IDENTITIES IN NEGOTIATION: STORIES FROM THREE TRANSNATIONAL MULTILINGUAL ASIAN WRITING TEACHERS

By

Minjung Kang

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ABSTRACT

This dissertation project investigates the lived experiences of three transnational multilingual Asian writing teachers across transnational trajectories to understand how these teachers negotiate their identities within sociocultural, institutional, and ideological structures. Addressing the underrepresentation of transnational multilingual teachers in Rhetoric and Writing, this project seeks to uncover the mechanisms that render these teachers invisible in the field and to make their everyday power struggles in negotiating their identities visible. Employing a story-centered qualitative research approach, including autoethnography and narrative case studies, this project interweaves stories from myself and two teacher participants. As a result, this project creates a more comprehensive and nuanced picture of transnational multilingual teacher identities. Specifically, the results of this project indicate that transnational multilingual teachers fluidly negotiate their hybrid identities to move between the systems of power, constantly reconceiving, remixing, and transforming who they are, drawing on their developed transnational, translingual, and rhetorical competencies. This project has implications for research and writing program administration to move toward greater visibility of transnational multilingual writing teachers in the field.

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

CHAPTER 1: AN INTRODUCTION TO TRANSNATIONAL MULTILINGUAL TEACHER IDENTITY STUDY

"민정아, 이거 미제냐? 좋은 거네 그럼. [*Minjung-ah, is this Mi-Jae[1]? It must be a good one then.*]"

Every year, I bring a whole suitcase of gifts from the US with me for my parents in Seoul, South Korea. Going through the items, my mom would ask if they were made in the USA to tell the quality of a product. I was born and raised and lived in Seoul till I moved to the US for higher education at the age of 20. My dad runs an old printing shop in Eulji-ro, a maze-like district in Seoul packed with small businesses dating way back to the Japanese colonial ruling era. His rough hands from running oily printing machines haven't had much chance to hold pencils at schools as his family suffered from generational poverty after the Korean War. My mom juggled many part-time jobs, the longest one being a grocery store cashier. She once dreamt of going to a design school, but she never had a chance as her male siblings had priorities with limited resources in her family. So when I began studying for an advanced degree in the US, they couldn't be more proud of their daughter. "내 딸이 말이야, 지금 미국에서 박사 중이야, [*See my daughter is doing 'doctor' in the US*]," they would say proudly to their friends. Like those gift bottles of vitamin supplement that said "made in the USA" on the bottom, I was a symbol of American abundance and success. I was the daughter who made (it) in the USA.

Unlike "there" where I was a symbol of Western success, "here," success was the farthest thing I associated with myself. Starting my graduate school journey in the field of Rhetoric and

[1] *Mi-Jae* literally translates to "made in the USA," but this Korean word has a historical connotation to pro-US military occupation in the aftermath of the Korean War in the 1950s, which created perceptions that imported US goods were rare and of high quality.

Writing in 2016, I was constantly reminded of my otherness that I didn't need to realize or face in Korea. I was an international student, international teaching assistant, Asian woman, immigrant, foreigner, and alien, and these categories marked my professional identity with otherness. I was someone other than the norms—norms that were not so normal to me without the birthright or lived cultural knowledge. From how to participate in graduate seminars to how to teach a college writing course, I had to re-learn cultural norms to shape my professional identity in White-dominant professional spaces. For every "mistake" I made due to the gap between "here" and "there," I paid close attention to my graduate colleagues, faculty, and students' habitus in every interaction, seeking for more models of the cultural norms to replicate. Unlike what Suresh Canagarajah (2006) often describes as shuttling between two lands and languages, I couldn't quite shuttle or close the gap between two worlds—Korea, my motherland and the US, my new home of academic ambition. My reality of going into grocery stores, opening a new bank account, standing in lines at the DMV, speaking up in classes, preparing for lessons, were among many other situations I was new to. Everyday adjusting to the US presented me with a rigid boundary that kept me from crossing between two worlds because, in none of those spaces, my Korean language and cultural knowledge was valued or appreciated. Rather, my language and culture felt irrelevant. So in my first year in the US, I quickly learned that, if I was not eloquent, intelligible, or astute in social interactions in English, people could be entitled to be rude, disregarding, and disrespectful.

So, instead, I settled on the other side of the boundary and tried not to look back. There is a commonly known phrase between new Korean migrants that says, "빨리 적응하려면 한국 사람 만나지 말아. [*Don't hang out with other Koreans if you want to adjust quickly*.]" It shows the tendency of Koreans to distance themselves from each other as an integration and language

learning strategy. This “self-segregation” (Kang, 2015, p. 98) sentiment among Koreans at best may encourage more openness for encountering cultural differences that come with a transnational move, but at its worst, it encourages us to give up the power and dignity to negotiate our cultural and language histories with the new ones—which was my case. So in my early career, I divorced myself from my histories, languages, and family, and reinvented myself by acquiring standard edited American English. Fresh in the field of Rhetoric and Writing, this was before I even learned that terms like linguistic diversity or multilingualism existed. My years of language training from Korea taught me that the most fundamental goal in learning English as a second language was acquiring and mastering English with “correct grammar” for written tests and the “right accent” for speaking tests. So I did not even imagine what it meant to be multilingual, negotiating multiple languages and cultures, or the existence of different English varieties. Instead, I convinced myself that if I could pass as the “norm” with “correct” English, I would get closer to the success that my parents were so proud of on the other side of the world. Passing as the “norm” meant that I was (trying) to pass as an Asian American with the birthright to the English language so that no one would challenge my authority as a writing teacher or scholar in writing studies. I became obsessed with the “right accent” to erase any trace of Koreanness—carefully arching my tongue to make [r] sounds. I stopped using Korean or watching, reading, or listening to anything in Korean even when I was alone. The only time I used Korean was talking to my mom on the phone, which became less and less frequent as I was consumed by dedication to my new life in graduate school. On those few phone calls, she put questions, worries, and longings aside and would just repeat, “많이 바쁘구나. [*You must be very busy*.]” Once off the phone, I went back “there,” the other side of the boundary.

In retrospect, I realize that I was never capable of erasing my Koreanness. It just bottled

up within me in the shape of shame and void of personhood. *I was an imposter, I was White-washed*.[2] When students assumed that I was an Asian American from California, the cost of playing along was having to skirt around students who were actually from California for the entire semester. When I rarely came across other Asians in the area in the Southwest, my heart would race and I would intentionally avoid them. I think I was afraid that they could see me through my mask and judge me for abandoning my identities[3]—of being Korean, of being Asian, of being a migrant. By denying my Korean identity, I felt distant to my family, my friends, and myself. Ironically, wanting to belong led me to have the most isolating experience. Passing created internal tension between my yearning for surviving in US academia and pains of invalidating my cultural and linguistic history.

But at the same time, I was slowly but surely starting to look outward to understand where my internal tension may be coming from. I still remember the first time I read the "Students' Rights To Their Own Languages" (SRTOL) resolution (1974) in Dr. Cristyn Elder's Composition Theories class in 2017. It was the moment my beliefs around standard English—that there were either correct or incorrect ways of using English—had been first challenged. Growing up in Korea learning English as a second language (ESL), I was primarily trained to perform well in English reading comprehension exams that evaluated correct use of grammar and vocabulary. As a result, I had the strong belief that there was only one correct way to use English until I immigrated to the US and read this resolution. According to the resolution, linguists had argued that standard English was one of the dialects or varieties of the English language among others and there was no linguistic evidence for which dialect was better or less.

[2] I put my reflections—some are retrieved from my journal entries, and some are formed as I was writing this dissertation—into italics to amplify my authentic internal voice and differentiate them from the main text.
[3] I use "identities" in plural deliberately to define identity as "broad and open-ended social positioning of self" (Bucholtz & Hall, 2005, p. 586) that emerges in many forms in relation to others and in relation to contexts.

The resolution continued to argue for the students' rights to use their own varieties of English in classrooms and called for literacy educators to "have the experiences and training that will enable them to respect [language] diversity" (p. 711). *Respect language diversity? What could that even look like in a writing classroom and what would teachers do with standard English?* It was the beginning of my questioning. Although I did not quite grasp what I could do as a novice writing teacher, it surely sprouted a sense of doubt on my standard language beliefs and the way I judged my English.

A semester after, in another class called English Grammars by Dr. Bethany Davila, I was introduced to the literature of sociolinguistics. Apparently, there were two different approaches to understanding how language works. One was 'prescriptivism' that focuses on establishing and enforcing rules of language such as grammar for uniformed language uses. The other was 'descriptivism' that focuses on how people create and change the rules of language in different sociocultural contexts, and thus, there are simply different ways of using language that can't be judged as correct or incorrect. I realized that most of my literacy education focused on ESL was exclusively prescriptive without the consideration of language variations or how certain sociocultural values and beliefs are attached to those variations—or what I learned as 'language ideologies' in Dr. Davila's class, "percepetion[s] of language and discourse that is constructed in the interest of a specific social or cultural group" (Kroskrity, 1998, p. 8). For instance, what is to speak "good English" in the U.S. is founded in social experiences and interests of certain groups. Because these interests aren't neutral (e.g., interests informed by cultures and histories of colonialism, slavery, immigration, etc.), language ideologies construct linguistic hierarchies that assign value judgments to different linguistic forms. Thus, language ideologies must be carefully

examined in terms of the multiple social divisions, looking at language *and* power, identity, class, gender, race, ethnicity, and so on.

In Dr. Todd Ruecker's Research Methods class, this lens of language ideologies applied to the English language moved to the contexts of second language learning—how do language ideologies reinforce linguistic hierarchies between native English speakers and nonnative English speakers? Reading the literature of Nonnative English-Speaking Teachers (NNEST) (Braine, 1999, 2010; Mahboob, 2005, 2010) was eye opening to me in particular. I learned that many NNESTs had experienced everyday struggles and encountered discriminatory practices in the TESOL[4] profession due to their nonnative English-speaking status. This was the first time I read scholarship that connected teachers' language differences to the issues of equity. The NNEST studies challenged the ways NNESTs are treated inferior to teachers whose first language is English as well as the oversimplified dichotomy between native and nonnative English speakers when judging language teacher competency. I felt so seen in the NNEST scholarship that discussed not only how individual NNEST experienced deficit framing of their language identities in teaching, but also how the larger social systems of linguistic hierarchies explain such linguistic marginalization. I also found their discussion of mobilizing teachers' diverse linguistic and cultural background as teaching resources, rather than treating them as deficit to teaching, very hopeful in that I could imagine an alternative to passing as a strategy.

What can my Koreanness do in the writing classroom?

This lineage of learnings and realizations led me to examine my "internal tension" as a larger problem on language diversity in higher education. I started my PhD program in 2019 with these strands of theoretical learnings, thanks to my mentors, Cris, Bethany, and Todd, that

[4] Teaching English to Speakers of Other Languages (TESOL), an area of study or specialization in teaching English

language differences have layers of social, cultural, institutional, and ideological implications. I also had a deep curiosity in other multilingual writing teachers[5] in the field. *I must not be alone. Where are they?!* So I envisioned this dissertation project with the yearning for a way to make visible the traditionally invisible struggles and labor of multilingual writing teachers that could contribute to the ongoing language diversity issues in our field.

I begin with these personal reflections to tell you, my readers, that this project is about the process of reconciling with my past-self who desperately wanted to pass and reclaiming my transnational multilingual Korean identities. This project is, in part, a personal healing that I hope will resonate with other transnational multilingual teachers in education who are doubting their worth at the cost of their identities. In fact, this project demonstrates the possibility of resonance by interweaving stories of mine and two participants who are also transnational multilingual Asian teachers of writing. In that sense, this project showcases distinct yet collective stories from our transnational trajectories filled with linguistic and cultural negotiations that shaped our (teacher) identities.

My hope is that our stories would not only resonate with other multilingual writing teachers but also with our field of Rhetoric and Writing that I believe is deeply invested in language diversity issues. To this, I must foreground that while scholars in our field have sagaciously attended to students' language differences and diversity in writing classrooms dating back to the SRTOL resolution in 1974, their attention to the other side of the classroom—the teachers—is limited with the need to extend to what transnational multilingual teachers'

[5] I choose to use "transnational multilingual teachers" to refer to me and two other participants in this project to emphasize 'transnational' in-betweenness in cultural identities and 'multiplicity' in linguistic repertoire rather than using terms like "international" or "nonnative English-speakers" that focuses on immigration status or the native/nonnative binary—although they are useful terms for clarity in some context and, hence, I do use them for that purpose in some cases.

experience could mean in the ongoing conversations about language diversity (e.g., language equity issues; translingual approaches to language difference; critical language writing pedagogy). This project responds to the lack of attention to multilingual writing teachers by recognizing our invisibility in the field and attempting to visibilize[6] us (and other multilingual writing teachers).

In doing so, I draw on my own personal experiences as a multilingual writing teacher to better understand how I navigated transnational spaces and negotiated my language and cultural identities. In addition, I further situate my stories in relation to two other multilingual writing teachers' lived experiences from their transnational trajectories. I make the choice to look at our broader life histories because our lived experiences moving between languages and lands are intertwined with the ways we, as teachers, negotiate identities and languages in writing classrooms. In other words, I chose to take a holistic view on these teachers' stories in and beyond the classroom as the personal, professional, political, cultural, and historical experiences are intricately merged.

Given that the interest of this project is to examine how transnational multilingual identities are negotiated, I approach stories in this project from a transnational perspective that considers the traversing nature of our lives, constantly crossing and connecting cultural, linguistic, and geographic boundaries beyond single nation-states. Broadly, the notion of transnationalism is defined as "multiple ties and interactions linking people or institutions across the borders of nation-states" (Vertovec, 1999, p. 447). Transnationalism extends the scope of analysis of identities and literacy practices beyond local, regional, and national contexts,

[6] I use the word "visibilize" as a rhetorical move to emphasize the invisibility of people and their stories that I am aiming to make more visible. Also, the act of "visibilizing" implies social justice orientation to represent underrepresented groups that are otherwise obscured.

focusing on the multiple ties and networks across multiple nation-states. Transnationalism destabilizes local and global boundaries and attends to "trans"-formation of the nature of space, cultures, languages, and social practices themselves in the process of crossing borders (Fraiberg et al., 2017; Lorimer Leonard et al., 2015; You, 2018). Taking a transnational perspective in this project, I ground our stories within the fluid and conceptual networks among languages, cultures, and spaces that we continuously traverse across, both physically and metaphorically. That way, I look at the ways we negotiate, remix, or transform our identities beyond the categorical identities bounded to nation-states.

Blurred boundaries between the local and global, however, still necessitates a careful attention to the uneven local and global power relationships. Thus, contextualizing our transnational experiences in the larger social, cultural, institutional, and ideological structures is imperative in this project. This is echoed, for instance, by my experiences of moving from internalizing a language deficit mindset to a more critical approach that situates my language difference in the political context of linguistic and cultural hierarchies. For instance, my prescriptive attitude to English has an important backdrop of the pro-US military rhetoric during and after the Korean War that created positive and superior representations of the US culture and English language. Thus, by focusing on the holistic lived experiences, I reframe what could be a personal narrative on literacy development and practices within the larger sociohistoric and cultural implications.

By centering our stories in this project, I also aim to decenter Western narratives and orientations to the profession that frame our identities as deficit and uncover hidden assumptions and structure that marginalize us or limit our access to the field and profession. How do we navigate the deficit framing on our identities? How do we navigate predominantly White (work)

spaces? How do we negotiate our language and cultural identities in those spaces? What mediates our identity negotiations? Exploring these questions, I hope that shifting deficit positioning of our teacher identities into an asset-based approach allows envisioning pedagogical opportunities for us and other multilingual writing teachers to leverage our linguistic and cultural repertoires toward better linguistic inclusivity in writing classrooms and other professional and institutional spaces.

Specifically, this project focuses on the following research questions:

1. How do we negotiate our linguistic and cultural identities as transnational multilingual Asian women?
2. What different social, cultural, and institutional structures influence or mediate our identity negotiations?

To uncover the mechanisms that are rendering us invisible in the field of Rhetoric and Writing as well as argue for ways to visibilize us, I examine multiple strands of scholarship across different disciplines. Specifically, I draw on three bodies of scholarship: Nonnative English-Speaking Teachers (NNEST), translingualism, and linguistic justice. In the remainder of this chapter, I introduce the major arguments and literature from those three strands of scholarship drawn in this project.

Nonnative English-Speaking Teachers (NNEST)

First, I introduce the NNEST (Nonnative English-Speaking Teachers) scholarship from TESOL, which focuses on nonnative English-speaking teachers in language teaching contexts. The NNEST scholarship has emerged in response to the professional marginalization and prejudices faced by nonnative teachers of English within the TESOL field. This marginalization stems from the prevailing belief, termed the "native speaker fallacy" by Robert Phillipson

(1992), that only native speakers can be good language teachers. Consequently, NNESTs are often relegated to a "second-class, inferior position vis-à-vis native speakers" in the language teaching profession (Braine, 2004, p. 15) and frequently encounter discrimination when seeking employment as English teachers.

The native speaker fallacy is rooted in a language identity hierarchy that elevates native speakers as the ideal embodiment of language teachers due to their 'mastery' of monolingual standard language rules, dominant accent, and cultural knowledge and authenticity. In contrast, nonnative speakers are perpetually viewed as less qualified to be language teachers (Holliday, 2005; Valmori & De Costa, 2016). Within this ideological hierarchy, "native speaking identities are validated at the expense of nonnative speaking identities" (De Costa & Norton, 2017, p. 8).

Given the uneven power relation between native and nonnative speaking teacher identities, the subject of NNEST issues began to gain recognition in TESOL in the 1990s. The early influential works like edited collections by Medgyes (1994) and Braine (1999) opened the floor for acknowledging and problematizing the presence of native speaker fallacy through NNESTs' first-person narratives, which highlighted the prejudice they faced against their professional credibility regardless of their linguistic competence or teaching training and experiences. These works exposed negative perceptions held by hiring administrators and students toward NNESTs, bringing NNEST visibility to the forefront within the TESOL organization and its publications.

Challenging the deficit discourse and native speaker fallacy, subsequent NNEST studies suggested that NNESTs can provide effective language instruction using their linguistic knowledge and multilingual experiences. Medgyes (2001) argues that NNESTs can serve as better learning models for language learners because, having been second language learners

themselves, they can offer language learning strategies informed by their own experiences and empathize with students by anticipating language learning difficulties and barriers. Similarly, Murphy-O'Dwyer (1996) asserts that NNESTs possess deeper insights into language structure and use gained through their formal language learning experiences. These studies show the early asset-based turn in NNEST scholarship that shifted away from deficit framing of nonnative teachers, focusing instead on their prior experiences and linguistic knowledge as asset and effective resources for language instruction.

In the 2000s and throughout the 2010s, studies on NNESTs continued to grow with the "NNEST movement," led by the TESOL professional caucus, emerging as "an advocacy, professionalism, and equity-oriented" scholarship to promote the role of NNESTs while countering discriminatory practices in the TESOL profession (Braine & Selvi, 2018, p. 2). Many publications have contributed to the movement (Braine, 2020; Kamhi-Stein, 2004, 2016; Llurda, 2005; Yazan & Rudolph, 2018), raising awareness and visibility of NNEST issues.

Although relatively recent, the issue of nonnative English-speaking teachers of *writing* has started to gain attention among scholars in Rhetoric and Writing. Ruecker, Frazier, and Tseptsura's (2018) article, "Language Difference Can Be an Asset: Exploring the Experiences of Nonnative English-Speaking Teachers of Writing" in *College Composition and Communication*, was the first to explicitly connect the NNEST scholarship to the context of first-year writing. Their work acknowledged the dearth of research on writing teachers whose first language is not English within the field. Drawing on the experiences of NNEST participants in writing classrooms, the study identifies that NNESTs in Rhetoric and Writing often encounter microaggressions that challenge their ability and legitimacy as a writing teacher. The study also reports that participants positively viewed themselves as "valuable contributors to writing

curriculum development, adding their often-unique perspectives and serving as role models for their students" (p. 632). Given both challenges and opportunities, the authors make suggestions to better support NNESTs of writing and to nurture stronger intellectual and professional communities around NNEST issues.

Another work that has examined the issues faced by NNESTs in Rhetoric and Writing is Monika Shehi's (2017) article, "Why is My English Teacher a Foreigner?: Re-authoring the Story of International Composition Teachers." As an Albanian migrant and nonnative English speaker, Shehi experiences students' negative perceptions of her NNEST status and challenging her authority and credibility as a writing teacher—which eventually leads her to mask her linguistic and cultural identities:

> I felt so discomfited by the resistance I was encountering that I was tempted to hide my identity and try to pass as an American. … By denying my Albanian identity, I felt I had erased a crucial part of myself. I had erased not only the first eighteen years of my life, but also my family, my friends, the people with whom I grew up, and the language in which I had knit my first thoughts. … I was less than half a person. (p. 265)

Shehi temporarily adopts a strategy of passing to regain teacher authority and capability. As a result, she grapples with erasing her histories, cultures, and people while navigating students' attitude toward her NNEST status. Her narratives echo the deficit orientation toward NNESTs and subsequent challenges that they face in the TESOL field, underscoring the need to examine NNESTs of writing in Rhetoric and Writing.

These works focusing on the experiences of multilingual writing teachers in Rhetoric and Writing reveal the vulnerable and unequal positions that NNESTs of writing occupy, akin to the challenges faced by NNESTs in the TESOL field. They also demonstrate that Rhetoric and

Writing is in its early stages but continuously working to visibilize multilingual writing teachers[7] and indicate the potential for further development of teacher language identity studies in writing classroom contexts.

While these NNEST works and movement have shed light on inequalities within the profession, they have also faced criticism for "[their] essentialized perspective on identities, which simplify the complexity and fluidity of teachers' identity-related teaching practices" (Lee & Canagarajah, 2019, p. 352). Indeed, scholars have argued that NNEST studies tend to oversimplify the native speaker (NS) versus nonnative speaker (NNS) identity dichotomy (Braine, 2010; Holliday, 2005; Selvi & Yazan, 2013). This critique has prompted more recent works to reconceptualize teacher language identities and move away from the dichotomy between NS and NNS (Aneja, 2016; Motha et al., 2012; Yazan & Rudolph, 2018). Thus, while the NNEST scholarship offers valuable insights into the native speaker fallacy and teacher marginalization based on linguistic identities, the dichotomy between NS and NNS is narrow and limited for achieving the goal of this project, which aims to represent the fluid and ever-negotiated identities of multilingual writing teachers. Therefore, in the following section, I introduce the translingual framework to more fully examine the complexity of language and cultural negotiation.

Translingualism

To address this issue of binary language identities, I draw on translingualism to provide me with a theoretical framework that more fully attends to the complex negotiations that teachers engage in. Translingualism is a theoretical move within Rhetoric and Writing that has been a

[7] I also want to acknowledge the efforts beyond publications that appear in professional spaces, such as the formation of "NNES writing instructors" Standing Group at Conference on College Composition and Communication since 2015.

response to bounded approaches to language and identity underscored by tacit monolingual assumptions and ideologies (Canagarajah, 2013; Horner et al., 2011; Lu & Horner, 2013). However, in suggesting an alternative framework that locates teaching and researching writing in the context of multiple languages and globalization, translingualism is not simply arguing for a shift from monolingualism to multilingualism. Rather, a "multilingual" framework would, in fact, reproduce the bounded notions of language and the nation state that the translingual theoretical and conceptual framework is intended to critique (Bou Ayash, 2019). Instead, the shift to "trans" signals a number of key assumptions that are useful in the study of transnational multilingual writing teachers.

