Korean American students did not have natural exposure to Korean, except in their home and their small Korean community. The KLS teachers also believed that the KLS school needed to be strict about the use of Korean only. The reality of Korean instruction in the school has been shown here to be quite different. The teachers spoke both Korean and English, while the majority of the students rarely spoke Korean. In fact, CS occurred as a natural language phenomenon between the teachers and the students, as other research has found (Auer, 1998; Gumperz, 1982; Li & Milroy, 1995; Myers-Scotton, 1993; Li, 1998).

While the students were participating in the Korean lessons, utilizing CS in the KLS, their construction of meaning varied and their meaning making was related to their complex identity construction, which might have been influenced by their parents’ parenting at home and their Korean ethnic heritage. Meaning is defined as “situated in specific social and cultural practices, and is continually transformed in those practices . . . meaning is a matter of situated meanings, customized in, to, and for context, used always against a rich store of cultural knowledge (cultural models) that are themselves ‘activated’ in, for, and by contexts” (Gee, 1999, p. 63). Not every student constructed
meaning in the same way, therefore they revealed different attitudes toward learning Korean language and literacy. They were surrounded by the Korean academic learning social context, but their degrees of engagement with meaning construction in Korean and English were different. These young learners, displaying their own agency, made a decision to be part of the surrounding social context of the KLS, or not. Their decisions were possibly made based on the findings of a third sub-question: adolescent social and ethnic identity construction, self-esteem, young adolescent developmental stage, and parents’ language ideologies. The students were in relation with multiple social contexts—home, schools (mainstream school, heritage language school, and after-school programs), churches, and social gatherings (personal or public), perhaps others. Each social context had its own values and moral systems that convey expectations to the students.

The KLS was a social context the students were put into by their parents so that in the same cases they were not actively but passively engaged in constructing meaning at the KLS; Dana said, “My parents forced me to go to the KLS.” The students who did not have a positive association or membership with the KLS seemed not to construct anything meaningful out of their Korean lessons; James and Dana both said, “There is no point.” When the students did not recognize a value or meaning from Korean literacy activities, they did not even want to be part of them, and in the extreme case of James, antagonistic perceptions and attitudes developed; he said, “You are crazy, aren’t you? Are you on cocaine?”
As discussed in Chapter 5, four Korean American students’ meaning making was situated in specific KLS social and cultural practices. They were expected to engage in the Korean language literacy practices in their Korean language lessons, as well as, through learning traditional Korean mask dance, Korean art, and Korean songs. However, the social context of the KLS was not free of other individual and societal influences from outside of the KLS. The students’ engagements in those practices at the KLS were not always active or passive, which means that depending on either internal or external factors, their mode of participating in Korean lessons varied. The KLS school itself influenced the students’ engagement in lessons; they complained that the school building was small, that it did not have school rules, that KLS teachers were not professionals, that they were forced to follow instructions, and that learning traditional Korean dance and music did not have value. Such factors at the KLS might have influenced the students’ attitudes toward learning Korean and their teachers.

More importantly, factors outside of the KLS might have greatly influenced the students’ perceptions of the KLS and their attitudes toward the school and their meaning making in its activities. Chart 6.7 shows complex dynamics in the students’ meaning making at the KLS. The factors outside of the KLS that influenced the students’ meaning making at the KLS are their peers at their public schools, grandparents in Korea, and their Korean ethnic identity. For example, James, who punched his classroom whiteboard, stated in his interviews that he did not remember what had directly caused him to behave that way. He said, “I was beaten by my mom on the way to the KLS.” His negative attitudes at the KLS seemed to originate mostly from his home. However, when James role-played a customer in the story, he engaged energetically in this activity and
exaggerated the role, sometimes ad-libbing. He was a good actor, sometimes sparking laughter from his classmates and his teacher. Due to his parental supports (e.g., visiting Korea), James, who used to consider himself as 100% American, developed his 15% of Korean identity, according to his father. The father said, before visiting Korea, he had not accepted his Korean ethnicity at all. That shows James’s meaning making in relation to his ethnic identity was constantly changing as he was influenced by various factors.

Figure 6.1. Complex Dynamics in Students’ Meaning-Making

Implications

My primary goal and purpose of this study was to better understand Korean American students’ language and literacy learning experiences at the Korean Language School.
Wanting to better know the KLS students and the KLS itself was my primary impetus to delve into the study so that it could contribute to heritage language maintenance. When this study began, I did not intend to prove or test any hypotheses or assumptions, which allowed me to explore new things I did not expect to find. I suggest some implications for heritage language education/bilingual education, code-switching studies, ethnic identity studies, young adolescent development, parental ideologies, and minority social capital.