First, the concept of "trans" signals a state of in-betweenness and reconceptualization of identities as multiple, fluid, and dynamic (Donahue, 2016). It allows for rescripting and complicating of who transnational multilingual writing teachers are—viewing their languages and identities as continuously in the making or in the ongoing process of "becoming" (Canagarajah, 2020) across different values, discourses, and literacies. The identities of these teachers are not static categories of subjectivities; rather, they construct and negotiate multiple identities in different contexts and with different people for rhetorical purposes. Focusing on identity and language practices as continuously evolving—rather than static or binary (i.e., binary between native and nonnative or between Pakistan/Korean and American)—then enables sensitivity in capturing these teachers' stories as partial, contradictory, and nonlinear. For example, I feel a contradiction in being "too Korean" in writing classrooms where my Koreanness seems to hinder building my teacher authority and at the same time to be "not Korean enough" because "passing" creates inauthenticity and guilt in me—in these two contradictory experiences, I am constantly negotiating my identities.

Second, a translingual framework allows for the study of multiple power relations in which identities are negotiated (Cushman, 2016; Lee & Alvarez, 2020). Language and cultural identities are deeply contextual and intertwined with social and ideological systems as individuals constantly shape or are shaped by them. Focusing on identity negotiations within power dynamics allows for representing these teachers' language practices and identities in negotiation within or against monolingualist standard language ideologies. It also enables recognition of monolithic identity markers imposed upon transnational multilingual teachers.

Third, drawing on translingual theory affords the ability to rescale transnational identities and practices across local and global contexts (Canagarajah, 2016; Canagarajah & De Costa, 2016; Wang, 2019). Translingualism focuses on the ways that linguistic and cultural negotiations constantly occur within and across the physical boundaries of nation-states. This means that even events taking place in a writing classroom are linked with transnational spaces that we have inhabited as we have carried experiences, resources, and practices between communities.

Lastly, adopting a translingual framework adds much needed attention to teachers' linguistic difference issues. Translingual discussion in Rhetoric and Writing often emerges from a concern for students whose linguistic backgrounds have been traditionally identified as deficit, identifying college writing classrooms as a space historically ridden with monolingualist English-Only ideology (Lu & Horner, 2013; Matsuda, 2006). Thus, much of the literature is student-centered, focusing on translingual approach and possible applications to writing pedagogy for students who are linguistically diverse. To date, broadly speaking in the field of Rhetoric and Writing, there have been only few conversations about transnational multilingual teachers of writing and how their linguistic and cultural identities and repertories shape their professional trajectories as well as every day teaching practices (Tseptsura & Ruecker, 2024;

Ruecker et al., 2018). Thus, by actively engaging in translingual conversations in this project, I aim to extend the scope of the translingual literature to teachers' diverse linguistic identities. This attention to teacher language diversity not only brings invisible stories of transnational multilingual writing teachers visibility as mentioned before, it also has a great potential in informing translingual writing pedagogy by examining the ways transnational multilingual teachers' ability to cross between languages and cultures influences teaching.

Some of the works have already demonstrated this potential. In Rebecca Lorimer Leonard's (2014) article, "Multilingual Writing as Rhetorical Attunement," multilingual teacher participants show how they have gained sensitivity, flexibility, and sensibility towards language differences through their daily lived experiences communicating across languages and cultures. Such an experiential awareness of language difference becomes an important pedagogical tool in their writing instruction, modeling a norm of language difference for their students and cultivating language negotiation as a concrete skill. Similarly, Eunjeong Lee and Suresh Canagarajah's (2019) study shows how teachers' sensitivity and flexibility toward language differences—which they call "translingual dispositions," teachers' competence to recognize and negotiate meanings—could enact translingual writing pedagogy. The focal teacher participant showed such translingual dispositions, for instance, through "emphasizing rhetorical effects over linguistic normativity while recognizing students' intent in their writing, which is often not easily visible on the surface" (p. 360). Building on these studies, this project explores how transnational multilingual teachers' diverse linguistic and cultural identities and repertoires shape their professional trajectories and everyday teaching practices, thereby further expanding the understanding of translingual discussion to encompass teacher language identities.

Linguistic Justice

Lastly, I am drawing on linguistic justice scholarship in this project, acknowledging that, although both NNEST scholarship and translingualism help me address the language identity issues, they are constrained in their ability to fully explore the racial subjectivities of language users. As Kubota and Lin (2006) pointed out: "the silence in [TESOL] field on topics about racialization and racism is peculiar given increased attention to them in other academic fields as well as the tremendous amount of racialized diversity manifested in TESOL" (p. 488; also see Ruecker, 2011). Consideration of intersections between race, language, and culture is indeed imperative in examining the aforementioned problematic binary and hierarchy between NES and NNES. The privileged positioning of NES teachers is often validated not only through native speakerhood (i.e., linguistic competence that validates the speaker as exemplar) of English, but also through Whiteness, revealing the tendency of equating NES status with Whiteness (Golombek & Jordan, 2005; Kamhi-Stein, 2004; Leung et al., 1997). In other words, being a native speaker may not guarantee one NES privileges (e.g., assumed language ownership, authenticity, authority, and competence), but being a native speaker *and* White is sufficient for such privileges (Zentella, 2014). It is imperative to understand this link between native English speakerhood and Whiteness from the history of colonialism, slavery, displacement, and immigration which has led to the worldwide spread and growth of the English language today (Phillipson, 1992). In postcolonial countries (e.g., Nigeria, India, Singapore) and countries where English is required as an international language (e.g., Korea, China), native speakers of English have been historically associated with White Anglo-Saxon protestant embodying Whiteness, class, and birth status in the West[8] (Pennycook, 2007). Such association of native English

[8] This historical native speaker construct as Whiteness and Western is especially relevant in this study that examines our transnational trajectories hailing between the East and West.

speakers with Whiteness disassociates non-White racial groups from English language ownership. For instance, Rubin's (1992) study revealed how undergraduate students held positive attitudes and willingness to understand an ethnically Caucasian instructor as opposed to expecting non-standard speech from an ethnically Asian instructor despite both instructors being native English speakers.

Similarly, some writing scholars also have brought up the concerns of lack of attention to racial dynamics in translingual discussion (Alvarez et al., 2017) and argued for a more race-conscious translingual paradigm that analyzes race, language, and power all together (Do & Rowan, 2022). Such cautionary words on translingualism as an ideologically neutral language theory was first raised by Keith Gilyard (2016). Gilyard highlights the risk of flattening language differences in the translingual frame of fluid meaning negotiations:

> [T]he translanguaging subject generally comes off in the scholarly literature as a sort of linguistic every person, which makes it hard to see the suffering and the political imperative as clearly as in the heyday of SRTOL. … Related to issues of students' language rights and institutional standards is the tendency to flatten language differences in some theorizing about translingualism. Translingualists are clear about the fact that we all differ as language users from each other and in relation to a perceived standard. Often elided, however, is the recognition that we don't all differ from said standard in the same way. (pp. 285-286)

Gilyard makes an important critique of how taking a translingual approach may result in treating all language differences as the same, "devaluing of the historical and unresolved struggles of groups that have been traditionally underrepresented in the academy and suffer disproportionately in relation to it" (p. 286). That is, different racialized subjectivities and their

language practices can be stigmatized differently in education and in our society. Given these critiques, I apply a linguistic justice perspective to pay careful attention to our racial identities interplaying with our transnational multilingual identities, asking: what happens if our transnational multilingual identities are also racially marginalized?; and what "historical and unresolved struggles" (p. 286) we carry in our racial, linguistic, and cultural identity negotiations?

The concept and role of race in language practices has been discussed implicitly or explicitly in Rhetoric and Writing as a critical way to examine 'standard English' and other varieties of English in college writing education. In Bethany Davila's (2012) empirical study, for instance, she explores the relationship between standard edited American English and Whiteness by examining how instructors' perception of students' race and ethnicity shapes their perception of student writings. Her study shows a pattern of associating perception of standardness with privileged White students. Making such a connection between Whiteness and standard language ideology, scholars have emphasized racial injustice from past slavery, segregation, police brutality, and other ongoing instances of civil rights inequality as the crucial sociopolitical histories and contexts of which language marginalization occurs in literacy education. Asao Inoue (2015, 2019) argues that the idea of singular Standard English is historically rooted in "political, cultural, linguistic, and economic dominance for White people" (Inoue, 2015, p. 8). Similarly, April Baker-Bell (2020) argues that "linguistic hierarchies and racial hierarchies are interconnected" (p. 2) as reflected in the historical treatment of devaluing of Black language in education. Writing scholars who focused on multilingual inclusion also posit their arguments in the larger sociopolitical history and contexts of im/migration, US nationalist rhetoric, and

English-only policy (Schreiber et al., 2022; also see the Composition Forum Summer 2020 issue on “Promoting Social Justice for Multilingual Writers on College Campuses”).

These works, among others, strongly suggest that promoting language diversity is a social justice issue and must responsively engage with the racialization of language users with the historical specificity of different marginalized groups. The term linguistic justice is often used in these efforts to signify their language inclusive work as social justice work against racial inequities. Black scholars have been on the front line of the linguistic justice scholarship. Geneva Smitherman (1986, 1999, 2006) established the recognition and validity of linguistic features and rhetoric of Black language and Ebonics. Building on the works of Smitherman, scholars like April Baker-Bell (2017, 2020), Carmen Kynard (2013), and Bonnie J. Williams (2013, 2017) developed, advocated for, and implemented Black English-centered literacy education while condemning code switching that at best promotes internalized racism in Black students by perceiving Black English as inappropriate for academic settings. More recently, the field of raciolinguistics has emerged, examining the intersections between language, race, and power (Alim et al., 2016). In particular, BIPOC scholars have argued for the inseparability between language and the embodied experiences (and historicity) of racialized communities, recognizing how raciolinguistic ideologies index certain bodies and their languages as more normative or appropriate than others (Baker-Bell, 2020; Lee, 2024). The idea of what is ‘normative’ and ‘appropriate’ in language practices is established through the White perspective or “white listening subjects” that construe racialized subjects as “linguistically deviant” (Flores & Rosa, 2015, p. 150; also see Rosa & Flores; 2017). Thus, raciolignuistic perspectives have been argued in tandem with linguistic justice to recognize and honor racialized subjects’ embodied knowledge and meaning-making. Recognizing the importance of these critical perspectives, this

project seeks to integrate a linguistic justice lens into exploring the interconnectedness of linguistic hierarches and racial inequity while paying attention to the historical specifics of marginalized groups and their experiences with language marginalization.

In conclusion, so far, I outlined how this project draws on three strands of scholarship that complement and inform each other (see Table 1). First, I introduced the NNEST (Nonnative English-Speaking Teachers) scholarship from TESOL. I situated my project within this NNEST literature, which enables me to contextualize multilingual writing teachers' experiences within the problematic linguistic hierarchies and deficit framing on their nonnative English-speaking identities. Second, acknowledging the binary notion of native and nonnative language identities as limited for the purpose of this study, I introduced the translingual framework that enables me

Table 1. NNEST, Translingualism, and Linguistic Justice

NNEST	Translingualism	Linguistic Justice
TESOL	Rhetoric and Writing	Sociolinguistics & Education
Focuses on teacher's linguistic identities	Focuses complex language and identity negotiations	Focuses on racialized subjectivities of language users
Examines NES and NNES dichotomy	Challenges standard language and monolingual ideologies	Examines intersections of race, language, and culture
Debunks native speaker fallacy	Reconceptualizes identities as multiple, fluid, and dynamic	Uncovers connection between Whiteness and standard language ideologies
Uncovers professional marginalization of NNESTs	Examines multiple power relations in which identities are negotiated	Promotes language diversity as a social justice issue
Shifts from deficit- to asset-based approach to experiences and knowledge in language of NNESTs	Rescale transnational identities and practices across local and global contexts	

to examine multilingual writing teacher identities as fluid, complex, and always in negotiation. Third, due to lack of attention to race in both NNEST and translingual scholarship, I drew on a linguistic justice perspective to examine how language and cultural identities intersect with racial identities and critically examine how multilingual writing teachers of color navigate spaces that are laden with racial ideologies in predominantly White spaces.

Linguistic Justice: An Epilogue

As an epilogue before concluding this introductory chapter, I would like to further discuss linguistic justice scholarship drawn in this project—this time, through a personal narrative. My own experiences have significantly influenced my perspective as a researcher and my approach to linguistic justice, which I believe is a crucial context to provide in this project that aims to honor the lineage of linguistic justice scholarship. Therefore, I transition back to a personal narrative in this epilogue, highlighting the profound impact of the COVID-19 pandemic and heightened racial injustice and violence on my engagement with linguistic justice.

In 2020, amidst the sociopolitical climate of racial injustice and violence, exacerbated by the unprecedented global pandemic, Rhetoric and Writing scholars were urgently called to address issues of linguistic justice. At that time, I was in the second semester of my PhD program, still in the early stages of planning this project with an interest in linguistic justice for multilingual writing teachers. My desire to engage with the linguistic justice scholarship at that time was from wanting to make teachers' language marginalization more visible just like Black scholars have done for Black language. But since then, my "scholarly ambition" has undergone a significant change. On May 25, 2020, when George Floyd was killed by the Minneapolis police on the street, and in the following July, when the CCCC statement, "This Ain't Another Statement! This is a DEMAND for Black Linguistic Justice!" (Baker-Bell et al., 2020) came out,

for the very first time—even though I had argued that I worked for social justice in other areas of my life—I had to rethink my limited perspective on linguistic justice that I had as a person with skin privilege. I learned about the harm that model minority myths about Asian Americans create for Black and Brown communities by invalidating their experiences of racism and oppression with the deceptively "positive" high achievement of Asian Americans (Chou & Feagin, 2015). I reflected on my complicity in anti-Blackness that traced back to generational anti-Black sentiments in South Korea (Dos Santos, 2020; Kim 2017; Tan et al., 2010). *As a writing teacher, was my effort and intention to discuss language diversity and negotiation in my classrooms ever informed by systemic linguistic racism on Black people? What are my own implicit biases on Black Language (Baker-Bell, 2020) and Black students?* If my goal was to argue for "linguistic justice" for multilingual people of color, I had to ask what it would mean to bring in multilingual writing teachers' experiences to the linguistic justice scholarship and movement and how such work could be intersectional and coalitional (Combahee River Collective, 2017[9]) with Black linguistic survivance (Baker-Bell et al., 2020). How could my work on visibilizing multilingual writing teachers for linguistic justice be shoulder to shoulder with Black language justice and anti-racist pedagogy, instead of derailing the movement with "race-neutral umbrella terms like multilingualism, world Englishes, translingualism, … when discussing Black Language and thereby Black Lives" (Baker-Bell et al., 2020, para. 8)? Heeding Gilyard's (2016) critique on the danger of flattening all language differences, how do I enter the translingual scholarship without flattening the historicity and experiences of Black people in the US with transnational multilingual people?

[9] The original Combahee River Collective Statement is dated April 1977.

When I attended an anti-racist pedagogy workshop in March 2021 led by Everardo Cuevas at Michigan State University, the work was unexpectedly straightforward yet challenging: "look inward." Everardo taught me that I must first attend to my positionality before drawing connections between my own work and linguistic justice. That was the one of the early seeds that sprouted my journey into the autobiographical component of this study. Before then, in fact, I was not fully convinced to center the project around my stories. I was still going through the emotionally-taxing shift from passing to seeing more and more safe opportunities to share my linguistic and cultural backgrounds at workspaces. So committing to an autobiographical project seemed too risky—and most of all, there was a fear to face and examine my own linguistic trauma and guilt of passing closely—until the anti-Black violence and murdering during the pandemic disrupted everything. I realized that I must reconnect with myself from the past in order to argue for others in linguistically marginalized groups.

Thus, imagining linguistic justice for transnational multilingual writing teachers of color, this project historicizes our stories in/against the context of racism and racialization. In particular, the notion of Asianization (Iftikar & Museus, 2018), a social process of racialization of Asians as the result of im/migration to the US, is drawn in later chapters to explicate our stories from the specific socialization experiences of Asian migrants in the US. I also lean on other Korean scholars, such as Jeong-Eun Rhee (2021), Soyeon Lee (2021), Irene Yoon (2019), and Eunjeong Lee (2020), whose autoethnographic works I saw myself in so clearly for the first time. Learning from their ways of historicizing their lived experiences of transnational and multilingual tension and paradoxes (that feeling of being torn between being neither Korean nor American), I try to narrate our stories beyond Western ways of knowing. Narrating our stories, I

also humbly "recognize what we (do not) know about other BIPOC communities' memories and survivance" (Lee et al., 2023, p. 14) as transnational women who came to this land by choice.

Organization of the Chapters

The purpose of this introductory chapter was to contextualize the topic of this project through my own stories and outline the connections between multilingual writing teachers' identities, NNES subjectivities within language hierarchies, translingual approach to language and identity negotiations, and racial subjectivities. The remainder of this project delves into the language and cultural identity negotiations of transnational multilingual writing teachers across different spaces and time within transnational trajectories.

Following the introduction, **Chapter 2** explores my choice of methodology used in this project. I elaborate on the methodological affordances of autoethnography and narrative analysis, which view lived experiences as a valid and valuable form of knowledge. I introduce three transnational multilingual writing teachers in this project, alongside the data collection and analysis process. I discuss my positionality as both the 'researcher' and the 'researched,' highlighting how this unique perspective impacted my interactions with the other two teacher participants as well as my orientation to data analysis.

The subsequent three chapters turn to the analysis of the stories. **Chapter 3** contextualizes our transnational life trajectories, where we developed our literacies and identities within distinct sociocultural backdrops. I examine colonial legacies in English literacy education in Pakistan and Korea, which permeated our everyday lives by enculturating Western values and discourses. I argue that moving between Pakistan/Korea and the US led us to develop a sense of dual perspectives, enabling us to critically understand and critique one world from the perspective of another.

Chapter 4 focuses on the strategies we employed to negotiate our identities in specific contexts in and outside of writing classrooms. The first section discusses the "passing" identity negotiation strategy, where we hide, withheld, or disaffiliate with our cultural and linguistic identities to protect ourselves from potential challenges as a writing teacher or migrant in precarious positions in predominantly white institutions governed by standard English regimes. The second section discusses "coming out" strategy, which involves choosing to disclose or leverage our transnational multilingual identities and related lived experiences as a result of feeling safe or empowered or for specific purposes. Passing and coming out stories in this chapter reveal social structures and regimes that marginalize and exclude us, as well as illustrate how we strategically navigate such structures.

In **Chapter 5**, I present stories where our identity negotiations did not stay static either as passing or coming, but constantly emerged dynamically as hybrid identities. Highlighting our hybrid identities in constant negotiations, the stories in this chapter examine how we understand situational needs and negotiate our identities reveals a discursive and complex identity labor practices of transnational multilingual Asian writing teachers—something often overlooked or remained invisible in Western narratives and orientations.

Chapter 6 summarizes the key findings from the previous three chapters, where I discuss the implications of these findings in relation to research in Rhetoric and Writing, writing program administration and curriculum. Then I discuss the limitations of this project and conclude with suggestions for future research.

CHAPTER 2: BUILDING A STORY-CENTERED METHODOLOGY FOR TRANSNATIONAL MULTILINGUAL WRITING TEACHER IDENTITIES

"How can we notice what we are trained not to notice?"

(Rhee, 2021, p. 3)

In the previous chapter, I introduced this project as story-based qualitative research that looks into transnational multilingual Asian writing teachers' lived experiences inside and beyond writing classrooms. Emphasizing the lack of attention on teachers' language difference issues in Rhetoric and Writing, I explained that this project aims to close-examine how these teachers present and negotiate their cultural and language identities while contextualizing such identity negotiations within the larger cultural, social, political, institutional, and ideological contexts and regimes. In doing so, I situated the project within the scholarships of NNEST, translingualism, and linguistic justice across different disciplines as theoretical frameworks to draw from. In this chapter, I turn to discussing my choice of story-centered methodology and method that I deploy in this project.

I use stories as the key method and methodology that "values the self as a rich repository of experiences and perspectives that are not easily available to traditional approaches" (Canagarajah, 2012, p. 260). Stories as a context-conscious qualitative method and methodology recognize experiences and knowledge of the groups who are "too particular to be in as academic knowledge" (Rhee, 2022, p. 48) as an important source of knowledge. As to transnational multilingual writing teachers in this project, involving two participants and me, our stories are of the 'particulars' in that they don't neatly fit into one language or nation-state nor into the "language diversity" population as discussed in the field that tends to consist of students. *Who*

are we now that we have two worlds in our lives? When we travel between the lands, what are we bringing and leaving behind? Who are we in classrooms? What learning can we offer to students? How do our students and colleagues see us in White monolingual spaces where our identities are read as something "other?" Thus, centering our stories in this project was an intentional move to best represent our literacies and identities negotiations in transnational liminal spaces (Canagarajah, 2020) without limitations of geographical and language boundaries.

Stories or narratives of individuals have been integrated into qualitative research as different methodological approaches (e.g., ethnography, narrative inquiry, discourse analysis) as well as different types of data sources (e.g., life history interviews, autobiographies, reflective journals). Some researchers may treat stories as a social practice by focusing on co-construction of stories between researcher and participants while other researchers may take on stories as a research instrument for gathering information to be analyzed for different attitudes, beliefs, and experiences (Talmy, 2010) The range of commitment to stories may also differ between those who focus on small stories from interviews and those who are interested in larger biographical stories.

My choice to center stories from life histories via dialogic methods (i.e., dialogic autobiography and phenomenological interviews; I discuss both later in details) in this project is based on two reasons. First, I recognize the methodological affordances of stories as context-conscious and -sensitive vignettes that unravel participants' experiences "not only [within] the local contexts of the participants' lives but also the broader sociopolitical discourses that made particular meaning-making options available to them" (Barkhuizen, 2014, p. 451; also see Pavlenko, 2007). Second, centering stories reflects my epistemological stance that views lived experiences as a valid and valuable form of knowledge or way of being. Especially, argued by

decolonial feminist scholars, stories of marginalized, oppressed, and silenced populations are powerful assertions for the validity of their bodily reality against modern, colonialist ways of knowing and being. Stories as a decolonial feminist research methodology give storytellers agency to "tell an alternative story [to] the history of Western research through the eyes of the colonized" (Smith, 1999, p. 2) that are intergenerational or/and transnational (Ahmed, 2017; Rhee, 2021) while building interrelatedness among the colonized by sharing their vulnerability in stories of survivance (Bhattacharya, 2016). Thus, in this project concerning visibilizing the lived experiences of transnational multilingual teachers of writing, stories are the key methodology and method that, for one, contextualize our stories within discursive sociohistoric, sociocultural, and ideological discourses, and for two, is a way of knowledge legitimization as those stories are often obfuscated in traditional research.

This project then centers on three specific teachers' stories that include my own and two participants' (each Joy and M[10]) who have negotiated different transnational multilingual identities. Specifically, I deploy two methods: autoethnography that reviews my own lived experiences and narrative analysis that reviews stories from two teacher participants. The processes of data collection and analysis were guided by two specific questions:

1. How do we present and negotiate our identities as transnational multilingual Asian women?
2. What different social, cultural, and institutional structures influence or mediate our identity negotiations?

Below, I introduce autoethnography and narrative analysis as qualitative research methods and note their methodological affordance in visibilizing transnational multilingual writing teachers. I

[10] They are pseudonyms chosen by the participants.

then turn to the processes of data collection for autoethnography and two narrative analysis cases. Then I go over the process of data analysis and identify core themes that guided my analysis. Finally, I discuss my researcher positionality and how it played a role in my interaction with two participants as well as my approach to analyzing their stories.

Autoethnography

Autoethnography is a known method merging ethnographic studies with self-narratives or biographical storytellings (Adams et al., 2013; Chang, 2008; Pensoneau-Conway et al., 2017). By definition, it is a "approach to research and writing that seeks to describe and systematically analyze (*graphy*) personal experience (*auto*) in order to understand cultural experience (*ethno*)" (Ellis et al., 2011, p. 1). In writing studies, autoethnography is not a methodology that's frequently used,[11] but Jackson and Grutsch McKinney's (2021) recent edited collection, *Self+Culture+Writing: Autoethnography for/as Writing Studies*, introduced its great potential to the field. The chapters in the collection helped situating autoethnography in writing studies both as a genre of writing (i.e., evocative autoethnography that reflects personal accounts around cultural practices in literary manner) and research methodology (i.e., analytic or interpretive autoethnography that also accounts personal accounts of cultural practices but through conventions of social science research writing) while addressing a wide range of issues of identities, belonging, trauma, and labor within the discipline.

Needless to say, autoethnography is a highly reflective and reflexive methodology that requires researchers to reconceptualize themselves and their past experiences as the site of their research—in that regard, it is a method of self-discovery. However, it is important to note that

[11] With the honorary note on Canagarajah's (2012) autoethnography exploring his cultural and professional identity negotiations; also, as Jackson and Grutsch McKinney (2021) notes, writing studies do have a long history of using personal narratives as a way to theorize, but not in the sense of qualitative research with a "systematic approach to gathering and interpreting data" (p. 12).

autoethnography is not “workings of an isolated individual; rather it refers to *individual versions of group cultures* that are formed, shared, retained, altered, and sometimes shed through human interactions” (Chang, 2008, p. 17, emphasis added). Seeing self as “active agents of culture” (p. 21), autoethnography locates culture in stories that are reflections of one’s social reality and historicity in connection to others. In that sense, autoethnography doesn't incite self-isolated narratives but engages in cultural analysis and interpretation of the stories to “understand others (culture/society) through self” (p. 48). Hence, autoethnography is intensely personal and yet poignantly universal to the larger contexts of people, places, culture, and practices.

Because of this nature, autoethnography is a powerful methodology for raising questions about power, status quo, and privilege. Autoethnography by those on the margins whose lived experiences are “not known” (Yoon, 2019, p. 449) illuminates what could seem like every day personal experiences “in relation to the perceived power asymmetry" (Do, 2022, p. 46) and "inquir[s] into systems and institutional dynamics that are built to silence, repress, and exclude" (Yoon, 2019, p. 449). Autoethnography humanizes members of “not known” communities, while pushing against assumptions and homogenous representations of sociocultural identities and practices. Holman Jones’ (2016) autoethnography, for example, practices queer storytelling as a way of questioning “normalizing discourses about identities, relationships, and practices” (p. 231). Diversi and Moreira (2017) propose autoethnography as a social justice methodology for “betweener” identities that are excluded within the essentializing notion of “Us/Them.” Bhattacharya (2016) also suggests autoethnography as a decolonizing methodology for Third-World Other subjectivities through their stories of survival.

But doing autoethnographic work poses unique challenges for researchers. One may raise questions such as: in collecting and writing past experiences, which memories matter and which

memories are forgettable? (i.e., question about data collection processes); how can autoethnographers represent "*insider* (cultural members)" cultural practices to "*outsiders* (cultural strangers)" (Ellis et al., 2011, p. 3) in avoidance of harmful mischaracterization? (i.e., question about data analysis and re/presentation) The 'data' of autoethnography is generally gathered by systematically and selectively writing "epiphanies"—significant memories that impacted or changed their life trajectories—that are in realm of the concerned study on particular cultural practices, values, and beliefs. However, the posed questions are not only about how to deal with 'data' in autoethnography, but also about ethical dilemmas concerning the storytelling's power of mis/representation. For instance, in writing multiple autoethnographies on rural Black women, Robin M. Boylorn's (2017) discusses the "fine line between telling a narrative with verisimilitude and telling a narrative that could be used against rural black women as evidence of their inferiority," reinforcing stereotypes (p. 11). In the case of this project, I had to ponder where my stories could be reinforcing the Orientalist view on Korea and Koreans, framing Korean society, culture, and people through the lens of Western construction of the East. This concern was echoed by Canagarajah (2012) in his autoethnographic work, noting that "storytelling is not politically innocent" (p. 261). Facing this ethical concern, Boylorn advises autoethnographers to stay "self-aware and self-reflexive about … not only the relationships between researcher and researched, but also the larger community" (p. 16). To me, to be aware of the larger community that I may mis/represent was to be aware of the ways in which I internalize such an Orientalist view due to American assimilationist rhetoric and enculturation. I tried to remember and recount "hidden feelings, forgotten motivations, and suppressed emotions" (Canagarajah, 2012, p. 261) in the process of assimilation and enculturation to reveal my cultural and language identities negotiation that are fluid and sensitive to the contexts of

larger communities, histories, and discourses. That way, when cultural "stereotypes" arose in my stories, I was bringing them up to critically examine—rather than reinforce—their portrayal and influences on my cultural and language subjectivities.

Narrative Analysis

Along with my narratives, I bring in narrative analysis of two other transnational multilingual writing teachers' stories to this study as distinct and yet collective telling cases. Before I discuss narrative analysis as the second methodology of this study, I would like to share a short story that led me to invite others' stories to this project along with mine. In 2020, I conducted a pilot study in a graduate seminar where I interviewed and observed a graduate teaching assistant from China, teaching a 100-level German language course during her doctorate program in German Studies. I found her multilingual background—native speaker of Chinese and fluent in English and German—and her area of study fascinating. My fascination was, admittedly, coming from my assumptions of her—informed by native speaker fallacy[12] and racial stereotypes that couldn't quite link East Asians with the German language. As the project progressed, her stories subverted my expectations and assumptions again and again. Then I realized how I was projecting my own experiences onto her stories as another transnational multilingual East Asian woman in the US academy. I assumed that we would share the same or at least very similar experiences and perceptions of transnational and multilingual experiences, but we were two very different people. This experience grounded me to the danger of researcher biases, but what it really taught me was the multitude of transnational multilingual teacher

[12] This was mentioned in Chapter 1 as an ideological construct of language teachers as native speakers of the language. Here, I am talking about how my native speaker fallacy (i.e., German teachers are German native speakers) was debunked.

experiences and the danger of isolating cultural practices in a single story (Adichie, 2009), which led me to my relationship with Joy and M in this project.

Reading Joy and M's stories for their language and cultural identity negotiations situated in their transnational trajectories, I draw on narrative analysis as a methodology that parallels autoethnography. That is, narrative analysis shares similarities with autoethnography in their focus on narrative epistemology and attention to contexts in which stories occurred and constructed.[13] As autoethnography takes inquiry into narratives on self as a meaningful data source, narrative analysis privileges participants' narratives as an epistemology and valid form of knowledge. In narrative analysis, narratives provide researchers "a portal through which a person enters the world" and make sense of their lives (Conelly & Clandinin, 2006, p. 477) in their identity creation processes. Because how one narrates their human experiences can't be separate from social conditions—"[s]tories don't fall from the sky" (Riessman, 2008, p. 105)—narratives are power sources for learning larger cultural attitudes, practices, and ideologies reflected and represented in participants' stories. Thus, narrative analysis, like autoethnography, is a highly context-conscious methodology. Barkhuizen (2011) encourages researchers to look beyond just the content of the narrative (who, what, where and when of the story) and consider the context of the narrative in two senses. One is reading narratives from spatiotemporal dimensions of narratives that locate an event or a thing in the past, present as it appears to us, and implied future. The other is reading them from sociohistorical dimensions of phenomena that are the focus of investigation. This way, Barkhuizen differentiates narrative analysis from analysis of narrative. This attention to temporal and sociohistoric context is crucial in examining Joy and

[13] Discussing these similarities, I acknowledge that they come from different methodological lineages, autoethnography being rooted in the practice of ethnography and narrative analysis that arose from the abroad activity in qualitative, interpretive research.

M's language and cultural identity negotiations holistically in transnational liminal spaces. Due to the context-sensitive nature, Jones (2016) argues for narrative analysis as a feminist methodology that gives "voice and agency to participants and populations that are potentially oppressed and othered" (p. 480). Seeing the same possibility, I conduct narrative analysis as a way to privilege Joy and M's narratives from the margin of our field.

About the Participants

Criteria that I used to choose participants were (1) self-identified nonnative English speakers (2) who have transnational migration experiences, (3) have taught a college writing course, and (4) have rich reflections on various sociocultural discourses on language and identity. I drew on my social connections to search for the possible participants in 2021. After conducting initial interviews with four candidates who expressed their interests, I eventually decided to focus on two participants, Joy and M, who shared rich reflections on their writing experiences and language identities. Below, I introduce Joy and M with a brief context of how we met (for understanding our relationship as researcher and participant better) and their transnational and literacy backgrounds.

Joy. The first time I met Joy was at an online teaching workshop in the midst of the pandemic in 2020. The topic of the workshop was "inclusive teaching." When the facilitator randomly put the attendees into Zoom breakout rooms, I was surprised to see two Asian women on my screen—one of which was Joy—because it was very rare to encounter an all Asian women's group at a university-wide workshop at this predominantly White institution. We shared our names and learned that we were graduate students from different departments teaching different kinds of courses. The conversation shifted from how to include Person of Color (POC) students in the curriculum to how we as POC instructors experience inclusivity and

exclusivity in classrooms. I said, “We also need more inclusivity work for us, to protect us as Asian woman teachers.” Joy and the other women shared their agreements. The breakout room ended shortly, but it was the earnest sharing I had had at a workshop. This led me to contact Joy to invite her to this study.

Joy was born and raised in South Korea. She describes herself as “native Korean” who “speak[s] English.” She is the first person to go to college in her family which makes her a “first gen." Although her parents never pressured her to succeed academically growing up unlike the other “typical” Korean parents who are highly invested in their children’s educational success, Joy naturally found her interest in the English language through books and movies. She remarks that she had this “innate feminist” orientation since young that bloomed through consuming Western movies and stories where women looked free and independent unlike Korean women. She lived in Australia for a year during high school. After completing her master's degree in Korea, she decided to move to the US for her doctorate degree in English. Her research was on 18th century English literature. She taught FYW courses for two semesters during her doctorate program as a graduate instructor at Midwestern University and another FYW course at Southwest University as a new faculty.

M. I met M through a part-time job that concerned cross-cultural education. We became close quickly because we shared similar research interest in colonial theories, we were both international graduate students from Asia, looking for a part-time job that our student VISAs allowed, and most of all, we shared the same uncomfortable sentiment around the dynamics at that part-time workplace where we were two of very few POCs. We often discussed how our identities are read at institutional spaces, which included the part-time job we were on but also teaching writing classes or being at our respective departments. Knowing that M also had taught

FYW, I reached out to her to invite her to this study, to which she graciously agreed and offered her time (and more) generously.

M was born in England as her parents were getting doctorate degrees there at that time. Her family moved to the Kashmir region of Pakistan when she was six years old where she attended semi-private Pakistani schools for primary education. At those schools, she learned with "textbooks by Oxford Press and other higher scaled European publishers" that were all written in English. Most instructions were in English at schools albeit Urdu was still used in daily communications. Today, she identifies as an "Urdu and English speaker." After getting a bachelor's degree in English in Pakistan, she worked as a university English lecturer till she moved to the US for her master's and doctorate degree in English where she specialized in postcolonial studies. She identifies as a practicing Muslim. She has taught two FYW courses as a graduate instructor at Midwestern University. She also has other teaching experiences in literature and topics in arts and humanities.

Data Collection

Autoethnographic Data. Unlike memoir or autobiography, autoethnography as a qualitative research method demands "a systematic approach to data collection, analysis, and interpretation about self and social phenomena involving self" (Ngunjiri et al., 2010, p. 2). The primary data source of the autoethnographic study was what I call a dialogic autobiography, an interactive method of eliciting significant events and anecdotes. Compared to written autobiography, dialogic autobiography evokes real-time reflection to stories in response to the interlocutor. To create the dialogic autobiography, I engaged in dialogue and recorded the conversation with my advisor where I talked about my teaching practices. Conversations typically occurred once or twice a week for about an hour to an hour and a half between Fall

2021 and Spring 2022 semesters. During these semesters, I was teaching two different courses at Midwestern University, which was a predominantly White institution. The class I taught and discussed in Fall 2021 was a non-credit bearing bridge course called Preparation for College Writing (PCW) geared toward international students and other linguistically diverse students. The course I taught and discussed in Spring 2022, on the other hand, was a mainstream First Year Writing (FYW) offered university wide. During the recorded conversations, I shared any significant moments or incidents from teaching the past week. However, the conversations were not limited to teaching experiences. As I was explaining my pedagogical choices and significant classroom interactions, I brought up related stories from my broader life trajectories that informed how I was presenting and negotiating my identities in the classroom.

Along with dialogic autobiography, I gathered and reviewed a range of teaching-related documents (e.g., syllabi, writing assignments, readings, slideshows) and personal artifacts (e.g., journal entries, old papers from schoolwork, immigration-related documents, social media posts, and photos) to supplement the dialogic autobiography. That is, as supplementary information to the dialogic autography, those artifacts served to elicit memories and were woven into the discussions with my advisor. They were also drawn as needed to add more context and richness to certain memories or events discussed in the dialogic autobiography in the analysis process.

Narrative Analysis Data. The primary data for narrative analysis came from interviews with Joy and M, which was IRB approved and received consents. About once a month, I met with each of them through Zoom for about an hour while audio-recording. These interviews were semi-structured and informed by Seidman's (2006) three-phrase phenomenological interviews. The first phase of the interview was centered around their life history (e.g., transnational trajectory, educational background, and multilingual literacy development in their respective

sociocultural context). The mid-phase interview focused on teaching experiences (e.g., approaches to teach FYW; key teaching events related to language or cultural differences). The third phase was centered around specific teaching artifacts such as syllabi, readings, writing assignments, and slideshows used in class. In this third phase, we looked at their teaching artifacts together as I asked them to reflect on the processes in creating them. Those teaching-related documents were collected between first and second interviews.

I conducted a total of seven interviews with Joy between Fall 2022 and Spring 2023. The first three interviews followed the three-phase phenomenological interview protocols (see Appendix for interview questions). The rest of the four interviews out of seven were building on what I learned from the first three interviews. During those semesters, Joy was starting her new position as a faculty in Southwestern University, teaching FYW courses. Thus, her discussion of teaching includes both at-that-time present FYW course at Southwestern University and old FYW course she taught as a graduate instructor at Midwestern University. All interviews with Joy were conducted in Korean and later translated.[14] In the case of M, I conducted a total of 4 interviews with her during the Fall 2022, the fourth interview being a stretch of the third phrase. M was not teaching FYW while interviews were conducted, and her stories are recounted memories from teaching a FYW course at Midwestern University a semester before as a graduate instructor. All interviews with M were in English.

[14] I acknowledge that being native Korean speaker does not necessarily mean that I am an expert in translation practices, nor have I received professional training for translation. Instead, I sought two rounds of member-checking, inviting Joy to review my translations.

Table 2. Data Sources of the Study

Narrator	Autoethnographer	Joy	M
Teaching Experience	Taught first-year writing over 7 years	Taught first-year writing over 2 years	Taught first-year writing for 1 year
Country of Origin	Korea	Korea	Pakistan
Languages	Korean and English	Korean and English	Urdu and English
Discipline	Rhetoric and Writing	English	English
Primary Data Source	19 dialogic autobiographies (1-1.5 hours each; during Fall 2021 and Spring 2022)	7 interviews (1 hour each; during Fall 2022 and Spring 2023)	4 interviews (1 hour each; during Fall 2022)
Supplementary Data Sources	Teaching-related documents • Course syllabi • Lesson slideshows • Writing assignments • Readings • Post-teaching reflections Personal artifacts	Teaching-related documents • Course syllabi • Lesson slideshows • Writing assignments • Readings	Teaching-related documents • Course syllabi • Writing assignments • Readings

Data Analysis

Data were analyzed recursively throughout the collection process. For every audio-recorded data (from dialogic autobiography and interviews), I first transcribed them using Otter.ai (https://otter.ai/), an online transcription program. Because Otter.ai does not support languages other than English, I transcribed interviews with Joy in Korean. I did not translate these Korean transcripts into English yet at this stage—I waited till I finished coding to selectively translate excerpts that were referenced in my findings. Transcripts were then moved to MAXQDA, a qualitative data analysis software program, for coding. I chose MAXQDA to assist me in managing and organizing about 34 hours of interview data across different narrators.

Especially, I found making analytic notes and integrating a system of codes across the different interview data on MAXQDA useful. Once transcripts were on MAXQDA, I read through them and inductively coded stories as guided by the research questions: how we negotiate our identities in different contexts and what mediates such negotiations. Supplementary data (teaching-related documents and personal artifacts) were selectively drawn based on the significant stories or events. For example, when Joy described an incident about deadlines, I went back to her course syllabus that had a language about her deadline policy.

The whole process of collecting data, transcribing, and coding was cyclical. For instance, coding invoked more ideas for follow-up questions to bring up to Joy and M the next time we talked; coding Joy and M's stories, I was reminded of memory that I forgot so I brought it up during the dialogic autobiography; and when coding the latest interviews with Joy and M, I returned to the older transcripts I already had reviewed to add different analytic ideas. During the coding process, I paid attention to the ways we described our cultural, linguistic, and teacher identities, as well as the ideological presumptions underlying these descriptions. Once I finished coding all interview transcripts, I ended up with a wide range of codes (a total of 67 codes on 304 segments). To group and categorize these codes, I reviewed the codes with concerned segments multiple rounds to identify larger themes across them. The themes emerged as the result are:

- Connection between our cultural and language identities and **colonial influence**
    - example codes: East vs. West; learning/retaining English; English and "American culture"[15]; English as social capital; English and Whiteness; "good accent"
- **Passing** as non-transnational or/and non-multilingual

[15] Quotation marks on codes indicate *in vivo* codes that are exact words used by us.

    - example codes: “high” language competence; identities as “unnecessary information;” separating “work” and “home”
- Presenting our identities explicitly or **coming out** as transnational multilingual identities
    - example codes: creating inclusion for multilingual students; curriculum inviting our identities; “personal” writing; students’ openness to difference
- Messy and complex identity negotiations or **hybrid** identities in negotiation and transformation
    - Example code: “neither Korean nor American;” visible Muslim woman who is invisible

Once data analysis was completed, I engaged in member checking to avoid privileging my interpretations of their stories entirely. I shared the full interview transcripts (for Joy, both Korean and English so that she can also review how her words were translated) to confirm whether everything they said was portrayed correctly and if there was anything they wish to omit or revise. I also shared drafts of my analytic descriptions of specific segments from the full transcripts so that Joy and M could see which part of their stories will be referenced in this project. To these specific segments/excerpts, they were also invited to correct and request to omit. I conducted a total of two rounds of member-checking as my writing became more developed and solidified. With their generous giving in time and attention to member-checking in addition to the interviews, I was able to write our stories “with” them, rather than “on” them, on some level.

Researcher Positionality

I must note the fact that I hold a unique position in this project in that I am the researcher and the researched at the same time. That is, when I engaged with stories by Joy and M, I was in

a dialogue with them as the researcher but also as one of them. When I heard their stories, I told mine, and that influenced the direction of our conversations naturally. I welcomed this blurred distinction between the researcher and the researched, with caution,[16] as it urged me to practice self-reflexivity by recounting and analyzing my own stories. This self-reflexivity made the interactions between me and Joy and M *reciprocal* in the sense that I was co-constructing our stories in conversations, rather than unidirectionally gathering their stories. This reciprocity also allowed me to build deep affective connections with them and their stories. This approach to practice self-reflexivity on my stories as well as the participants' stories comes from my firm belief that researchers' lives (their values, interests, and life histories) are inextricably connected to their ways of viewing reality, what constitutes knowledge, and hence, their research. Making this point, I echo Rhee's (2021) linking between ontology and epistemology: "[w]ho I am is never separable from what I know and how I know or vice versa" (p. 4).

Joy and I share very similar backgrounds—we both are first-gen students from Korea whose parents are endlessly proud of our achievement in the US academy. We both share the Korean cultural lineage that allows us to understand subtle "Korean things" with no need of language to describe. On the other hand, getting to know M constantly awakened me from my arrogance as a "transnational expert"—the sense that I automatically understood other transnational people's lives, especially those who came here for educational purposes like me. I was oblivious of histories and ongoing political complications and violence in Kashmir caught between Pakistani and Indian governments and militaries. I did not know about the Urdu language before M taught me how alphabet keyboards work intricately to write in Urdu.

[16] Providing an *emic* or insider perspective into the focal participants or communities is welcomed in giving rich description in analysis. However, researchers who are "insiders" must be cautious of privileging their interpretations without an effort to include multiple points of view (i.e., conducting member-checking).

Interacting with M, I realized the danger of equating my worldview to the World's view. Kwon (2020) echoes this danger of insider positionality in her transnational ethnographic study:

> I am a native of South Korea, bilingual in both Korean and English, who first learned English as a foreign language. ... As a person who has gone through the experiences of navigating multiple schooling contexts and countries, I may understand the complexities and challenges that the focal children and families face. I acknowledge, however, that "being born into a group, 'going native,' or just being a member does not necessarily afford the perspective necessary for studying the phenomenon" (Merriam & Tisdell, 2016, p. 146). (p. 108).

Understanding M's stories required me more than just interview hours. I read books by Pakistani historians and feminist scholars that M graciously shared with me. She invited me to a talk by Masrat Zahra, a Pakistani woman photojournalist and documentary photographer who has worked at the frontline of the Kashmir conflict, where I was able to peek at how political conflict causes violence in people's everyday lives in Kashmir. M also invited me to final presentations for a graduate seminar on Southeast Asian feminism where I could learn more about her scholarship. I am endlessly thankful to the generous ways M invited me to her life. While I had the advantage of Korean heritage, language, and experiences to understand Joy's stories deeper, my relationship with M and the time we spent outside of the Zoom interview sessions allowed me a different kind of relational connectivity.