First, this study has significant implications, not only for Korean heritage language itself, but also for heritage language maintenance of other languages. Heritage language education has come into prominence worldwide. The location of this study was in a southwestern city of the United States in which the local Korean population was 1,143 (2010 U.S. Census), which represents a small percentage (8%) of the city’s total Asian American population of 14,450.

Despite the small Korean population of the city, the Korean Language School was founded in 1998 and has been run by six principals. As a Korean teacher at the KLS, I had observed many issues over 10 years from students, parents, teachers, and the Korean community members. According to the teachers in their interviews, among the different parties, it was the KLS teachers who struggled the most. Their challenges came from: (a) students who were not motivated to learn Korean; (b) parents who were not dedicated enough to support their children’s Korean language development at home; (c) a school that was not run with systematic heritage language education, school management, and teaching materials; and (d) a small Korean community divided into political factions, which prevented it from making an effort to maintain Korean language and heritage.
However, this study complexifies the roles of all parties and certainly illustrates the difficult emotional challenges faced by foreign-born parents raising American-born children.

Heritage language education can help minority students develop a strong ethnic identity, and can cater to the needs of psychological well-being while the students learn their heritage language and culture and connect to their ancestral roots. That also will help build strong parent-child bonds, as well as an affinity to their minority society. To make this happen, as Wu’s (2011) Chinese heritage language teachers and the KLS teachers in this study believed, parents are the critical party to maintain their children’s lifelong learning of heritage language, while the teachers accepted their responsibility to develop students’ language proficiency.

Another implication for heritage language education suggests that pre-service and in-service professional development for heritage language teachers is crucial so that they are equipped with sociocultural perspectives, effective acculturation practices, and differentiated instruction for their students, as Randolph (2012) recommends. In Randolph’s study, Spanish teachers did not implement their additive and pluralistic views of acculturation and language maintenance into their planning and instruction.

I found CS to be a valuable tool in studies of bilingual/multi-linguals, regarding the meaning-making strategies bilinguals employ in their discursive practices. As Grosjean (1992) argues, we need to have a holistic view of bilingualism. CS helps us to better understand bilingualism and non-standard language usages among bilinguals. The field of CS can be studied in various ways, depending on researchers’ intentions and
purposes, because CS is a systematic linguistic tool, a window, and a path for different purposes of study: speech community membership, construction of ethnic identity, bilingual children’s conversation, social interaction, and bilingual creativity (Auer, 1998; Lo, 1999; Shin & Milroy, 2000; Song, 2009). This study especially found CS as the prominent language practice that revealed ethnic identity. CS played substantial but distinctly different functions both for the students and the teachers. However, this study did not explore frequencies of certain functions of CS or hidden causes of CS. In future studies, it would be valuable to study certain types, functions, and patterns of CS related to frequencies in order to search for deeper levels of individual cognition and social function, and also CS’s impact on language acquisition.

Ethnic identity, an unexpected finding, appeared to be a key component of this study in accordance with attitudes at the KLS. Identity formation has been considered a crucial aspect of individual development and psychological well-being (Erikson, 1980; May & Yalom, 2005; Rogers, 1961). Ethnic identity is a central, defining characteristic of members of minority groups (Phinney, 2000). Ethnic identity of children of immigrants, both U.S. born and foreign born, is correlated to their development and well-being. Which societal and personal factors affect their ethnic identity construction? To better understand minority children’s construction of, negotiation for, and reconstruction of ethnic identity, more studies are necessary of the diverse backgrounds of immigrant and American-born children.

This study focused only on Korean American adolescents in the process of searching for self-identity, as well as for group identity. One of the findings would be that
different developmental stages played an important role in the students’ perceptions of
themselves and others. Ethnic identity is not fixed and thus, it varies widely in terms of
salience, intensity, and meaning (Pieterse, 1997). One must be cautious not to be
deterministic about the students’ ethnic identity formation based on their quantification
with a percentage. The young are easily influenced by others in various social contexts
and they are quick to change their minds. Until they reach psychological and emotional
maturity, they will construct, deconstruct, and reconstruct their identities. Conducting a
follow-up study with the same student participants would provide a better understanding
of their identity formation after they become adults, because they could add invaluable
resources to the current study in retrospect.