Of course, this does not mean that the same cautionary words from Kwon don't apply to my dynamic with Joy. "Being born into a group" doesn't, again, guarantee deeper rapport building. In the case of Joy, the time I have known Joy was shorter than with M. Joy was also in a different state while M and I lived in the same area and met in person outside of the Zoom

interviews. My interaction with Joy was also complicated with our use of 존댓말 (honorific Korean[17]) during the conversations, creating a mental distance from her for using such a formal and professional Korean language that I was out of practice—that is, having spent most of my professional life in the US, my honorific Korean required in professional interaction in Korea was lacking in my linguistic repertoire. After perhaps the third interview out of the total seven, we built the rapport as Joy described the interviews as, "얘기하는 거 그냥 재미있어요. ["*it's fun talking to you*.]"

Chapter Conclusion

This chapter described the research design for this project, which combines autoethnographic study and narrative case studies. I introduced the affordances and significance of using stories as the method and methodology in this project. Following this, I detailed the data collection and analysis procedure aimed at addressing my central questions: (1) how do we negotiate our language and cultural identities?; and (2) what mediates our identity negotiations? I concluded the chapter by discussing my positionality as a researcher and the researched, as well as how I navigated ethical decisions throughout the project. In Chapters 3, 4, and 5, I will present my findings to answer these questions.

[17] It is a cultural norm to use honorifics among individuals of the same or similar age if they are not considered close friends.

CHAPTER 3: NARRATING THE COLONIAL "PAST" AND DEVELOPING DUAL PERSPECTIVES

"[M]ere self-exposure without profound cultural analysis and interpretation leaves this writing at the level of descriptive autobiography or memoir."

(Chang, 2008, p. 51)

"That idea Cristopher Columbus had was more powerful than the reality he met and so the reality he met died."

(Kincaid, 1991, p. 37)

This project explores how transnational multilingual writing teachers shape and negotiate their language and cultural identities in everyday lives across multiple spaces and times. To achieve this, I focused on three teachers: Joy, M, and I. I gathered and analyzed our stories as discussed in the previous chapter. In this chapter, I present key stories detailing our literacy and language development within our respective transnational and multilingual contexts. As Rebecca Lorimer Leonard (2014) points out, "political [histories and] changes are not neutral backdrops to the everyday use of literacy and language, but instead wield surprisingly direct influence over these writers' access to literacy materials and language instruction, and on their identities as language users" (p. 243). The first section of this chapter focuses on our early English literacy development in Pakistan and Korea to provide crucial sociocultural and sociohistorical backdrops for our language and cultural negotiation. Joy and I share experiences of learning English as a second language for academic purposes in Korea, while M has acquired English in a bilingual environment in Pakistan. Our stories of multilingual literacy and language reveal the broader global colonial structures in Pakistan and US imperial influence in Korea, where

learning English was not just language acquisition but entailed colonial legacies and ideologies. The second section of this chapter situates such colonial influence in our literacy development within transnational contexts. Moving to the US as we embarked on our graduate studies, we begin to compare our situations in Pakistan-Korea and the US and develop a critical lens to look at Western society and ideals.

Our Early Literacy Development and Colonial Legacies

Our early literacy education experiences in Pakistan and Korea underscore the impact of colonial regimes on our English literacy development. Specifically, colonial legacies were reflected in our Pakistani and Korean educational environments, which emphasized the prestige of English as an economic capital (i.e., better job prospects or college admissions). English acquisition also afforded us sociocultural capital (i.e., access to literature, film, or music; embodiment of sophistication or progressiveness) in Pakistan and Korea, creating a positive, idealized, or romanticized imagination and perception of Western society and culture. In this section, I first illustrate M's stories growing up in Pakistan and then move to Joy and my stories in Korea where the three of us developed English literacy.

Pakistan. In the first interview with M, her story unfolded with an account of the British colonial influence during her childhood. M was born in the UK, where both of her parents were graduate students at a British university. When she was about six years old, M and her parents relocated to Pakistan. In Pakistan, her parents devoted significant effort to ensuring "retaining [M's] English" that she acquired in the UK. This included implementing "English only" hours at home, during which M exclusively communicated in English with her parents, as well as bedtime stories in English. M describes this experience as "peppering English throughout the day."

As she grew up, the emphasis on maintaining English proficiency extended to her schooling. For her primary education, M attended a semi-private foundational school in Kashmir, Pakistan, which she described as ranked between Pakistani public schools and "top private schools affiliated with the Cambridge boards." This presence of Cambridge boards in Pakistani education traces back to British colonial rule, providing a pathway for Pakistani students to pursue higher education in England (Ali & Farah, 2007). While Urdu remained prevalent in spoken communication, English served as the official language at M's school. Teachers switched between Urdu and English in classrooms, and all written textbooks were in English, typically published by "higher scaled European publishers" such as Oxford Press. Noticing the recurrent connections to Cambridge and Oxford, M explained how her primary education was imbued with "colonial legacies":

> **M**: Obviously, there are those colonial legacies in English being a marker of prestige and success and, you know, the English education being important to make people gentleman, or those kinds of things, but also because English is, like, considered one of the official languages of the country. ... So we were taught to write in English, think in English, walk in English. That was literally the thing we were told on the first day of classes. (M, Interview 1, 09/21/2022)

During British colonial times in the 1830s, the educational system under the East India Company established "a fresh system of education offered in the English language and demanded abandoning official support for the local academic language like Persian, Arabic, and Sanskrit," with the belief that Western education could only be introduced through English (Gupta, 2007, p. 153). Today, English remains the medium of instruction and a compulsory subject in all schools in Pakistan. As a nation, Pakistan has both Urdu and English as its official national languages. English language proficiency, shaped by centuries of "colonial legacies," as M describes, has

become a socioeconomic capital—a "defining factor for success in the lives of young people … rather than subject area expertise" (p. 154).

However, for M, English held a significance beyond its socioeconomic value in Pakistani society. The primacy and dominance of English was rather mundane to her because it permeated every aspect of her life, from home to school, where she was required to "write in English, think in English, walk in English." Gaining English proficiency wasn't a choice for her; it was seamlessly integrated into her domestic life and educational environment by historical, institutional, and ideological forces in postcolonial Pakistan. Describing the imposition of English spread in British colonies, Pennycook (2007) argues that the effect of Anglicist rhetoric not only produced superior images of the English language but also fostered liberal and progressive perceptions of Britain, its empire, and institutions through "the finest and greatest medium for arts, politics, trade, and religion" (p. 18). For example, in her essay, "On Seeing England for the First Time," Jamaica Kincaid (1991) describes how colonial legacies are reproduced in everyday lives of the colonized. She reflects on the English history education she received at school, the English hat her father liked to wear, and her mother teaching her to eat food in the English way. English history, culture, and values became "the source from which we got our sense of reality, our sense of what was meaningful, our sense of what was meaningless" (p. 32). Thus, colonial legacies—discourses of European superiority—persisted long after the formal end of colonialism, manifesting not only within the English language acquisition but in M's everyday reality where she expected to conform to the archetype of a "gentleman." English then isn't simply a socioeconomic capital for gaining access to education or economic success; it is a sociocultural symbol and capital for "prestige and success" circulated through discourses of European superiority.

Korea. Although South Korea was not officially colonized by the West, it was under the influence of US imperialism following the end of World War II, replacing Japanese colonialism. The US military intervention and occupation in Korea were often justified by the perception that Korea lacked effective governmental and administrative structures after enduring a long period of Japanese colonization. Pro-US military rhetoric quickly propagated the narrative of necessary "international aid" for Korea's stability and progress. During the separation process of South and North Korea, the US further solidified their position as a neutral mitigator and a "peacemaker," credited with rescuing South Korea from communist threats and establishing democracy. An advertisement poster below (see Figure 1) depicts the Korean peninsula divided into "North Korea - USSR (Union of Soviet Socialist Republics)" and "South Korea- US." The caption

Figure 1. Advertisement Poster for the US Army Military Government in Korea, National Museum of Korean Contemporary History, Seoul (November 1946)

inside the red-and-blue *Taeguk*—a symbol in the Korean national flag—reads, "Unification of Northern and Southern zones still stalemated but tasks of military government go on," highlighting the extensive US military presence during the process of separation between South and North Korean governments. American imperialism remained dominant in Korea throughout the latter half of the 20th century, bolstered by the influx of American media and Hollywood productions.

This historical backdrop underscores the profound influence of the English language within contemporary Korean society—a structural and cultural imprint of ongoing US imperialism. It encapsulates complex ideologies of American heroism, capitalism, and neoliberalism, consequently wielding significant economic, social, and ideological capital in South Korea. Learning English as a second language transcends mere language skill acquisition; it serves as a gateway to attaining sociocultural and economic values. For instance, proficiency in English increases employability, rendering individuals more desirable workers, as well as enhances one's perceived sophistication when speaking in a dominant variety and accent.

The glorification of American culture, language, and values is evident in my "made (it) in the USA" story from chapter 1. My family took great pride in my academic achievements in the US higher education, a sentiment symbolically echoed by my mother's preference for products labeled "made in the USA," which she considered a mark of quality. Indeed, numerous traces of US ideological influence permeated my daily life during adolescence. One of my earliest memories dates back to 2000 when I was an avid fan of Britney Spears. My elder sister collected pop albums featuring artists like Christina Aguilera, Backstreet Boys, and Destiny's Child. I would sneak into her room to listen to Britney Spears' albums. With the music on a CD player, I would painstakingly transcribe the English lyrics from the CD covers into my notebook, using a

hand-held English-to-Korean dictionary to decipher unfamiliar words. I mimicked her pronunciation while admiring her blond hair, fair skin, and outfits—attributes rarely seen in Korean media at the time. Whenever I turned on the TV, I gravitated towards channels airing Hollywood movies, with *Home Alone* becoming a personal favorite. Seeing the huge house that Kevin, the main character, lived in, I would imagine that: Americans live in giant mansions! By middle school, I had earned a reputation as a student who is "good at English" by my teachers and classmates. I very much took on that label, which motivated me to diligently memorize new English vocabularies and grammar rules. It also spurred me to consume more American media, including movies and pop music. I remember my classmates gathering around my desk after English tests, seeking to compare their answers with mine, as if I had all the correct answers. I felt proud of how my proficiency in English was treated by others. It was a different kind of "smart" from being good at math, history, or any other subjects. It was a kind of "smart" associated with the imagined sophistication, wealth, and progressiveness.

These memories of consuming American culture and developing English literacy as the dominant language of modernization and globalization are intricately intertwined with Korea's history as a US-occupied nation. In the memories above, I unwittingly embraced US imperialist ideologies that historically idealized American culture, language, and ideals. The pervasive presence of US mass media in Korean society led me to internalize tropes of glorified American abundance. In terms of language acquisition, my pursuit of English proficiency extended beyond mere social mobility and economic opportunity—although those were significant factors, including college admissions and employment prospects in Korea. English held symbolic value for me, representing attributes like "sophistication, wealth, and progressiveness." The cultural

imagery of the US permeated not only my literacy development but also my everyday cultural consumptions.

Joy's experience of learning English while growing up in Korea parallels my own, but unlike my uncritical consumption and adoption of American mass media and language, Joy finds American culture and language liberatory. Beyond formal education, Joy's interest in learning English was sparked by exposure to Hollywood movies and literature by Western authors. When I asked about her motivation for learning English, she expressed:

> **Joy**: 그냥 그 문화가 저와 맞는 게 있었던 거 같아요. 그때는 몰랐는데 제 내면에 feminist 가 있었는데, 한국의 language 나 culture 가 저랑 안 맞는 게 있었던 거 같아요. 당연히 미국이 그런 건 아닌데, 영화나 이런 데서 보면 나오는 어떤 그런 이미지, 상상되는 이미지, 뭔가 자유롭고 독립적이고, 이런 거가 좋았던 거 같아요, 지금 생각해보면. 그래서 그런 게 좀 동기부여가 됐던 거 같아요. (Joy, Interview 1, 09/13/2022)

> **Joy**: *I think the culture was interesting to me. I now realize how I had this "feminist" in me that was not answered through Korean language or culture. Of course, I am not saying that the US is always [feminist], but in their movies, there is this image or imagination of something free and independent, and I think I liked that aspect. I think that motivated me [to learn English].*

Joy's identification of the cultural imagination of "free and independent" as her motivation to learn English, particularly in how gender was portrayed differently in Western movies or books, highlights her quest for a perspective not satisfied by Korean language or culture. She describes her inner "feminist" disposition finding resonance in Western media, where feminism themes were more pronounced than in Korean narratives. In a subsequent interview, Joy cited Jane Eyre's novels as her favorite, emphasizing the feminism themes they contained: "제일 와

닿았던 건 그 속에 있는 feminism theme [*the most striking thing was the feminist themes in them*]" (Joy, Interview 4, 12/02/2022). For Joy, the symbolic value of English lay in its association with feminism, granting her access to read woman-centered feminist narratives. In contrast, Joy noted aspects of Korean language and culture as lacking gender equity in discourse:

> **Joy**: 뭔가 한국의 어떤 '시댁'이라던지 이런 말, relation 에 대해서 하는 '큰아버지,' '아주버님' 이런 거가 영어에선 다 'in law'이고, 다 동등한 그거가 있는데, 한국에선 또 그렇지 않고. (Joy, Interview 1, 09/13/2022)

> **Joy**: Korean words like '*si-daek* [husband's family]' and words for family relations like '*keun-abuji* [the elder brother of one's father]' or '*ajubu-nim* [brother-in-law]' are all just equally 'in-laws' in English, which isn't the case in Korea.

Joy's examples of Korean honorific words used to refer to the male side's in-laws highlight a linguistic and cultural disparity compared to the English term "in-laws." These Korean honorifics, exclusively used by married women to address their in-laws with respect, are rooted in Confucian patriarchy, reflecting the traditional virtues of wives serving their husbands and their families as their familial responsibility. Despite her rejection of blindly idealizing the US over Korea (as she remarked, "Of course, I am not saying that the US is always [feminist]"), Joy finds herself grappling with the contrast in gender discourse between the two cultures. That is, despite being aware of and experiencing patriarchal oppression in the US as a woman, she perceives the US culture as 'less patriarchal' compared to her experiences in Korea. Joy's comparative perspective between Korean and US languages and cultures creates an interesting irony where she perceives one form of patriarchy potentially 'saving' her from another form of patriarchy. These hierarchies within patriarchies experienced by transnational women, as they navigate changed gender statuses through migration, reflect a nuanced transnational

understanding of gender dynamics. Kim (2006) notes that this phenomenon arises from a lack of attention to American patriarchy while abstracting the non-Western world as inherently patriarchal (p. 520). Joy's experience underscores how US gender ideologies are intricately woven with historically idealized American culture. Joy uses attributes like "equal" and "independent" to describe US gender discourses while critiquing Korean society as relatively more patriarchal. This juxtaposition between Korean and US cultures and societies partially resonates with my own experiences where I associated attributes such as "sophistication" and "progressiveness" with US culture. However, unlike my early experiences of absorbing American culture uncritically, Joy's experiences of literacy acquisition reflect her development of critical comparative perspective,[18] enabling her to critique Korean patriarchy.

So far, I have examined the sociohistoric backdrops that outline how Pakistan and Korea engage with colonial and imperialist ideologies, which influenced our early English literacy development. M's early literacy development in Pakistan had a strong emphasis on English acquisition both at home and school, where she was encouraged to speak, read, write, and even "walk" in English. This primacy and prestige of English traces back to the British colonial era, that instilled European superiority discourse in the Pakistani educational system. Joy and I also experienced a strong emphasis on English acquisition at school, but gaining access to American cultural mediums such as literature, films, and music drove our personal desire to learn English. Our interests in American cultural media were connected with historical US-imperialism in Korea that positioned American culture as "sophistication" and "feminist." These sociohistoric contexts of English in Pakistan and Korea led us to view English literacy not only as the educational and economic capital but also as sociocultural status that idealized Western culture

[18] I will further discuss this critical comparative perspective or dualistic perspective, comparing Korean/Pakistani societies to the US, later in this chapter.

and values represented in English. Acquisition of English literacy and related exposure to Western sociocultural values led Joy to critique Korean society as she made comparisons between the different patriarchal undertones of Korean and English languages. This sense of dual perspectives, where we critique one culture from another point of view, becomes more prominent as we transition to the US educational environment. In the next section, I highlight how we developed a sense of dual perspectives—comparing Korean/Pakistani society to the US—in the US academic settings.

Transitioning to the US Academy and Developing Dual Perspectives

In this second section of this chapter, I continue to present our stories around literacy education, but the context is now moved to the US academy. Three of us moved to the US as adults for advanced degrees. M and I moved to the US in 2016 for a master's degree and continued with a doctorate studies. Joy moved to the US in 2018 for her doctorate degree after completing her master's at a Korean university. In our early migration stage, we experienced new cultural and literacy practices in the US as international graduate students. It was a pivotal moment of change where our cultural and language identities were challenged and negotiated as newcomers to academic discourse in the US.

In particular, we often compared and contrasted our educational experiences in Pakistan and Korea with our new experiences in the US, developing a sense of dual perspective. Dualistic orientation or dual perspective is a common "tendency [where] migrants compare life experiences and situations from different points of view of their native and adopted societies" (Lam & Warriner, 2012, p. 195). Comparing social ties from one community to another, transnational migrants constantly balance the two worldviews and values and negotiate what appears to be oppositional presentations of the world. Researchers in transnational migration

studies have termed such dual perspectives migrants draw upon to make sense of their transnational experiences as dual-national perspective (Jimenez, 2003), dual visage (Guarnizo, 1997), bifocality (Rouse, 1992; Vertovec, 2004), or double belonging (Golbert, 2001). In this section, I illustrate how we developed and drew on dual perspectives to understanding and navigating the US academic setting compared to our experiences from Pakistani/Korean educational settings.

Dual perspectives on learning style. When I asked M about her experiences of moving to the US to begin her graduate program, she felt compelled to explain the differences in academic performance between Pakistan and the US that led her to negotiate her learning styles. Reflecting on her experiences, she remarks:

> **M**: I don't want to use the word 'old school,' but it is generally how pedagogies are like, … [in] Asian contexts. In Pakistan, India, and East Asia, [pedagogy] is very top-down, and … teacher being the bucket or the fountain of knowledge and things coming to you. So, original thinking wasn't honestly encouraged. ... Here, it's a lot of American cultural things, you know, having your opinion in and having to say something creative on things. I am, more often than not, comfortable in listening to people and observing things. I learn better that way. I don't necessarily have to say something all the time, you know. But there's this expectation … to speak. I do feel pressured in those moments to be, okay, I'm expected to speak here. I'm expected to be articulate in this space. (M, Interview 1, 09/21/2022)

M experienced a stark contrast in educational models between "Asian context" and "American cultural things." She describes the Asian pedagogical model as "old school" and "very top-down" where teachers mainly lecture to students. While she hesitantly uses the word "old school" to critique such unidirectional learning, she also defends the lecture-based Asian pedagogical model as her preferred way to learn, where she listens and observes. Later in the

same interview, M also adds that lectures in Pakistani education have helped her understand complex theories by philosophers such as Derrida and Foucault. On the other hand, she experiences American classrooms as highly participatory, where students are expected to speak and share their "original" and "creative" thoughts, rather than listening to lectures. When I asked her what she meant by "original thinking," she further described it as "finding your own footing and your own voice" in texts, as opposed to receiving knowledge from the teacher through lectures (M, Interview 1, 09/21/2022). This new expectation to speak her own opinion in classrooms poses a challenge for M, as she is not used to sharing "original" thoughts on the go and leads her to "feel pressured."

Understanding the challenge that arises from the differences in learning styles between Asian/Pakistani education and the US classroom, M also acknowledges the drawbacks of such discussion-driven learning. She remarked:

> **M**: Theory has gone from here (laughter). Theory isn't as big in the US. I would have colleagues who would often say, "I get by. I know all the theories I need to know." So to be honest, to give credit to our training back home, I was trained more holistically, … taught in broader [and] multiple traditions [and] time periods. (M, Interview 1, 09/21/2022)

M recognizes the lack of depth and coverage of theories in her graduate program in the US compared to the holistic training that she received in Pakistan. Through her interactions with her colleagues, M realizes that the emphasis on "original" opinions in classroom discussions has the potential for shallow coverage of materials being discussed, allowing students to "get by" without holistic learning of theories. For example, M observes common discussion exchanges in classrooms as "performative" and "posturing": "A lot of it is so performative. Part of it is honestly so much posturing as well. And generally, we relate being articulate to being smart" (M,

Interview 1, 09/21/2022). While M faces challenges in expressing her opinions in US classrooms, she also critically compares her experiences in Pakistani and the US education and critiques the performative nature of learning in the US, which has the potential leading to a partial or limited understanding of the material.

Encountering "performative" nature in US classrooms was echoed by Joy. With experiences of attending graduate school in Korea, Joy also adopts a dual perspective, comparing Korean and American graduate schools while navigating the new US academic environment. In her first year of the PhD program, Joy found it challenging to fully engage with classroom discussion. She shares a moment where she realizes the source of the challenge:

> **Joy**: 하나도 연관이 없는 데 "piggybacking off of what you said" 이러고 [웃음]. 나는 내가 영어를 못해서 이해를 못하는 줄 안거죠, 처음에는. 서로 딴소리 하고 있는 둘이서 서로 맞다고 하니까, 무슨 얘기를 하고 있는 건가, 하나도 관련이 없는데. 그래서 처음엔 얘네는 그냥 자유롭게 얘기를 하는 건데, ... 나는 그거를 뭔가 연구처럼, '그거의 textual evidence 는 몇 페이지지?' 이렇게 생각했던 거 같아. 만약에 한국에서 그랬어 봐. 교수님한테 완전 혼나거든요. (Joy, Interview 6, 02/08/2023)

> **Joy**: *They say, "piggybacking off of what you said," even when it is not related [laughter]. At first, I thought I couldn't follow because my English was not good. But it was because they were talking about two different things as if they were related. So when people were talking just freely, … I was taking them too seriously like I was researching it, wondering 'what page is the textual evidence on?' Imagine if a graduate student did that in Korea. Your professor won't let you get by.*

Joy realizes her confusion during discussions stemmed from her unfamiliarity in the performative discourses in US classrooms—typical idioms and phrases such as "piggybacking off of what you said" used in academic discussions—rather than from her English proficiency.

She finds this lack of logical connections in discussions to contrast with her prior graduate school training in Korea, which emphasized finding "textual evidence." Like M, Joy critiques lack of depth or thoroughness in the nature of classroom discussions and compares it to her experiences from her Korean university. Then Joy adds that Korean professors are stricter on graduate students and "won't let [them] get by" for lacking relevance or evidence.

Both M and Joy drew on dual perspectives when comparing educational discourses in Pakistan and Korea to those in the US. As they discussed the differences in pedagogical styles and learning environments, they recognized and critiqued performative discourses during class discussions that lacked relevance, evidence, or rigor in knowledge (see Table 3). Despite the romanticized imagination of the West (i.e., symbols of "gentleman" for M and "feminist" for Joy) that formed backdrop of their early English literacy development in Pakistan and Korea, they were able to break away from the colonial imagination and navigate their identities from a deficit perspective (e.g., I can't follow the discussion because my English proficiency is not good enough) to critical perceptions of the barriers they faced as an international student new to the US graduate school.

Table 3. Dual Perspectives on Pedagogies (as described by M and Joy)

	Asian Pedagogies	US Pedagogies
Contrast 1 (critique on Asian pedagogies)	• "top-down" (M) • "old school" (M) • "strict" (Joy)	• "original thinking" (M) • individual "opinions" (M)
Contrast 2 (critique on US pedagogies)	• "theory" based (M) • "evidence" based (Joy)	• performative (M & Joy)

Dual perspectives on English proficiency. While M and Joy's stories highlighted their dual perspectives on learning styles transitioning to the US academic spaces, my experiences during this early transition period were centered around how my understanding of "good English" shifted as I compared my experiences in Korea to my new experiences in the US. In my Korean literacy education, "good English" was characterized by standard grammar and lexicon, as well as a dominant accent, pitch, and rhythm. Possessing these linguistic features in Korea was highly desirable, and hence, granted me college admission and part-time ESL (English as a second language) teaching jobs. The socioeconomic capital that "good English" affords to Koreans is rooted in the US imperialist history, which places American culture and language on a pedestal, as discussed earlier in this chapter. However, when I moved to the US and began my graduate studies, my "good English" was no longer a desirable skill, but rather, a baseline ability that was expected of me. Thus, the stories below illustrate how I began to critique, rather than romanticize or glorify, the English language as I drew on dual perspectives on Korean and US expectations on language proficiency and became more critically conscious of standard English ideologies.

One evening, I came across a short YouTube video featuring a reaction from an Asian server at a Chinese restaurant visibly surprised by a White man ordering food in fluent Mandarin. I immediately thought of my English conversation teacher from high school. He was from the States and could only say a few things in Korean, but all of us in the class were impressed, having not seen any White people speaking Korean other than those few "외국인 방송인 [*foreigner celebrities*]" on Korean TV programs. *If you are White and native speaker [of English], you don't have to be perfect in your second language. In fact, just knowing a rudimentary second language and few cultural references are impressive "bonus"* (Journal

Entry, 09/12/2020, revised). On the other hand, when I came to the US, speaking English—not on a rudimentary level, but fluently—was a requirement for survival, and never a "bonus." *If you are a person of color and nonnative English speaker, you have to be perfect in your second language [English]* (Journal Entry, 09/12/2020, revised). In every corner of my new life in the US, I was expected to communicate in English, most often standard English. The assumed English-only environment in the US academy led me to cling to practicing writing and speaking in standard English. But I didn't complain. In classrooms, as a graduate student or teacher, I was the one supposed to speak "clearly," with the right rhythm, intonation, and pitch, as a nonnative English speaker. In Korea, English was my strength. In the US academy, English was my weakness.

During those moments, I was grappling with a curious double standard in language proficiency, one that seemed to favor White native English speakers over nonnative English-speaking people of color. In Morgan's (2004) self-study on his teacher identity as a White male native English speaker from Canada teaching English in China, he experiences the prestige associated with his identities was sufficient to make him a highly desirable teacher, and his rudimentary Mandarin was seen as an advantage rather than a shortcoming by his Chinese students. This privileging of his race and native English-speaking status over Mandarin proficiency illustrates the prestige of the English language in countries like China and Korea, where English has become the dominant language of modernization and globalization. Such prestige is often embodied in White, Anglo bodies as the epitome of the ideal English (Pennycook, 2006).

When compared to my experiences in Korea, I notice my identity as a respected English speaker in Korea shifting in the new reality I faced in the US, where monolingualism and

standard language ideologies prevailed. The dissonance between how Korean and Western societies positioned me in relation to English became magnified by an accidental encounter with a YouTube video. The video featured a White man fluently speaking Mandarin, which surprised the server at the Chinese restaurant. This reminded me of the reactions my classmates and I had when our English teacher from the US spoke short Korean phrases. For both the man in the video and my English teacher, their abilities in a second language, whether proficient or not, were seen as an unexpected and impressive "bonus."

Around the same time as encountering the YouTube video, I came across an advertisement poster at the Midwestern University library. The poster (Figure 2) was recruiting undergraduate volunteers for a summer English teaching program abroad. Once again, I was reminded of my high school English teacher back in Korea. How did he find his way to Korea to teach English without knowing Korean that much?, I wondered. But what caught my eyes was what the bottom of the poster said: "No teaching experience necessary." The poster made teaching English abroad a great opportunity for inexperienced native English-speaking teachers to gain experiences abroad, teaching and volunteering. They will help students like me back in Korea, to pronounce words correctly. Those students, like I did, may gain English proficiency for advancing in their education and future job prospects. It seemed like the mechanism behind the poster—volunteering to teach English abroad with no teaching experience—was a deliberate import/export system. Native English-speaking teachers are exported to countries in high demand. Countries importing those teachers are receiving the "right" kind of English embodied in those visiting teachers. Learning about English teaching volunteerism through the poster, I felt as though I had uncovered an automated system that reproduces English as a medium of Western

cultures and values—that I picked up in the classroom with teachers from the US and mass media from the US.

Encountering the poster for a volunteer tourism program solidifies my questions around double standards in "good English" as I extend my personal experiences in high school to the larger contexts of global English language teaching business. English language volunteer programs are a common "practice in which Global North, often young and inexperienced, volunteers teach English in the Global South on a short-term basis as a form of alternative travel"

Figure 2. "Teaching English Abroad" Global Volunteerism Advertisement Poster (11/20/2019)

(Jakubiak, 2019, p. 212). From the US alone, over 6,000 students travel abroad for English-teaching volunteer trips every year (Banki & Schonell, 2018), the majority of whom are White females who are unskilled in teaching (Jakubiak, 2019). Voluntourism relies on the global market where English is a "global currency" and "White, Dominant American English (DAE) speakers are perceived as having the highest exchange value in wider linguistic markets" (p. 217; also see Kubota, 2002). Thus, there is a clear trend among voluntourism programs to prioritize nationality or/and native English-speaking status over formal teaching experiences in recruiting volunteer teachers. A dominant critique of English teaching voluntourism arises from the question of structural power imbalances rooted in colonial legacies (Bhattacharya, 2016). By continually supplying volunteer teachers who embody the idealized English, voluntourism becomes a neocolonial mechanism that imposes "Western, civilizing, and imperial discourses" on local communities (Jakubiak, 2019, p. 216). My repeated encounters with different White native English-speakers in the global contexts (i.e., my English teacher in Korea, in the online media, and the poster) can be explained by such global linguistic superiority of English rooted in colonial legacies. While back in Korean classrooms, I was impressed by my English teachers' availability to speak rudimentary Korean, through those repeated encounters in the US, I gradually began to recognize and critique the language ideology that creates the double standard on language proficiency and privileges White native English speakers.

In summary, drawing on dual perspectives, we recognized a dissonance between our imagined and romanticized notions of the West—shaped by long colonial legacies—and the everyday reality we encountered in the US. For instance, M's exposure to Western pedagogies enabled her to critique the "top-down" model she was raised with, yet her perspective from her home country also allowed her to critique the performative nature of the American model.

Similarly, I developed a dual perspective by comparing my understanding of English proficiency in Korean and the US, leading me to critique the language ideology that privileges White native English speakers. Across all these stories, we have cultivated critical dual perspectives in transnational contexts, allowing us to critique one viewpoint from another.

Chapter Conclusion

The history of British colonialism and US imperialism profoundly influenced our language and cultural identities in transnational spaces across Pakistan, Korea, and the US. In our early English literacy development, English wasn't simply a second language for us; rather, it permeated into our everyday lives, enculturating Western values and discourses. The broader colonial sociohistoric contexts were not neutral backdrops to our literacy development; they significantly influenced our everyday lives, engendering romanticized version of Western society and culture represented by concepts like "gentleman," "sophistication," and "feminism" in our stories.

As we moved back and forth between worlds, we became more aware of the power dynamics in our home and US cultures and developed a critical dual lens that allowed us to critique both Asian and Western cultures from both directions. For example, even as Joy was influenced by US-imperialist ideologies that deemed American values as more feminist, this still allowed her to understand and critique patriarchal ideologies in Korean language and culture. Another case is M's exposure to Western pedagogies enabled her to critique the top-down model she was raised on, yet the perspective of her home country also allowed her to critique the American model for being performative without rigor in theories. Similarly, while I was enculturated in Western ideologies through English language acquisition and benefited from being proficient in English in terms of socioeconomic status, I also learned to realize and be

critical of the double standards on language proficiency that privilege White English native speakers. These critical insights are something that a person who doesn't have cultural connections and lived experiences between Pakistan/Korean and the US may not have. That is, these dual perspectives are unique, shaped by our transnational knowledge and lived experiences, in that we are able to move between the two worlds, observing and understanding each world from the other's perspective and hence being able to critique from both directions. This ability to strategically draw on dualistic lenses becomes a critical framework in our identity negotiations—which is discussed in the next chapter—where we fluidly move between Pakistani/Korean and American cultural and linguistic identities.

CHAPTER 4: IDENTITY NEGOTIATION STRATEGIES: “PASSING" AND "COMING OUT”

> “[O]ne can self-consciously use this irreducible moment of essentialism as part of one’s strategy”
>
> (Spivak, 1990, p. 109)

This dissertation project examines how transnational multilingual writing teachers negotiate their language and cultural identities. In the previous chapter, I explored the sociohistorical and sociocultural backdrops of our transnational trajectories that have influenced our negotiation of cultural and language identities. I identified historical colonial legacies in Pakistan and US imperialism in Korea, which influenced our English literacy development. As the three of us, Joy, M, and I, traversed linguistic, cultural, and geographic boundaries and started graduate schools in the US, we drew on dualistic perspectives in which we compared our home countries to the US contexts. Despite strong colonial legacies in our sociohistoric backdrops in Pakistan and Korea, our tendency to compare Asian contexts to US contexts didn’t necessarily result in the idealization of Western society. Rather, we developed critical dual perspectives, critiquing certain aspects of Pakistani/Korean social practices from the perspectives and experiences we gained from the US, as well as critiquing US cultural practices from perspectives and experiences we brought from Pakistan/Korea.

This chapter begins to look at specific strategies that we adopt to negotiate our identities in navigating social and institutional contexts. As Pakistani and Korean migrants in the US, the three of us studied and taught at Midwestern University, a predominantly White institution. Our identities were shaped and developed through our experiences and social positioning as

transnational multilingual teachers of color in predominantly monolingual White US-centric spaces. Navigating such spaces posed challenges for us as language and racial minorities, while recognizing the majorities or dominant identity groups as the opposite of us. This experience of Othering led to the development of a sense of dualistic identities (i.e., Pakistanis/Koreans or Americans; multilingual speakers or monolingual speakers; nonnative English speaker or native English speaker, Asian or White). We strategically moved across these dualistic identities—negotiating, (re)shaping, (re)framing our identities—in order to navigate social, institutional, and ideological conditions we encountered. In this chapter, I discuss two major strategies identified as identity negotiations moving across dualistic identities from both directions: passing and coming out.

1. **Passing**: Passing strategy involves hiding, masking, withholding, or disassociating with our cultural and linguistic identities to protect ourselves from potential challenges as a writing teacher or migrant in precarious positions in predominantly White institutions governed by standard English regimes. When passing, we hide or withhold our Korean/Pakistani, Korean/Urdu-speaking, nonnative English-speaking, or/and Asian identities to pass as an ideological American, monolingual speaker, native English speaker, or/and White (See Figure 3).
2. **Coming out**: Coming out strategy involves choosing to disclose or leverage our transnational multilingual identities and related lived experiences as a result of feeling safe or empowered or for specific purposes. When coming out, we disclose our identities—that are otherwise may be passable as American, monolingual speaker, native English speaker, or/and White—by sharing certain cultural/linguistic knowledge and

experiences of being Korean/Pakistani, Korean/Urdu speaker, nonnative English speaker, or/and Asian (See Figure 3).

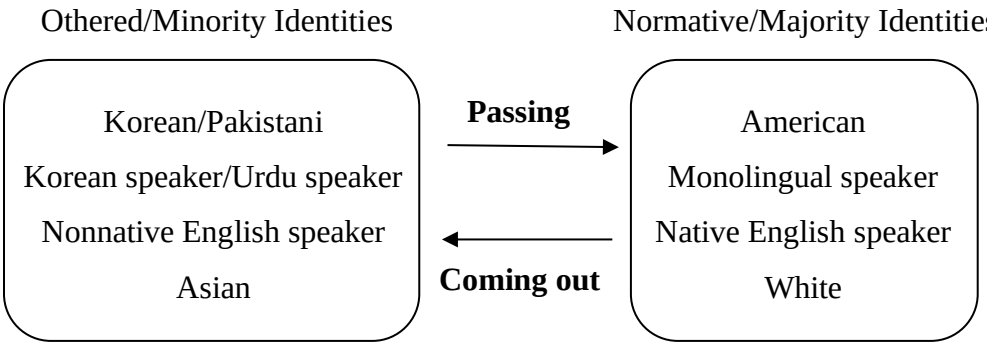

Figure 3. "Passing" and "Coming out" Identity Negotiation Strategies

The first section of this chapter makes the case that repeated negative experiences, which shaped our identities as deficit or subordinate, led us to "pass" to avoid or protect ourselves from potential conflict, dismissal, or challenge to our identities. The second section focuses on what motivates our identities to "come out" despite such negative experiences and potential harms that we try to avoid by passing. I argue that passing and coming out are careful and strategic identity negotiations in response to the social interactions within predominantly White institutions and standard English regimes. Thus, these two identity strategies are significant in revealing social structures and regimes that marginalize and exclude us in everyday lives, as well as constrain or limit our professional trajectories as writing teachers. Closely examining and contextualizing passing and coming out strategies also visibilizes how we navigate such invisible social structures through constant identity negotiations. Overall, therefore, this chapter aims to showcase how our identities emerged, rather than remained static, as we made strategic and rhetorical choices while navigating specific sociocultural conditions.

Passing

Passing is a wide spectrum of social practices wherein individuals mask one identity category to pass as another. Through passing, one may move "from a stigmatized location to another that is considered to be normal and/or connected to a desirable identity" (Cárdenas, 2018, p. 114) within the given oppressive environmental contexts. Thus, passing can be a strategy of resistance and survival for the stigmatized subject who navigates the environment with stereotypes and hierarchies of identities. Historically, in the US contexts, passing emerges from the act of individuals transitioning in racial identity from Black to White (Ginsberg, 1996; Wald, 2000). However, passing as a social practice also applies to other cases of gender, class, disability, religious, and ethnic identity (Cárdenas, 2018). Because identities are not monolithic but intersectional (Crenshaw, 1989)—for instance, one may pass as White to gain privilege along one dimension but may still remain disadvantaged in other dimensions such as sexuality, class, and disability—it is crucial to consider how individual identities are positioned in multiple contexts of social hierarchies and power relations.

Passing is a morally complicated act for oppressed individuals who pass as privileged. By passing or being perceived to be a member of an advantaged group, passing subjects may feel guilt for benefiting from "opting out of the shared struggle" and risk for potentially reinforcing oppressive stereotypes (Silvermint, 2018, p. 13). Thus, my focus in examining our experiences of passing isn't on whether our passing was virtuous, successful, or authentic. These questions may only penalize the passing subjects for their morality and authenticity. Rather, I focus on contextualizing the moments of passing, exploring what sort of systems or structures of oppression have led us to see passing as a strategic choice to survive. Below, I begin to illustrate

our passing stories, highlighting multiple social actors and contexts in which we chose or were compelled to choose to pass.

Passing as a native speaker. One afternoon in my office at Midwestern University, I found myself chatting with a colleague who, like me, was also a transnational multilingual writing teacher. We discussed how our teaching experiences were going this semester. I mentioned that I started to introduce my personal transnational and multilingual experiences in my writing class. To this, my colleague responded, "I do it anyway." Intrigued, I asked him what he meant by that. He explained that in his writing class, he openly shares details about his upbringing, the languages he learned, and how his background informs his approach to writing, right from the first day of class. He emphasized, “because I have to.” He explained that he doesn’t have the “choice” to avoid mentioning his language background because of his noticeable accent. In contrast, he pointed out that I had more discretion in this matter, noting, “you don't have much of an accent.” Until I actively chose to disclose my language identities, I was “passable” due to my unmarked accent or “non-accent.”

Similarly, with a British English accent, M’s language identities were typically perceived as belonging to the dominant language group. M noted that her students at Midwestern University often did not perceive her as an international graduate student from Pakistan; instead, they would regard her as an “American Pakistani” due to her accent:

> **M**: Students would be surprised to know that I'm from South Asia or I'm from Pakistan, like they would think I'm an American Pakistani, ... somebody who was raised here. … Initially, I would tell, like, “I'm an international student here, and I'm from this part of the world.” ... But I don't do that anymore and when I would do that, the next comment usually would be like, you know, your accent is different. You don't sound Pakistani. (M, Interview 1, 09/21/2022)

Until M disclosed herself as an international student from Pakistan, she was able to pass as an American due to her English proficiency and British accent. Here, M describes British and American speaking identities interchangeably as the dominant language group of native English speakers. Because M did not "sound Pakistani," M passed as a native English speaker, which signals a belonging to Americanness. M then, until she shared her background, remained as a British native English speaker to her students.

Thus, in both cases, M and I were passing as native English speakers in classrooms because of our acquired accents from the dominant English variety. Although Joy did not describe how her English accent was perceived by others, she mentioned that she does not share her transnational and linguistic background in her classroom. This was evident when we were looking at her slideshow for the first-day lesson for her writing class. In the slideshow, she had a slide in which she introduced herself. On the left side of the slide was her name, area of study, email, and office, and on the right side was a picture of her in front of the British Museum. She said the picture was from her trip to the UK for an academic conference, where she presented a paper on her research on 18th century English literature. Upon looking at the slide, I became curious whether she shares her background beyond the information on the slide. When I asked Joy how she typically introduces herself to the class, she said:

> **Joy**: TA 일 때는 좀 insecure 했던 거 같아요. 당연히 TA 인지 아는데 TA 라고 일단 안하고 한국에서 왔다고 얘기 안하고. … 뭔가 글쓰기를 가르친다는 거에서 오는 불안감도 있었던 거 같아요. 내가 글쓰기를 가르쳐야 하는데 내가 모국어가 영어가 아니다 라는 걸 오픈한다는 거가 부담스러운 그런 점 (Joy, Interview 1, 09/13/2022)

> **Joy**: *I think I was somewhat insecure when I was a TA. Even though people obviously knew I was a TA, I didn't immediately say I was a TA and didn't mention that I was from Korea. … I think there was also anxiety coming from the fact that I was teaching writing.*

> *It felt uncomfortable to admit that my native language is not English when I had to teach them writing.*

When she was a TA (a graduate student instructor) with less teaching experience, she felt "insecure" and anxious about her social positions as a graduate student, Korean, and nonnative English speaker. The anxiety from her social positions was compounded by the subject matter—teaching college writing—connoting her nonnative English-speaking international graduate student position as something "uncomfortable to admit" for a writing teacher. As highlighted in Chapter 1, nonnative English-speaking identities are often invalidated for the role of a language teacher due to the tendency to falsely assume native speakers as the best embodiment of language teacher competency. Robert Phillipson (1992) refers to this treatment of native speaker constructs as the ideal language teacher—at the expense of nonnative speaker identities being seen as second in knowledge and performance to native speakers—as the native speaker fallacy. Under the native speaker fallacy, the dominant construct of 'ideal' college writing teachers in the US institutions is the native English speakers who embodies and reifies standard academic English language and literacy. Joy, thus, feels discomfort in revealing her nonnative-ness in language as it could challenge her teacher qualification and competence.

Her discomfort of disclosing her identities is also tied to the institutional context of which Joy, a transnational nonnative English-speaking teacher, is teaching written academic English to students, the majority of whom are US-born native English speakers. Given the uneven power dynamics between native and nonnative English speakers, Joy, as a nonnative English speaker, is placed in a unique teacher position where her students may assert greater authority and ownership over the English language as native speakers. Due to the power relations between her

and her students, Joy chose to pass without disclosing her transnational and multilingual identities in order to protect her professional identity as a writing teacher.

M shares similar concerns about how her identities could be perceived by her students, which influenced her conscious choice to pass. After describing how her students would perceive her as an American, M added why she allowed them to maintain that assumption without revealing her identities:

> **M**: Sometimes students take liberty … in the sense that they challenge your authority as an instructor because English probably is not your first language … or [that] you're not from here, or you're a graduate student, right? … I think some of it … [was for] protecting myself in that space. Okay, I don't have to give them unnecessary information on where I'm from, or if English is my first language. (M, Interview 2, 10/07/2022)

M considered her language and cultural identities, compounded with her position as a graduate student, as information that could potentially lead students to "challenge [her] authority." Just as Joy chose to withhold her identities from her students due to deficit assumptions about her identities, M also sees passing as a strategy to avoid such deficit assumptions affecting her teacher authority. That is, while her Urdu-speaking and nonnative English-speaking identities may be questioned and challenged for such authority over the English language, passing as a US-born native speaker allows M to "protect [her]self in that space." Consequently, M's cultural and language identities become not only "unnecessary information" but also something she doesn't want to draw attention to for passing.

Running throughout our stories of passing thus far was the native speaker fallacy, which marked our multilingual identities as deficit, posing us potential challenges on our teacher authorities upon reveal. Due to the notion of the native speaker fallacy, our nonnative English-speaking identities are perceived as indicative of a lack of teacher competence and authority in

writing classrooms. Thus, Joy and M made a conscious choice to withhold our language identities from students in order to avoid the potential challenge. For M and me, our unmarked English accent allowed us to disassociate ourselves from the nonnative English-speaking identities.

Passing as a White male authority figure. Our stories of passing were not limited to how our linguistic identities are challenged but also encompassed how our identities as transnational multilingual Asian women are stigmatized in multiple systems of marginalization. For instance, in my early years of teaching college writing, I struggled with seeing and accepting myself as a writing teacher because I had not seen any other Asian women teaching writing in the US. In my department, the majority of the faculty and graduate instructors were White. The lack of an Asian woman teacher model created a dissonance between my teacher self-image in writing classrooms and my imagined "typical teacher" identities. In one of the conversations with my advisor, I recount this struggle on teacher self-image:

> **Me**: So when I moved to the US, and I got a teaching role, I couldn't really put myself [into the teaching role] because I've never seen a teacher like me. So there was … something that I felt like I had to make up for that unexpected identity for a typical English teacher. It was something more than just the language background. It was definitely everything else, too, that made me feel a little [like I was] getting a job that I'm not supposed to [get]. (Dialogic Autobiography 2, 09/17/2021)

I saw myself as an "unexpected identity for a typical English teacher." While my nonnative English-speaking status was what I consider marking me as an "unexpected" teacher—under the logic of the native speaker fallacy— it was more than "just the language background." I was having trouble seeing my intersectional identities as an Asian migrant woman in the image of a "typical English teacher," an image developed throughout my life encountering many White

native English-speaking teachers in classrooms as a student, as well as in the department I was teaching at that time. Having not seen any other multilingual Asian woman teacher model reinforced my difficulty in taking on a teacher position and led me to feel as though I did not deserve the job. Although building a sense of teacher identity and persona takes time for all novice teachers, my issue with teacher self-image was compounded by the lack of Asian woman teacher representations. Thus, I felt the need to "make up" my "unexpected identity," viewing my identities as deficits to be compensated for. A way for compensating for my assumed deficit identities was to mask and hide them—hence, I started to pass.