Finally, even though this study did not impose boundaries of specific
socioeconomic status as criteria for purposeful sampling, the three families were upper-
middle class, based on the fathers’ professional careers and privately owned homes in
affluent neighborhoods. Two fathers had Ph.D.s, and the other father was a dentist; the
mothers were stay at home mothers, except for James’s mother who was a geographic
information system technician. All of the families lived in expensive houses in affluent
neighborhoods in the city’s most respected school attendance area. The parents’
endeavors to maintain their Korean language and culture have important implications.
The fathers were highly educated and worked at the core of mainstream society as
minorities; therefore, they could access more resources and connections to understand the
reality of social, economic, and professional mobility in the United States. They were a
first-generation minority and realized that they had to carefully construct their children’s
access to the host society due to their racial and ethnic minority status.
It was these parents’ belief that maintaining their Korean culture and language was crucial for their children to keep their roots in today’s diverse, multilingual society and to have an advantage in mainstream global society, as we saw in the previous chapters. Their practice can be understood as perpetuating their cultural, linguistic, and social capital (Bourdieu, 1986). Instead of blindly believing in the American dream, the parents saw limitations for their children access to majority group membership. Rather, they developed strategic ways to perpetuate their social capital as a minority in the United States. That was to inculcate their children with strong ethnic identity and to expose them to authentic Korean culture and language in Korea. Crossing borders enabled the children to immerse themselves into their parents’ country and to stay connected to their roots. Thus, as long as they mastered English and achieved academic success in the mainstream society, the children could have a professional career and affluent life, like their parents, and visit Korea periodically to reconnect to their roots. Language ideologies were the driving force for the parents to create a social mechanism for their social capital perpetuation.

**Limitations**

The first limitation of this study is the small number of participants. Investigating four Korean American students and three families cannot represent the whole population of Korean American students and families. It would be misleading for findings of this study to be generalized to other Korean American students and families, or to those of other Asians.
The second limitation is that I am an insider in the Korean community that I am studying. Being an insider can limit my critical perspectives in this study, given my many years of experience as a Korean language teacher in this Korean Language School. As has been said, a fish in water cannot see water. Therefore, I tried to excavate my prior knowledge in my analyses.

Third, this study was conducted in a city with a very small Korean community; the total population of Korean Americans in the city was 1,100 (2010 U.S. Census). The findings of this study conducted in this small Korean community cannot be generalized, especially to large Korean-American communities, because this community has a unique social, economic, cultural, and geographic environment.

Finally, by choosing to research only one social setting in which the participants engaged in Korean language and literacy practices, I limited the scope of the study. Looking at various social settings would allow richer analysis of the data across different social settings. This study did not attempt to generalize to all Korean American students the experiences of four Korean American children while they were engaged in acquiring and using two different languages (Korean and English) in a heritage language school.

**Final Thoughts about this Journey**

In 2012, I embarked on my doctoral dissertation study. Until I reached the point where I had to frame my dissertation proposal, I was in love with the fields of thought and language, bilingualism, and sociocultural studies. I believed those concepts would help me to discover something that other scholars had not found. Ambitious but young in the
scholarly world, I was in a sink-or-swim mode by trial and error. It was like a rich, deep mine that I was delving into: new knowledge, concepts, theories, pedagogies, and disciplines. It was exciting and even fun to absorb whatever enticed me. It was as if the academic world was beckoning to me, asking me to come and play with it.

However, I found that conducting research was a different discipline from savoring knowledge. Conducting research and carrying it out requires a clear mindset and final destination. Reaching conclusions does not come naturally. I realized I was so ambitious that I wanted to dig out a big diamond that would make everyone astonished by the finding. Instead, I became humble enough to know my capacity and limits and learned that my academic journey will never end.

Through this study, I learned that I would never know what is really happening in the human mind and brain. What I can do is to observe and listen carefully, and then extrapolate, hypothesize, interject, reflect, and interpret a social phenomenon and suggest the most plausible answers to my questions. Conducting a qualitative research study can be tricky to the extent that researchers can be too subjective, biased, and theory blind. But, I believe that qualitative research opens a door for researchers to get to know human subjects who are complex, multi-layered, and mysterious, in that only humans can understand other humans through establishing reliable relationships of trust.
APPENDICES

Appendix A: The Yale System of Romanization (‘ marks a tense consonant)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Hangul (Consonants)</th>
<th>Yale</th>
<th>Basic Phonemic Realization</th>
<th>Hangul (Vowels)</th>
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<th>Basic Phonemic Realization</th>
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Appendix B: Abbreviations for Grammatical Analysis

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<th>Abbreviation</th>
<th>Description</th>
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<td>Adverb derivational morpheme</td>
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<td>Honorific vocabulary</td>
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<td>Imperative</td>
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<tr>
<td>INT</td>
<td>Intensive</td>
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<td>LOC</td>
<td>Locative particle</td>
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<tr>
<td>PART</td>
<td>Particle attached after a word-final consonant in personal names</td>
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<td>PROP</td>
<td>Propositive</td>
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<td>PST</td>
<td>Past tense</td>
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<td>Q</td>
<td>Question</td>
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<td>-----</td>
<td>-------------------</td>
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<td>Suppositive</td>
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<td>T</td>
<td>Topic</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>VC</td>
<td>Verbal connective in verb phrase</td>
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