This doubt on my teacher self-image wasn't just an internal struggle. Externally, I experienced my identities as a nonnative English-speaking Asian woman teacher perceived as Other or deficit for a writing teacher position in my interaction with students. In the early stages of my teaching career, a well-meaning check-in with a White male student who had been absent for weeks abruptly ended with his comment: "I don't understand anything you're saying. The words coming out of your mouth don't sound like English to me." It was clear that the student was unhappy with something—that I still don't know what it was about—and intentionally behaved disrespectfully, and the way he chose to do so was by treating me as an unintelligible English speaker, even when I thought I was passing as a fluent English speaker. Again, it was "not just the language background" that was weaponized against my teacher identities, but "something more." That is, for one, how my intersectional identities as a multilingual Asian migrant woman could be labeled with "words [that] don't sound like English," and for two, how my teacher identities and authority could be easily undermined by a student. What the student said was viscerally engraved in my memory with the shock from realizing that a student could make such a confrontational and disrespectful comment to an instructor. I immediately reported

the incident to my then-WPA, who supported me, but there was not much that could be done. The following class, it was difficult to focus on teaching as I was worried about encountering the student again. I became afraid of having more negative interactions with students, which intensified my desire to pass as 'yet another' writing teacher. It turned out that perfecting my accent wasn't enough. Passing meant I had to dissociate myself from the implications of my Asian, migrant, nonnative English-speaking, and woman identities in terms of the challenge they posed to my authority as a writing teacher.

When I shared this experience with Joy, she responded with a similar story of her own:

Joy: 항상 attendance 를 체크하는데, 한 학생이 맨날 그거를 하면 나가는 거야 끝까지 안하고. ... 학기가 거의 끝나갈 즈음에 애들에게 attendance 점수 보여주는데 그 학생한테 이메일이 와서 왜 자기가 이거 밖에 점수가 안되냐, 나 맨날 갔다, 그래서 내가 너 항상 나갔잖아 그랬더니, 나한테 "Dang, that's cold. I thought we were closer than that." 도대체 너랑 나랑 언제 closer 했으며. … 그래서 학생들한테는 너무 친절하게 격없이 해서도 안되는 거구나를 그 때 느껴가지고, 그 이후로는 나는 좀 authority figure 다 이런 거를. 내가 백인 남자였다면 안 그랬을 거 같은데 나는 아시안이고 여자니까 내가 스스로 authority figure 처럼 행동하지 않으면 학생들이 쉽게 생각할 수 있구나를 느꼈죠.

Me: 저도 오늘 reflection 을 읽는데 Lee Tonouchi 가 쓴 Hawaiian Pidgin 언어에 대한 글이었는데, 한 학생이 "This is at best a lazy form of writing." 이라고 아주 짧고 성의 없고 무례한 말을 쓴 거 에요. 지금 채점하고 온 건데, 아무리 상식적으로 내가 읽을 줄 뻔히 아는데 이렇게 쓴다고? (Joy, Interview 1, 09/13/2022)

Joy: *One student would leave right after I took attendance and would not stay till the end. … At the end of the semester, I sent students attendance grades and the student emailed me, "Why is my grade so low? I attended all the classes." So I replied, you always left early. Then he replied, "Dang, that's cold. I thought we were closer than*

that." When did I give the idea that we were "close"? Since then, I can't be too kind to students or act so informally. I try to be more like an authority figure. I don't think he would have done it to a White man. As an Asian and a woman, if I don't act like an authority figure, students could undermine me, I realized.

Me: *Me too. I just came from reading student reflections. They are about a reading by Lee Tonouchi talking about Hawaiian Pidgin. A student wrote, "This is at best a lazy form of writing," which was very short, indifferent, and rude. How could someone write this knowing for sure that I will be reading it?*

In this conversation, Joy and I share experiences of encountering tension from White male students displaying insolent behaviors toward us. We both interpret these behaviors as direct or indirect challenges to our authority as teachers. Joy's student felt entitled to an attendance grade and expressed his disappointment, claiming that Joy and he were "closer than that." This interaction with the student reminds Joy of her identities as an Asian woman, which, to her, is linked to precarious teacher authority as opposed to "White male" teachers. This realization prompts Joy to adopt a more formal demeanor, consciously acting "like an authority figure." In response to her story, I resonate with her comparison of her teacher authority to White male teachers, and share an occasion when a student submitted disrespectful comments on an assigned reading, titled "Da State of Pidgin Address" by Lee Tonouchi (2004), a writer activist who writes in Hawaiian Pidgin dialect. The student, rather than engaging with the text or the given reading discussion questions, wrote a few curt words, characterizing Tonouchi's article as "at best a lazy form of writing." This response surprised me, and I found myself grappling with the student's assumption that such a response would go unchallenged.

Joy and my experiences highlight how Asian women teachers' authority in educational settings are often compromised and challenged. The presence of Asian immigrant and Asian

American women faculty in higher education brings unfamiliarity to students at predominantly White institutions (Nguyen, 2016). About 73% of higher education of all ranks are White, while approximately 5% are Asian women (National Center for Education Statistics, 2023). In K-12 education, only 2% of all teachers were Asian women in the 2020-2021 school year (National Center for Education Statistics, 2023). The chances that college students saw Asian women in teaching roles before and after entering higher education are naturally extremely low. Given this low presence, Asian women are rarely associated with positions of authority and power in educational institutions, and often occupy a fragile status as authorities in classrooms and as subjects of racial microaggressions (Choi & Lim, 2021; Endo 2015). Both Joy and I experience how our teacher authority as Asian women gets dismissed by students. For me, I trace such lack of authority as an Asian woman teacher to the image of "typical teacher" I developed in my lived experiences, who was a White American. Experiencing my teacher authority being dismissed resulted in decreasing confidence in teaching and deterring my teaching capacity—leaving me worried about encountering the confrontational student again, for example. Through these experiences, Joy and I inadvertently learned passing—hiding our identity as Asian women with multilingual and transnational backgrounds from students—to "act like an authority figure" and to protect ourselves from potential tension with students. This is also echoed by M, who considered her linguistic and cultural identities as "unnecessary information" with the goal of "protecting [her]self in that space" from "student tak[ing] liberty [of] challeng[ing] [her] authority as an instructor" (M, Interview 2, 10/07/2022). In these stories of experienced or potential tension with students, our identities were recognized as possible compromises for our teacher authority. Thus, we learned to pass as a survival strategy as writing teachers.

Passing by disaffiliating with Asian identity. While writing classrooms were a prominent space where we often passed, passing as an identity negotiation strategy occurred in broader contexts as we navigated the US institutions that marked our Asian migrant identities with certain cultural stereotypes. In her English PhD program, Joy specialized in 18th-century English literature. She often encountered puzzled reactions from people who found her area of study unexpected or surprising. She did not like having to explain her enthusiasm for English literature, which traced back to her favorite book Jane Eyre by Charlotte Brontë, sparking her "inner feminist" and desire to learn English, as mentioned in Chapter 3. Joy wanted to be identified as an English literature scholar, and refused the idea that her racial or cultural identities impose expectations and limitations on her area of study. Joy said:

> **Joy:** 나는 아시아 사실 진짜 하나도 모르거든요, 사람들이 그렇게 생각하는 게 너무 싫은 거죠. 아니 나 아시아 몰라, Asian literature 도 모르고, 공부하지도 않고. 그런데 사람들은 편견을 가지고 있으니까. … 그 전에는 백인이 이거를 공부하는 거 처럼 identity 를 지우려고 했던 거 같애. 의도한 건 아니었는데. 아시안 공부도 해봐 이러면은 그거 되게 하기 싫고, 왜 나 아시안이라고 아시아 공부해야 돼? (Joy, Interview 4, 12/02/2022)

> **Joy**: *I actually don't know anything about Asia, and I really dislike how people think that way [that I would know]. I'm like, no, I don't know about Asia, or Asian literature, and I don't study it. But people have prejudices. … I think I was trying to erase my identity as if a White person was studying this [English literature]. It wasn't intentional. If someone says, "why not study Asian things?" I would say, I don't want to and be like, why should I study Asia just because I am Asian?*

Joy reflects on her frustration with the narrow expectations and assumptions that others place upon her based on her identity as an Asian. Even though Joy has no interest or experience in

Asian studies or Asian literature, she experiences "prejudices" on her scholar identities often reduced to her Asian identities, confining her scholarly exploration to "Asian"-related subjects. Rebelling against such superficial characterization of her personal interest and pursuits based on her race and ethnicity, she dissociates herself from Asian identity and studies English literature "as if [she was] a White person." She refuses to be constrained by preconceived notions about what is expected for someone of her background by downplaying or disaffiliating herself from Asian identities.

Similar to how Joy disaffiliated herself with Asian identities to cope with pigeonholing expectations regarding her academic pursuits, I also sometimes passed by distancing myself from Asian identities in order to navigate and counteract certain stereotypical expectations of Asians. Particularly in spaces like US government offices where my migrant/non-citizen status is reviewed and scrutinized, I navigated additional layers of potential discrimination based on my immigration status on top of the existing challenges associated with Asian racial stereotypes and prejudices. In one notable instance that exemplified this complex identity negotiation, I found myself at a DMV, which I dread visiting. *People at the DMV are never nice. I am not saying this like the general sentiment of "yeah, DMV sucks. It takes too long." I always have to show up with a file of documents that prove my legal presence in the US. Waiting in a line … reminds me too much of entering the US border. It's nerve-wracking. … On this particular day, I walked into the [local] DMV … hoping that I prepared everything I needed to get a driver's license. As I was waiting in line, I saw a young East Asian woman with another Asian woman who looked older—perhaps she's her mother. The staff called them to come up to the counter. The young woman spoke for the older woman in what I could recognize as a Chinese accent. The staff visibly frowned. … The staff started to talk very loud and slow, as if talking to a child, that they*

were missing a paper. She was so loud that everyone standing in the line could hear her. The short encounter was over when the staff waved her hands to call for the next person in line. There was no further explanation or sorry or even a good-bye. I thought people here loved small talk and being all friendly with strangers, but I guess not with everybody. The two left the building. I felt bad for them. I'm sure it was stressful for them to show up here today like I was.

When it was almost my turn, I was crossing my fingers to get someone else than the rude staff. But, oh well, she waved at me. When she asked why I was here, I intentionally said out loud and clear (maybe even slowly) that I was here for a driver's license—almost to prove that I don't deserve that frowning from earlier. I handed in my passport and I-20. She flipped them through and typed my information on her computer. …Then she asked, "Do you need the written test in Chinese?" I was confused because she was holding my Korean passport, entered my information into the computer, and I was speaking to her in English. Does she think Chinese is spoken in all Asian countries? Can she be that stupid? I swallowed those thoughts and simply answered, "No." (Journal Entry, 09/23/2021, revised)

In this story, I visit the DMV feeling anxious due to past negative experiences at US government offices, such as crossing the "US border," where my legal status is under scrutiny. While waiting in line, I witness a disturbing interaction between the DMV staff and an Asian woman with a "Chinese accent." The dismissive and condescending behavior of the staff member toward the Asian woman and her companion alerts me to the intolerance and rejection of interacting with Asian speakers beyond assumed language barriers. When it is my turn, thus, I intentionally assert my fluency in English to counteract the implicit bias against Asian speakers. However, the staff member still assumes that I needed the written test in Chinese, based solely on my Asian appearance. The passing strategy by policing my English speech allowed me to

avoid rude and dismissive treatment, yet I could not escape the ways Asians are conflated as a homogeneous ethnic group.

Coming Out

Thus far, I illustrated stories about passing as an identity negotiation strategy which enabled us to move through the social structures that often marginalize and portray our identities as deficit. We chose to pass in order to avoid critical events that could lead us to losses, difficulties, or threats on our identities. However, as we gained more lived experiences in the US and teaching experiences, we gradually started to recognize spaces and opportunities where our identities could "come out" safely. In the next section of this chapter, I illustrate "coming out" stories where we disclosed or leveraged our partial[19] identities as they were situationally and socially relevant, welcomed, or beneficial.

I use the term "coming out," originating from gender/queer studies, that describes the self-disclosure of LGBT individual's sexual orientation in varying levels of situations. While coming out can be a liberatory and empowering act, asserting one's dignity and queer visibility, it also carries the risk of negative reception, misrecognition, and ignorance of others. Therefore, "the power of this revelation depends, at least in part, on audience uptake" (Cooley et al., 2012, p. 51). Revealing sexual identity is sensitive to how the audience might misinterpret and misjudge the individual who comes out, requiring individuals to carefully assess the context and audience before feeling safe or appropriate to come out. I view coming out as a helpful concept for describing and analyzing the self-disclosure of intersectionally stigmatized identities as a context-sensitive identity negotiation strategy. I argue that coming out—revealing concealed or

[19] Identities in this project are plural, in the sense that they are never one-dimensional, but they are in fact multi-dimensional and intersectional. When we are coming out, we are also passing at a certain level (e.g., I may come out as a "Korean" and yet pass as "native English speaker"). In Chapter 5, I discuss further what I mean by "partial" identities and this concurrent passing and coming out.

undisclosed identities—is a strategic decision based on social or situational relevance and audience uptake. The following are "coming out" stories that I contextualize within social and situational interactions.

Pedagogical relevance motivating coming out. While passing was an identity negotiation strategy that we deployed due to the negative experiences of our compromised teacher authority stemming from our vulnerable identities as multilingual Asian migrants, gaining more teaching experience over time led us to realize other ways of negotiating our identities in classrooms. The turning point for me occurred when I started to teach the Preparation for College Writing (PCW) course in my third year of the PhD program. PCW is a non-credit bearing bridge course at Midwestern University, geared toward international students. The focus of the shared PCW curriculum is to help students draw on their prior experiences, linguistic knowledge, and cultural practices as assets in writing. Given this focus, I was able to identify pedagogical applications of my own scholarly interests in multilingualism and related experiences I had as a transnational and multilingual person. I introduced students to the

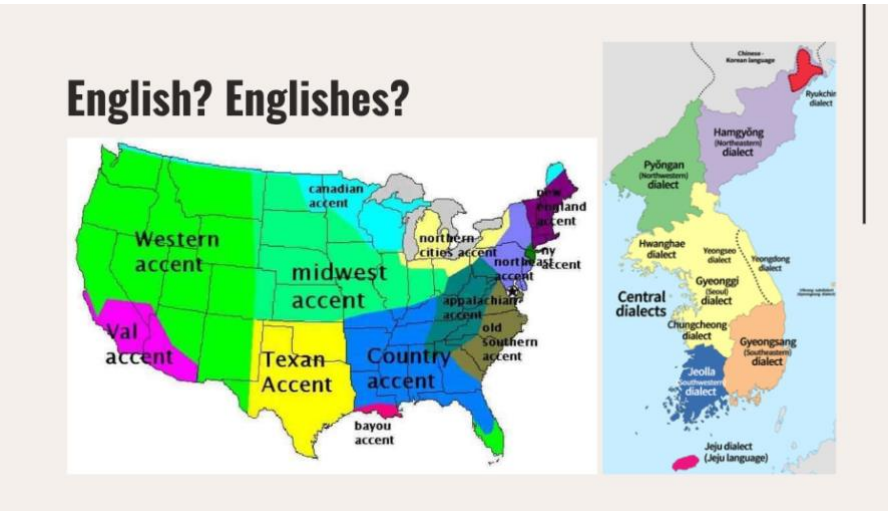

Figure 4. "English? Englishes?" from PCW lesson (09/08/2021)

different varieties of English to complicate the notion of standard English. I showed accent and dialect maps of the US and Korea (see Figure 4) as examples of various language varieties beyond the standard language. Going over the map, I shared my own literacy history, being raised in Seoul, Korea, by two parents from Jeolla province who often code-meshed Joella dialect with standard Korean dialect. I told them a story of being embarrassed at elementary school in Korea for misspelling "양말 [*socks*]" as "양발 (which translates to [*both feet*])", a Joella dialect of the word 'socks' that my family used at home. This inspired students to share their own stories as examples of regional dialects in different languages such as Mandarin and Arabic. Coming out of that day's class, which was only the second week, I already felt something was different. Compared to teaching mainstream First-Year Writing (FYW) courses, in PCW, I felt "much more comfortable being myself as a teacher … because there's so many … pedagogical reasons to share my own literacy background … the living example of what I am trying to teach" (Dialogic Autobiography 2, 09/17/2021). My transnational and multilingual experiences became "living examples" of lessons that my PCW students found relevant, resonant, and engaging.

Realizing pedagogical benefits of drawing on my identities, I began to modify the curriculum—adapting writing assignments and lesson materials provided by other PCW teachers—to include more of my personal experiences. One of the lesson materials I received was using an 'apple' as an example of a cultural object with different meanings and codes (see Figure 5) in US culture, such as symbolizing "Adam and Eve, fall season, gravity, and teachers." Upon seeing this example, I immediately thought of 'rice' as another cultural object that my students might find more relevant than apple. In class, I introduced the added slide on 'rice' as

Figure 5. "Cultural Code," Original Slide (Above) and Added Slide (Below) (10/08/2021)

the cultural symbol representing "meal[20], fertility, and hard work." Then I added, "In Korea, there is a common saying, "Every grain of rice is a farmer's hard work." So my mom would say it to me when I didn't finish my food as a kid." I was able to connect and incorporate my own cultural knowledge and experiences into the lessons for pedagogical purposes—in this case, normalizing the non-US cultural discourses in the classroom to encourage students to bring in their own cultural and linguistic backgrounds into their classroom discussion and writing. The

[20] For example, 밥 ('rice' in Korean), 饭 ('rice' in Mandarin), and 御飯 ('rice' in Japanese) are synonymous with meal and food, signifying how rice is central to East Asian meals.

pedagogical relevance to my identities enabled me to come out as a transnational multilingual Korean migrant teacher rather than passing.

Similarly, Joy found pedagogical connection and relevance as a mediator for deciding to disclose and incorporate her personal backgrounds into her teaching. Joy's site of identity revelation was in literature courses. She said:

> **Joy**: 문학 수업을 하다보면 꼭 multicultural 한 거라던지 다른 culture 에서 온 캐릭터의 상황이라던지 이런게 나오면은 그런거에 relate 할거가 있으니까 그럴때 얘기한거 같은데. … 제가 instructor 로서 영어뿐만 아니라 나의 identity 가 있잖아요. 내가 여자고, 아시안이고, 영어가 모국어가 아니고, 이런 것들. (Joy, Interview 1, 09/13/2022)

> **Joy**: *When teaching literature, if situations involving multicultural aspects or characters from different cultures come up, I could relate myself to them and shared [my identities]. … As an instructor, I have my identity, not just English [speaking identity], but I am a woman, Asian, and English is not my native language. These kinds of things.*

In her Introductory Literature class, Joy occasionally discussed her multicultural background when literary works involved "multicultural aspects or characters." Although the interview did not delve into the specifics of how Joy leveraged her identities while teaching literature, the course "contents"—comprising literary works with multicultural aspects and characters—prompted her to "relate [her]self" to these works and share her own multicultural identities. Joy also mentioned having flexibility in selecting "different books" that may have relevance to her multicultural identities. Similar to my experiences, Joy found pedagogical relevance to her identities as a driving force for coming out as a pedagogical resource, while her site of coming out was in literature courses.

Social trust and safety leading to coming out. When there was a sense of safety, comfort, or trust that our marginalized/stigmatized identities won't be weaponized to challenge us, thus, we saw an opportunity to come out. Although M expressed that she prefers not to disclose her transnational identities in writing classes—described by her as "unnecessary information" to "protect [her]self in those spaces" in her previous passing stories—in one semester, M felt such safety to come out as she sensed more openness toward her identities from her students. She said:

> **M**: Sometimes [it] depends on the student demographic as well. … [In] the spring class … some students I had were coming from an organizing and activism kind of background. And so they were invested in these conversations about equity and inclusion. So it was sometimes easy to bring in those conversations … about my being a multilingual speaker in that particular classroom. … It wasn't intentional. … I think that students being able to see those nuances led me to disclosing my identity or divulging those kinds of extra information. (M, Interview 2, 10/07/2022)

M encounters the student demographic of "organizing and activism" background, who were "invested" in equity and inclusion issues. Interacting with those students, M recognizes this particular classroom as a relatively safer space where it was "easy" to disclose her multilingual identities. Although it is unclear whether she disclosed her multilingual identities for certain pedagogical purposes—as she describes bringing in her identities to the classroom "wasn't intentional"—certain students' openness to discuss equity and inclusion issues and their ability to see "nuances" in those issues led her to feel comfortable enough to divulge "extra" information about herself.

Mainstream cultural visibility prompting coming out. In the PCW course, I discovered the connections and affordances of drawing on my transnational and multilingual identities to

writing pedagogies, leading to a shift from my tendency to pass to seeking more opportunities to come out in classroom spaces. Another impactful mediator of my coming-out identity negotiation was the recent global popularity of Korean culture. It began with the "Gangnam Style" phenomenon in 2012, followed by the surge of popularity of Korean media, including K-pop, K-dramas, and Korean films, making Korean culture visible in the mainstream US media over the past decade. Around the time I was teaching PCW in 2021, indeed, I started to see Koreans everywhere, from the globally successful Netflix K-drama *Squid Game* to the movie *Parasite*, which won the Best Director at the Academy Awards. When Parasite was playing in my local theater in the Midwest, I couldn't believe sitting in the theater with a bunch of non-Koreans watching a Korean movie with English subtitles. That was the first Korean movie I watched in the US. One day, a classmate in a graduate seminar said to me, "Parasite was the best movie I've seen this year." It was a rare moment of small talk about Korean things at school. It felt like *Parasite* wasn't just a foreign film that only a few movie enthusiasts watched, but a mainstream movie for everyone to watch, alongside other Hollywood movies in theaters. With a sense of pride, I agreed and said, "I watched it twice, one in Korea and the second time here. You should check out other movies by Bong Joon-ho [the director of *Parasite*]." Later, I made sure to watch that year's Academy Awards live on TV, knowing that Parasite was nominated. When director Bong won the award, becoming the first person from an Asian country to win in this category, I was elated with a sense of pride that a Korean director received high recognition from Hollywood, where movies I grew up watching were made. The next day, I went in to teach my FYW class and opened up with this exciting news. "A Korean movie won an Oscar last night!" Although only very few students knew about the movie or the director, I was still excited

Figure 6. "The BTS MEAL" from McDonald's Drive Thru Menu (06/02/2021)

Figure 7. "Newsweek: The Koreans Are Coming!" National Museum of Korean Contemporary (01/06/1997)

to explain what the movie was about and how I thought it was changing the US-centric film industry.

Behind this excitement was my perceptions of Korean culture and society always being a niche subculture in US society. When I moved here in 2013, some people didn't even know the distinctions between South and North Korea. However, suddenly, the popularity of Korean media grew large enough to be part of the mainstream US culture. I started to see Koreans everywhere—on TV and YouTube, American media outlets talked about the global success of BTS, a K-pop band, in tandem with the popularity of Taylor Swift. The movie Parasite was screening in my local theater. At work, my colleagues and students engaged with me about K-drama and K-pop. When I went to McDonald's, they were selling a "BTS MEAL" on their menu (see Figure 6), which always symbolized American culture for me. In March 2022, BTS was invited to the White House to address the surge of Asian-Hate crimes, speaking for the

Asian/Americans in the US. That same year, I visited the National Museum of Korean Contemporary History in Seoul and encountered the January issue of US Newsweek with the headline, “The Koreans Are Coming!” (see Figure 7). The cover depicted industrial Korea, with a cartoon image of Koreans holding a variety of Korean-made goods, including radio, fish, iron, shirts, ships, and tires destined for export. In my mind, the image of the Koreans crossing the globe with Korean goods in their hands juxtaposed with myself crossing between Korea and the US, but this time with Korean culture in my hand.

From the McDonald’s menu to the White House, the visible mainstream status of Korean culture in the US led me to experience my Koreanness as a commonplace identity in spaces I used to believe were strictly “American.” This shift influenced how I introduced myself on the first day of my FYW class. In addition to my professional identities (e.g., my role at the institutions, research background, and teaching experiences), I began to introduce my transnational and linguistic identities (see Figure 8). This included mentioning my hometown, “서울 [*Seoul*]”, my multilingual backgrounds, my dog, “라떼 [*Latte*]”, and ENFJ, a Myers–Briggs Type Indicator (MBTI) which I explained as “a really popular personality test in Korea right now.” I intentionally included Korean words in the slide to express my language identity naturally and establish the presence of languages other than English in the classroom as the norm. I also introduced the MBTI as a current social trend in Korean society, assuming that some of the students would be interested in learning aspects of Korean culture. These are different from coming out to leverage my linguistic and cultural identities as pedagogical resources as described earlier; this information about Korean culture did not have direct connection to writing pedagogy, but information diverged to express who I am to as I started to feel comfortable

Figure 8. "About Me" Slide in Fall 2022 FYW Course (Above) and Added Slide in Spring 2022 FYW Course (below) (01/12/2022)

coming out as a transnational Korean migrant teacher due to the belief that Koreanness has made its place in US mainstream discourse.

The rise of Korean culture's global popularity, exemplified by the success of Korean films and music groups, played a pivotal role in my coming out identity negotiations. With a sense of pride in Korean culture, once seen as niche or invisible, I began to voluntarily share elements of my Korean identities, such as mentioning my hometown, using *hangul* (Korean

alphabets), or introducing a social trend in Korea. These moves are distinct from the earlier coming out stories where I leveraged my experiences for class discussions, as they may not have direct connections or relevance to the pedagogy, yet I was open to share.

Coming out as an act of resistance. In describing her religious identity, M shared a story of how she decided to wear a headscarf. As a Muslim, she did not wear one growing up in Pakistan because she felt "scared about how [she's] going to look," (M, Interview 4, 12/09/2022) but when she graduated from college, she chose to wear it to cultivate her religious practice along with praying and fasting. When she moved to the US, M decided to continue wearing it to assert her visible Muslim identity. M explained her reason for continuing to wear it:

> **M**: It's an agential choice in some ways. … There are also political reasons and that became more prominent post-9/11 globally, when, you know, Muslims were kind of demonized ... in the North, Global North. ... This was a conscious choice to identify within religion, or be a Muslim woman, claiming that identity. ... It's a resistance to the discourse. ... When I moved to the US, I was told to take it off by family and friends, because, you know, Trump was just elected and the US's discourse was very xenophobic, very rabid, and very Islamophobic. So I was told [to] take it off, you don't have to wear it in the US, look out for your safety. And then I kind of became more resistant. I was like, no, I'm not going to take it off. So I moved here and I continued to wear it. (M, Interview 4, 12/09/2022)

M makes a deliberate "agential" and "conscious" choice to wear a headscarf to "claim [her] identity" as a visible Muslim woman and resist Islamophobic discourses, particularly in the context of heightened xenophobia and safety concerns post-9/11 and during Trump's election. Despite family and friends advising her to remove it for her "safety," she asserts her identity with resilience and political defiance, exemplifying a courageous and intentional coming out strategy.

Chapter Conclusion

In this chapter, I aimed to answer my research question concerning how three of us negotiate our identities while navigating social structures that often devalue our identities as transnational multilingual Asian woman teachers. One identity negotiation strategy we often relied on was passing. Passing took place within a complex matrix where our language, racial, or/and gender identities were under pressure or at risk. The three of us passed without disclosing our transnational multilingual identities due to the ideology of the native speaker fallacy that marked our teacher identities as deficient and posed potential challenges to our authority as teachers upon disclosure. These challenges were experienced in various situations where we had to navigate tensions with students who displayed disrespectful behaviors toward us, highlighting the ways in which the authority of Asian women teachers in educational settings was often compromised and challenged. Outside of the teaching roles, we also encountered stereotypical expectations on Asian identities that we sought to counteract by passing. These stories about passing reveal how our intersectional identities are devalued and marginalized in social situations and structures. Thus, passing is not merely a deception, but an identity strategy for survival for us.

When we recognized opportunities where our identities could be shared safely, without fear of being challenged, we sometimes chose to come out rather than continue passing. Joy and I opted to reveal our identities and related linguistic and cultural experiences in the classroom when we found them relevant to the curriculum. A sense of trust and safety stemming from students' engagement with equity issues led M to feel comfortable disclosing her identities. The recent surge in the popularity of Korean media has also played a role in shaping my comfort with my identities in everyday interactions. Lastly, M engaged in the coming-out identity negotiation

as an act of resistance, intentionally manifesting her identity as a visible Muslim woman by choosing to wear her headscarf against Islamophobic discourses in the US.

Passing and coming out are helpful concepts for unveiling the social structures and regimes that marginalize and exclude us, as well as for understanding how we strategically navigate such structures. However, I must clarify that our identities aren't fixed or stable enough for us to only either pass or come out. Even when we choose to come out, for instance, we are also passing at a certain level. When I reveal my identity as Korean by sharing an aspect of Korean culture, I may simultaneously be passing as a "native English speaker" to navigate social interactions that mark non-dominant accents or speech negatively. While Korean identities may be highly valued, prompting me to come out, their hyper-prominence to others can be burdensome, as it positions me as a cultural ambassador with the risk of being misrepresented or misunderstood. Rather than contained with passing or coming out models, the way we negotiate our identities remains fractured with conflicting motivations and situational contexts. In the next chapter, I complicate the notion of passing and coming out, illustrating contradictions and ruptures within our stories.

CHAPTER 5: COMPLICATING "PASSING" AND "COMING OUT" STRATEGIES AND MOVING TOWARD HYBRIDITY

> "I tried to listen to one group and turn a deaf ear to the other. Both persisted. I negotiated my way through these conflicting voices, now agreeing with one, now agreeing with the other."
>
> (Lu, 1987, p. 444)

In the previous chapter, I examined two identity negotiation strategies that the three of us—transnational multilingual Asian woman writing teachers—used to navigate predominantly White and monolingual institutions. At times, we "passed" as mainstream American, monolingual, native English-speaking, or/and White identities to avoid potential challenges and conflicts and to protect our vulnerable, Othered identities. At other times, we "came out" as our transnational, multilingual, Korean/Pakistani, or/and woman identities as a result of careful assessment of social situations where we felt safe, empowered, had specific purposes. These passing and coming out moments were significant in revealing broader systems and regimes that marginalized our identities—as Asian, nonnative English-speaking, and women. They also captured how we tactically took up or resisted certain identities (and stereotypes) to strategically navigate our social contexts.

However, these concepts of passing and coming out have critical limitations, as they rely on fixed, contained notions of identities. Describing how we either align or disaffiliate ourselves from certain identities is limited to a bounded notion of identity categories that is overly simplistic to capture the complexities of transnational multilingual identities. Thus, this chapter

argues for shifting from such binary conceptions of identities toward a more fluid, dynamic, and emergent approach.

In making this argument, this last findings chapter illustrates stories that do not neatly fit into passing or coming out strategies—stories where our identity negotiations did not stay static either as passing or coming out, but constantly emerged differently based on the situational contexts. Presenting these stories, this chapter complicates passing and coming out by focusing on how our identities did not simply move between the contained and stable identity categories; but rather, our identities go through constant negotiation, fragmentation, and transformation within various sociocultural, institutional and ideological contexts. Hence, identities are *hybrid* in nature (Bhabha, 1990; Gutiérrez, 2008), constantly meshed and (re)mixed (see Figure 9).

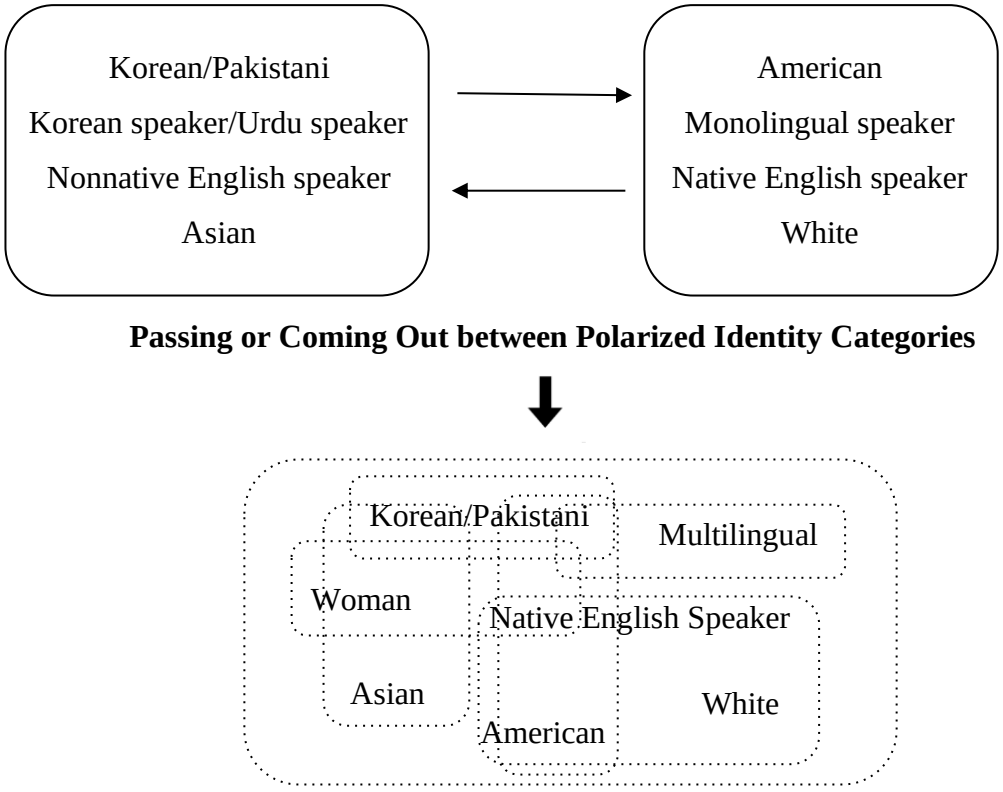

Figure 9. Hybrid Identities

Ultimately, the goal of this chapter is to move away from cataloging us into polarized identity categories in passing and coming out, and to arrive at a complex understanding of our hybrid identities that are otherwise difficult to recognize or remain invisible. The stories in this chapter are organized into three sections, each focusing in turn on Joy, me, and M.

Joy's Hybrid Identities: Being Both Korean and Non-Korean

As a 18th century English literature scholar, Joy expressed her frustration with the narrow expectations and assumptions placed upon her scholarly pursuits based on the way people stereotyped her. Joy then chose to disassociate her Asian identities at graduate school and studied English literature "as if [she was] a White person" (Joy, Interview 4, 12/02/2022). However, her motivation to pass as non-Asian scholar shifts when she went into the job market in her last year of PhD program. As she was forming her job market materials for an English faculty position, she pondered on her identities that she used to avoid or reject:

> **Joy**: 한국사람으로서 18 세기 영문학을 공부한다는 거를 거부했던거죠. 난 그냥 영문학 공부하는 사람인데. 그런데 잡마켓 나갈 때 부터 생각을 많이 했던 거 같아요. 내가 어쨌든 미국 사회에서 minority 로서 이걸 selling point 로 적어야 하나 고민을 했고. … 이 잡이 requirement 가 두 가지 있었는데 첫번째는 digital 이고 두번째는 non-major literature 였어요. … 인터뷰 하면서도 제가 학사를 philosophy 랑 English literature 했는데, 그럼 동양 뭐 그런 것도 했냐는 거야 (웃음) 그래서 "했지" 했더니 그런 거에 관심을 많이 가지더라구요. … 내가 한국인이니까 world literature 가르쳐라 … 그럴려고 나를 뽑았다고 하더라구요. (Joy, Interview 7, 04/17/2023)

> **Joy**: *I rejected studying 18th-century English literature as a Korean. I'm just someone who studies English literature. But I think when I was going on the job market, I started to think more [about my identities]. I carefully thought if I should highlight being a minority in American society as a selling point. … This job [I got] had two requirements:*

> *one was digital-focused and the other was non-major literature. … During the interview, I mentioned my bachelor's in philosophy and English literature, and they asked if I had done any Asian stuff (laughs). I said I did, and they seemed very interested in that. … They wanted me to teach World Literature because I am Korean, and that's why they hired me.*

Joy "rejected" her identities as a Korean and passed as "just someone who studies English literature" during her graduate studies. However, she starts to reconsider her stance as she navigates the job market and realizes that her "minority" status and cultural background can be assets in academic institutions looking for someone who studies "non-major literature." Her used-to-be concealed identities shifts to a potential "selling point" for the American academic job market. This shift in her perspective may have been driven by the demand for diversity at neoliberal academic institutions, where her identities become a valued commodity (Lawless & Chen, 2017). In her job interview, thus, she associated herself with "Asian stuff" to strengthen her candidacy. Before, she rejected and rebelled against the prejudices on her Asian identity reduced to Asian studies, asking "why should I study Asia just because I am Asian?" (Joy, Interview 4, 12/02/2022) But during the job search, Joy temporarily, and perhaps with still lingering hesitation, embraces her Asian identities for the job market purposes and becomes hired to teach World Literature "because [she is] Korean." This contrast shows that Joy is cognizant of how her identities as a Korean/Asian could enable or constrain her at different social situations and contexts and capable of negotiating her identities fluidly to meet her different goals.

I asked how she is teaching the World Literature course that she mentioned as having no background in. Interestingly, she replied that, having a background in only English and American literature, she decided to design the course as a Korean literature course, exclusively

teaching Korean classical and contemporary literary works. It was interesting because Joy had repeatedly mentioned in the earlier interviews that she did not like Korean literature growing up because her inner "feminist … was not answered through Korean language or culture" (Joy, Interview 1, 09/13/2022). In another interview, she also listed typical Korean literary tropes such as "'한' 이런거랑 팍팍한 삶, 하층민의 서러움, 그리고 통일 염원 ['*han*[21]*,' harsh lives, the struggles of the lower class, and wish for unification of North and South Korea*]," describing how these cultural tropes didn't align with her interests, and she ended up preferring Western literature (Joy, Interview 3, 11/15/2022). When I asked why she chose to teach Korean literature even though she disliked it, she said: "차라리 아는 거 가르치자 … 뭐 어느 정도는 읽었으니까 고등학교 때 [*I might as well teach what I know … I did read some of it in high school*]" (Joy, Interview 4, 12/02/2022). Being assigned to teach a non-Western world literature course, Joy felt that she did not have other options but to teach Korean literature drawing on her experiences from Korean secondary education. While she rejected affiliation with Asian or Korean studies before (i.e., "I don't know about Asia, or Asian literature, and I don't study it"), this time, she accepts prior experiences and knowledge in Korean literature to navigate the course imposed on her to teach due to her background in "Asian stuff." Again, Joy affiliates and disaffiliates with her Korean identity and related experiences for situational goals. Her identity stays malleable and constantly emerge pronounced or stay concealed strategically.

Previously, Joy had mentioned that the pedagogical relevance to her identities often led her to disclose her linguistic and cultural identities to students while in other teaching spaces they remained withheld. In her World Literature class exclusively focused on Korean literature,

[21] "한 [*han*]" is a multifaceted emotion that encompasses a sense of deep sorrow, resentment, and regret. It is a concept deeply ingrained in Korean cultural experiences, often involving feeling oppressed or enduring injustice from the past Japanese occupation.

she became even more openly "Korean" as not only it was relevant to the curriculum but also as it granted her "authority" as a Korean literature professor:

> **Joy**: Authority 로서 가르치는 거 가 달라요. 영국문학을 할 때는 scholarship 에 의지해서 예를 들어 gothic novel 은 이런 거다 ... 이거는 한국이니까 굳이 내가 어떤 scholar 가 한국인의 정이란 건 흥이란 건 이런 거다 라고 rely 하지 않고 "한국에서는 그래"라고 말할 수 있는 거? 그런게 다르더라구요. (Joy, Interview 6, 02/08/2023)

> **Joy**: *Teaching as an authority is different. When teaching English literature, such as explaining what a gothic novel is, I have to rely on scholarship. … Since this is about Korea, I don't have to rely on what scholars say about Korean "jeong" or "heung"[22] is; instead, I can simply say, "That's how it is in Korea." That's what was different.*

Joy compares her authority in teaching English literature to Korean literature. Unlike teaching English literature that requires her to carefully "rely on scholarship," teaching Korean literature, Joy can simply claim her authority over Korean culture as a Korean. For example, Korean affects like "jeong" and "heung" were naturally ingrained as cultural knowledge to Joy that she could teach to her students in reading Korean literature without relying on scholarship. Her identities as Korean and Asian embody lack of authority over English literature (e.g., Others assuming that Joy would study an Asian-related subject, not 18th-century English literature), requiring her to thoroughly engage with the scholarship, whereas in Korean literature class, she embodies great authority even without scholarship backing her up. Again, while in other cases, she rejects her Korean identity to be associated with her scholarly interests and expertise due to imposed

[22] "정 [*jeong*]" is a fundamental aspect of Korean relationships that signifies deep affection and compassion for others. "흥 [*heung*]" refers to a sense of excitement and enthusiasm, often in the context of social gatherings involving arts, music, and dance.

prejudicial assumptions, Joy experiences benefits of explicitly associating her Korean identities with her teaching Korean literature.

However, Joy still felt hesitant to fully accept such benefits of having insider cultural experiences and knowledge as a Korean. In fact, having such explicit and close connections to the course materials and the perception of a respected authority led her to feel uncomfortable, encountering a blurred line between her professional and personal identities. She said:

> **Joy**: 수업시간에 가끔 내 경험을 얘기할 때, 이게 뭔가 내가 한국 사람을 설명한다기보다 나를 설명하는 거 같아서 부담스러울 때가 있어요. … 딱 한주만 feminism 이런 걸 했거든요. 근데 이런 뭐 당연히 한국에서 sexism 이나, gender stereotype 이라던지, gender role 이런 거 당연히 나오는 부분이니까 discuss 를 많이 하긴 했는데. 학생들이 페이퍼에 한국에서의 여성의 role 은 to be a mother 이다 그래서 이 text 가 그거에 resist 하는 거다 하는데. 맞긴 맞는데, 뭔가 더 뉘앙스가 있고 complexity 가 있는 건데, ... 학생들이 '한국인 교수가 말했는데 한국은 이렇대' 이렇게 될까봐? 그리고 너무 exposure 가 없던 주제를 하다보니까 이것만이 걔네가 아는 전부가 될까봐? … 나는 한국인 교순데 내가 얘기했으니까 100 프로라고 생각할 까봐? (Joy, Interview 7, 04/17/2023)

> **Joy**: *Sometimes during [World Literature] class, when I talk about my experiences in class, it feels like students see my experience as 'the' Korean experience, so it can feel uncomfortable at times. … We covered feminism for a week and topics such as sexism, gender stereotypes, and gender roles in Korean society naturally came up, so we discussed them a lot. The students wrote in their papers that 'the role of women in Korea is to be a mother and this text resists that notion.' They are right about that, but there is more nuance and complexity. … I'm worried the students might think, 'Our Korean professor said this is how it is in Korea,' and they might take it as the complete picture. And since they have little exposure to these topics, I fear this might become all they know [about Korea]. … Since I'm a Korean professor and spoke on the topic, they might believe what I said was 100%.*

Joy reflects on the challenges of discussing Korean topics in class where her own experiences as a Korean person become a direct source of teaching. She feels a burden when discussing her own experiences and cultural context because it may inadvertently become a definitive representation of all Korean people. This is a heavy responsibility, as Joy is aware that her perspective may be seen as the definitive truth about Korea culture, especially given her position as an authority figure—a "Korean professor" in a Korean literature course. She is also concerned that students may oversimplify or stereotype Korean culture based on their limited "exposure" to Korean subjects. This includes their interpretation of women's role in Korea lacking "nuance" and "complexity." That is, while she acknowledges that there are truths in their discussion (e.g., women's roles as mothers and the resistance against it in texts), she also recognizes the need for a more nuanced and complex understanding of these issues. When her identities intersect with the curriculum—which was a driving force for Joy to come out, as discussed in the previous chapter—Joy experiences the complexities of teaching culturally specific topics, particularly in her position as a professor who shares the same cultural background as the subject matter.

So far, I have illustrated Joy's fluid identity negotiations, strategically affiliating and disaffiliating with her Korean/Asian identities to meet multiple contexts. She disaffiliates with Korean identities when it comes to her English literature studies and yet she decides to strategically (re)affiliate with them for the job market. She doesn't like Korean literature and yet perceives it as a way out of navigating teaching an imposed course that she felt a lack of expertise in. She finds her Korean identities and experiences relevant and grants her authority over the subject materials on Korean literature and yet she feels discomfort in how her identities become the course material with the risk of misrepresentations and lack of complexity. Joy's stories demonstrate how her transnational and multilingual identities are constantly in

negotiation, situationally and strategically recreated and constructed, to navigate different ways her identities are indexed or to achieve certain purposes and goals she sought. Joy's hybrid identities become evident here, as she navigates different degrees of affiliation with Koreanness (e.g., Joy is too Korean in the literature course to her students; Joy is not Korean for studying English literature), blending and merging aspects of her Korean identities to suit her needs. They also hinted at a wide range of identities and complexities within the idea of "Koreanness," that she felt at risk of misrepresenting via her personal experiences only to the audience who are outsiders to Korean culture.

My Hybrid Identities: Being Both Inclusive and Exclusive in Teaching

As one of the "coming out" stories in Chapter 4, I described how I drew on my linguistic and cultural experiences while teaching the Preparation of College Writing (PCW) course, which was designed for international students and other linguistically diverse students. Since the curriculum focused on helping students leverage their prior experiences, linguistic knowledge, and cultural practices as assets in writing, I used my own experiences as "living examples" to encourage asset-based writing. For instance, I shared differences in Korean dialects and Asian cultural codes related to the word 'rice.' These teaching practices, which utilized my own experiences, helped international students recognize their own similar linguistic and cultural experiences as valuable sources for their writing.

However, at the same time, explicitly positioning myself as a transnational multilingual Asian writing teacher created a sense of discomfort or exclusion for domestic students[23] in my class. I began to notice this during the first writing project, where students were asked to write a

[23] Due to the self-placement policy at the Midwestern University writing program, PCW courses were open to all students who would like to take advantage of a non-credit-bearing bridge course (i.e., PCW) before taking the mainstream writing course. As a result, 8 domestic students—who identified themselves as US-born English monolingual speakers—and 6 international students from China and Saudi Arabia were enrolled in my class.

literacy narrative reflecting on significant experiences in their literacy development. In one class, as an example of a literacy narrative, I shared my experiences of learning English as a second language in Korea and how my literacy practices changed when I moved to the US. I then paired students to "interview" each other about their hometown, language, the schools they attended, and regional dialects/accents (including the prompting question: "What is one unique word that your hometown community uses?"). This "interview" activity was to help students reflect on their broader lives and brainstorm possible topics for their literacy narrative project. Due to the odd number of students, I also participated in the activity and paired up with a student, who was from a nearby town close to Midwestern University. We decided that he would interview me first, so I shared my experiences of growing up in Seoul, learning English and Japanese, my parents' Jeolla dialect, and my strict Korean high school experience. When it was his turn, he said he didn't know any dialects or accents. Then I noticed that he was struggling to come up with one unique word from his hometown community. During one of the dialogic autobiography recordings, I recounted this moment:

> **Me**: He couldn't really identify one word that's unique to his hometown. And that was kind of interesting to me. I asked him, 'isn't there any word people use or call, like a certain restaurant? Not as it's called, but differently?' He said, 'I don't think so.' He just couldn't find anything. (Dialogic Autobiography 2, 09/17/2021)

Despite my attempt to redirect the question by asking about "any word people use … differently" to meet his situation, the student struggled to come up with a word. I began to think that sharing my experiences may have unintentionally influenced his perception of the question, leading him to feel unable to relate to my examples. He then shifted the conversation to asking for my recommendations for his upcoming family trip to Japan. Having said that I speak Japanese and visited Japan during the activity, I wasn't surprised by this shift in conversation, but it led me to

consider that Japan might have been the only aspect of what I shared that he could relate to. At the end of the class, he approached me and said he was struggling to find a topic for his literacy narrative project. This immediately transported me to our earlier interactions during the activity when he struggled to come up with his own examples. So this time, I changed my strategy and paused "coming out" to give him examples that did not involve transnational or multilingual experiences, such as finding passion in reading a book or moving to a new place like the Midwestern University campus. After listening to me, he then asked if he could write about a fiction series he read in middle school that made him realize reading was fun for the first time. He added, "I am not sure that's really topic-worthy." I reassured him that it was a good idea and clarified that the project is about literacy experiences, not necessarily about multilingual experiences. He thanked me and left the classroom, but I wasn't quite sure if he was convinced. I noticed my coming out strategy, highlighting my own experiences to frame the assignment, may have influenced his perception of his own experiences as not relevant to the assignment. Thus, I "paused" coming out momentarily in order to respond to his needs, but I was still left with an uncertainty about whether such a strategy truly worked. I began to contemplate whether drawing on my transnational multilingual experience—while I observed how it positively reinforced international students to see their language differences as assets—may inadvertently have led domestic students who don't associate with language differences to feel excluded.

What I suspected as a possible sense of exclusion among domestic students intensified during the second writing project. The project was a translation narrative, where students were asked to translate a text in their "home language" into an "English dialect" and write an essay reflecting on their translation process. Since the word "translate" might seem limited to converting one language to another, I clarified for students who identified their home language

as English to "pick a text from a specific culture that involves coded language, jargons, slangs, etc. which needs translation for the general audience of English users." Although I felt confident that the project was communicated clearly, I started to notice many domestic students struggling to find a text to 'translate.' One White female domestic student was particularly expressive about her "discomfort" in looking for a translatable text:

> **Me**: I could tell she wants to do the least … so when I'm saying something in the class, she doesn't care. But when it comes to an assignment that she has to do, now all of a sudden, because she hasn't been listening to me, she asks me, in a blaming way, 'You assign me this very confusing thing. Why can't she explain this better to me?' … She was really struggling to find a text [to translate]. So I recommended [her to] look at what broadcasters say during the soccer game: 'When they describe certain things, I wouldn't know what that means because I don't know [soccer]. So can you translate that for us?' And then she said to me, 'This assignment sounds like it's much easier if you know a second language.' (Dialogic Autobiography 3, 09/23/2021)

Before her issue with the translation narrative project arose, I noticed the student seemed frequently disengaged during class, as she was often on her phone and visibly not paying attention to the lesson. When I approached her to check in on her writing during class, she often engaged with me in accusatory matters, questioning the clarity or effectiveness of my teaching rather than seeking guidance due to her lack of attention during instruction. Having other prior experiences of my teacher authority as an Asian woman challenged by White students (as illustrated in the previous chapter as one of the causes of my "passing"), I was alerted by her impertinent behaviors and started to feel uncomfortable for possible conflicts with her. Thus, instead of calling out the unwillingness on her part to listen to my instruction, I decided to draw on a strategic empathy to see her "issues" from her point of view and suggested an example from what she had addressed as her interest: American football (soccer). However, the student ignored

my explanation and claimed that the assignment was designed for those who "know[s] a second language." In that moment, I was burdened with explaining an assignment that a White monolingual student believed was not designed for her—"comforting" the "discomfort of [a] White student … whose power comes from the privilege" (Reyes, 2023, p. 2). This prompted me to reflect on my coming out identity negotiation strategy, which I believed to be beneficial for promoting linguistic diversity in the classroom. However, when I established transnational and multilingual experiences as the example and norm, it caused discomfort among domestic White students, with one of them challenging my authority and competence as a teacher.

Since this incident, I began to notice a sense of divide in the classroom between domestic and international students in how they understood the writing projects and participated in class. While international students rarely expressed issues with writing about their experiences for projects, domestic students often struggled and consulted me for their choice of topic and direction of writing, where I clarified that their non-transnational and non-multilingual experiences were valuable sources. On the other hand, domestic students were more vocal in class discussions compared to international students who rarely spoke up. This made me question whether I was framing discussion questions in a way that catered more to domestic students than to international students, especially since my previous teaching experience had been exclusively in mainstream writing classes with a majority of White monolingual students. While, when it came to assignments, I worried that I am attuning to international students in a way that leads domestic students to feel excluded, when it came to classroom discussions, I wondered if I was more attuned to White monolingual domestic students due to my past teaching experiences. Furthermore, spatially, the students sat apart from each other—domestic students clustered together, while international students formed their own groups, creating a spatial division in the

classroom. During one of the dialogic autobiography recordings, I drew a map of the classroom (Figure 10) to share with my advisor how I was struggling to address the divide between students. Four domestic students were actively engaged in conversation and sat at the front of the class. Two Chinese international students in the back were relatively less active but still participated in class conversation. The rest of the students sat on the sides or in the back, away from me, either quietly engaged or disengaged in my lesson.

Worried about this divided classroom between domestic and international students with different needs and learning styles, I decided to incorporate more one-on-one instruction during class instead of relying on class discussions. I would explain the day's goals and walk around the room to talk individually with each student. This strategy allowed me to tailor my teaching and teacher identities to individual students' needs. For domestic students, I would share my

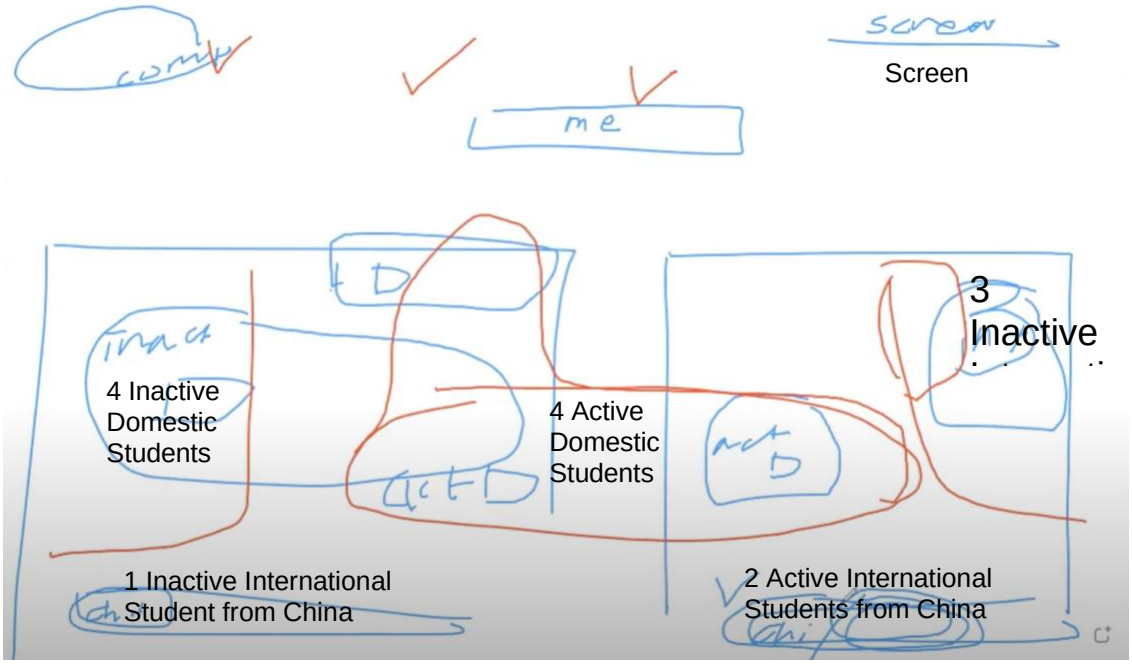

Figure 10. Map of the PCW Class and In/active Domestic and International Students during Class Discussions (10/28/2021)

"American" experiences to help them understand the assignment and build rapport, while for international students, I would share my transnational, Korean, or Asian experiences to connect with them and encourage them to write and reflect on their multilingual identities. This one-on-one approach where I made my identities malleable to meet students' different experiences and needs made me feel like I was bridging the gap between the divide.

Spending ample time with individual students in class naturally led me to gain a deeper understanding of who they are than I would in other writing classrooms. I got to learn about their hometowns, cultures, languages, families, career goals, and passions, and these diverse backgrounds and interests helped me to see their multifaceted identities beyond the simple "divide" of "domestic" and "international" student groups. The "divide" in student groups was not as straightforward as I initially thought and was, in fact, a product of my own assumptions about students based on their perceived identities. When asked to research a community for a project, a student from China wrote about a local historic bookstore because of her interest in how small, old businesses sustain themselves through community engagement. I remember thinking this was a "unique topic" because, subconsciously, I expected her to write about a community among Chinese or Chinese Americans. This instance and other numerous interactions with individual students led me to recognize the complexity and nuance in students' identities and choices, and perhaps more importantly, alerted me of my own assumptions on students' cultural identities that could shape my expectations of the kinds of topics that students would pursue. I further reflect on this realization during the dialogic autobiography recording:

> **Me**: Just because they're Chinese, you know, that doesn't mean that they want to [write about China]. … I'm Korean, but also I don't want to be reduced to just this Korean person. … Like a double-edged sword of this curriculum, inviting their culture, their language is great. But also, you [need] a very good sensibility of how you treat this

> culture. Because … we talked about linguistic tourism or exoticizing differences. … that is … just a parade of … it's like an international fair. … Everyone wears their traditional clothes and shows the most easy to recognize [side] from their culture. (Dialogic Autobiography 7, 10/28/2021)

I realize that arguing for my own identities as more complex than "just this Korean person" also applies to students' identities. I deeply and personally understand the danger of "reduc[ing]" identities into static images of cultural identities such as Chinese or Korean. This is echoed in Joy's experience of teaching Korean literature in the previous section, where her teacher identities are often reduced to Korean identities creating a sense of burden and discomfort on her end to represent Koreanness in the classroom. So I describe the PCW curriculum that invites such personal experiences as writing resource is a "double-edged sword:" while it enables multiple experiences to be recognized as valuable literacy resources, without a deep "sensibility" for cultural differences and complexities, it could be a mere "tourism" (Matsuda, 2014) that highlights exoticized and easy-to-recognizable cultural aspects, engendering generalizations and stereotypes. I use "international fair" as an example of such exoticization of culture where I saw a very thin line between celebration and displayed generalization of culture.

In sum, due to the curricular emphasis of the PCW on viewing language differences as a writing asset, I actively leveraged on my transnational and multilingual experiences as pedagogical resources. This "coming out" strategy benefited international students by helping them recognize their own experiences as valuable assets for writing. However, it also led to a sense of exclusion and discomfort among domestic students who could not relate to such multilingual experiences, resulting in struggling to find their own footing in the assignments. This issue was intensified when a White monolingual student expressed discomfort in a challenging manner to my teacher authority, claiming that the assignment was designed for

multilingual writers. Sensing these divided reactions from international and domestic students in the class, I adopted a more individualized teaching approach, adapting my teacher identities to better align with each student's identities and experiences. While this individualized approach helped me to bridge the gap to some extent, I came to realize the complexities in student identities that I have previously generalized within the polarized categories of "international" and "domestic" students. My reflections from the PCW class complicate my "coming out" strategy illustrated in Chapter 4, revealing situations where it was not always successful or adequate in interactions with different student identities. These experiences demonstrate how my identity negotiations as a teacher are inseparable from student identities (Morgan, 2004). In teacher-student interactions, I found myself co-constructing my identities based on student responses to my pedagogy, constantly transforming myself to meet their learning needs that stem from students' hybrid, complex identities.

M's Hybrid Identities: Being Both Visible and Invisible

In the previous chapter, I illustrated M's "agential choice" to wear a headscarf as a way to claim her Muslim identity in the US. M described that, even though she had a choice to take it off when she moved to the US—and her family and friends back in Pakistan even persuaded her to remove it to "look out for [her] safety"—she willfully continue to wear it as a form of "resistance to the discourse" of Islamophobia and xenophobia in the US, which was heightened with the election of then-President Trump. Unlike other stories of "coming out" where we carefully assessed our circumstances to feel safe or empowered before deciding to disclose our identities, M's "coming out" identity negotiation here was unique in that she powerfully exercised her agency over her religion despite the potential risk to her safety.

While her motivation to come out visibly as a Muslim woman by wearing a headscarf was her exercise of agency, M experiences frustration from how other people perceive her choice to wear it in a way that erases her agency:

> **M**: There's so much meaning ascribed to this by other people, projecting onto this. So I have had conversations with professors here who are very intelligent people, you know, academics, but [they ask] 'is your family forcing you to wear it?' and not recognizing the fact that … I am a doctoral student … I'm a woman who can critically think, I can make my choices and … you're negating or erasing the agency of that person. So 'you are in the US, do you still have to wear it?' … Those kinds of things … keep coming up and I realize that … some people don't really want to engage with my point of view. So they project their things like, 'This is conservative.' (M, Interview 4, 12/09/2022).

M describes the experiences of other people "ascrib[ing] and "projecting" their own meanings and opinions of her headscarf onto her, regardless of her true intent or her point of view. She highlights some of the projecting remarks she received, even from "intelligent" people such as professors and academics, who questioned her decision to wear a headscarf. These remarks imply that M was being coerced to wear the headscarf, failing to recognize her agency as a woman "who can critically think" and "make [her] choices," and project their association of headscarves with oppression onto Muslim women without "engag[ing] with [her] point of view." This reflects a broader issue of how the cultural and religious forms of dress of Muslim women are often politicized and sensationalized by Western liberal ideals outside of the proper context (Abu-Lughod, 2013). The Western view and projection on clothing like burqa and hijab often erases Muslim women's voices and lived experiences and only replicates stories of suffering and oppression on women's rights, while justifying "rescue missions by outsiders" (p. 20).

M's frustration with others' inability and unwillingness to understand the complexities of her religious and cultural practices leads her to resist taking off her headscarf. M said, "I wanted

to take it off at one point but then I also felt that it would be read differently. 'Hey, this woman got liberated in the US!' … So then I decided to stick with it" (M, Interview 4, 12/09/2022). If she were to remove the headscarf, it could be perceived by others as an indication that she has been "liberated in the US," which feeds into existing biases about Muslim women's dressing as part of their religious practices. M is placed in a no-win situation where both wearing and removing the headscarf can lead to misinterpretation and misrepresentation of her intentions and beliefs. This puts her in a difficult position where neither choice fully allows her to express her identities without external interference. As a result, M repeatedly expressed how "exhausted" she feels:

> **M**: You feel like having become a representative of sorts, [when] not even wanting to. … The representation thing is kind of thrown on you. … It's exhausting. … It's not something that should require a comment from anyone… . It is exhausting. It is exhausting. And then there are people who've known you for several years and you've had this conversation with them several times. And then it still comes up like three years down the line, four years down the line, and I'm like, okay, you were not even listening. … They just want to have their own takeaways and I don't have the time. (M, Interview 4, 12/09/2022)

Being visibly Muslim by her choice to wear a headscarf, M expresses how she feels forced into a role of representing Muslim women, despite not seeking that role. She finds herself subjected to unsolicited inquisitive attention from others. She feels that people she has known for years continue to raise the same questions or misunderstanding, which labors her with the need to clarify or educate others who "were not even listening." The constant need to explain, justify, or defend her choices takes an emotional toll on her, creating a strong sense of weariness.

M's story demonstrates the complexities of asserting and negotiating her religious and cultural identities in a context where others may hold preconceived notions and judgements. M

experiences others projecting their own meanings and opinions onto her headscarf, questioning her decision to wear it while implying coercion or oppression without acknowledging her agency. Remarks from people at her school fail to engage with her point of view, reflecting broader issues of Western liberal discourses around Muslim women's rights. M finds herself in a double bind: wearing the headscarf can be misinterpreted as oppression, while taking it off could be seen as liberation—neither fully represent her true intentions and beliefs. As a result, ironically, M's identities remain both visible (with the headscarf) and invisible (with imposed) as a Muslim woman. "Coming out" as a practicing Muslim woman came with the constant need of negotiating her identities to be understood and not to be misunderstood, imposing a representation fatigue on M.

Chapter Conclusion

In conclusion, the stories in this chapter shed light on the fluid and dynamic nature of identity negotiations that extend beyond the binary strategies of passing and coming out. They underscore the complexity of navigating social structures and highlight how our identities are constantly meshed and (re)mixed through strategic interactions within various sociocultural, institutional, and ideological contexts.

Joy's experiences demonstrate her strategic alignment and disaffiliation with her Korean/Asian identity, illustrating the nuanced ways she navigates different contexts to achieve her goals. Additionally, Joy faces the challenge of having her teacher identities reduced to Korean identity, creating a sense of burden and discomfort on her to represent the complexities of Koreanness in the classroom. My own reflections reveal the challenges and adaptations required to effectively engage with students with different linguistic and cultural backgrounds, complicating my initial "coming out" strategy. These experiences demonstrate how my identity

negotiations as a teacher are inseparable from student identities, necessitating a constant co-construction of my identities based on student responses to my pedagogy. M's story highlights the challenges of negotiating religious and cultural identities in a context where Western liberal discourses often distort Muslim women's experiences. Ultimately, M's "coming out" as a practicing Muslim woman revealed an ongoing identity negotiation against widespread misrepresentation, leading her to feel exhaustion and fatigue.

Collectively, these stories illustrate our identities as hybrid, in a constant process of negotiation across various contexts. Our hybrid identities are complicated and contradicted with the burdens of representing cultural identities, challenges of teaching cultural subjects while embodying those identities, identities negotiated contingently and relationally with others' identities, and the risk of misunderstanding and misrepresentation. Joy is neither fully Korean nor non-Korean, my own multilingual experiences are both inclusive and exclusive pedagogy, and M is neither entirely visible nor invisible.

CHAPTER 6: IMPLICATIONS AND CONCLUSION

> "[A]ll forms of culture are continually in a process of hybridity …, which enables other positions to emerge … [and] sets up new structures" (Bhabha, 1990, p. 211)

In this project, I have focused on three transnational multilingual writing teachers and their lived experiences across transnational trajectories to understand how these teachers negotiate their identities within sociocultural, institutional, and ideological structures. Addressing the lack of attention to transnational multilingual teachers in Rhetoric and Writing (Ruecker et al., 2018; Tseptsura & Ruecker, 2024), this project has uncovered the mechanisms that render these teachers invisible in the field and to make their everyday power struggles in negotiating their identities visible. By interweaving my stories with two teacher participants, this project has created a more comprehensive and nuanced picture of transnational multilingual teacher identities. Specifically, dynamic identity strategies—like "passing" and "coming out" emerged across our stories—highlight the complex negotiation of sociocultural contexts we were in. However, these passing and coming out identity strategies were not simply binary (i.e., overcoming passing through coming out) or linear (i.e., once you come out, you are out). Rather, our identities were constantly in a complex process of negotiation, emerging differently—and contradictorily—in our everyday identity, literacy, and teaching practices. Therefore, the results of this project ultimately suggest transnational multilingual teacher identities as hybrid as they fluidly negotiate their identities to move between the systems of power, constantly reconceiving who they are, drawing on their developed transnational, translingual, and rhetorical competence.

In this last chapter, I will discuss the implications of this project for Rhetoric and Writing to move toward greater visibility of transnational multilingual writing teachers in the field.

Implications for Research in Rhetoric and Writing

Grounded in these findings, the project offers the following implications for studying transnational multilingual writing teacher identities. First, in theorizing writing teacher identities, Rhetoric and Writing researchers must move away from binary notions of identities, cultures, and languages, which assume that individuals could be categorized based on static identities. Instead, a less bounded approach to understanding transnational multilingual teacher identities as multiple, fluid, and dynamic is suggested as this project has demonstrated the blurred binaries between what constitutes Pakistani, Korean, or American identities, or native and nonnative language identities through discursive processes of cultural and linguistic identity negotiations. In Chapter 5, Joy, M, and I strategically and constantly negotiated our identities differently, transcending the binary of "passing" and "coming out," in our everyday identity, literacy, and teaching practices. Joy's identities, for example, emerged with varying degrees of affiliation with Koreanness depending on her situational contexts, such as neoliberal demands for her minority identities or others' inability to understand complexities of Korean culture. In my case, I experienced how my identity presentations impacted students' learning experiences and strategically changed the ways I drew on my identities and lived experiences to respond to students' different needs. M's identity negotiations as a Muslim woman wearing a headscarf revealed to be complicated as her desire to claim her religious and cultural identities often clashed with others' ignorant opinions and agendas. In these experiences, none of us remained static or one-dimensional as Korean/Pakistani nonnative English-speaking Asian women. Instead, we dynamically negotiated, recreated, or resisted certain language and cultural identities

imposed on us. This suggests the need for a theoretical approach that reconceptualizes identities as fluid (constantly emerging differently), dynamic (responding to rhetorical situations), and hybrid (rejecting either/or binary identities).

The second implication is the need to extend the translingual framework used for studying identity negotiations by turning to two areas. This project drew on an interdisciplinary approach by bringing together (1) NNEST (Nonnative English-Speaking Teachers) and (2) linguistic justice scholarship with a translingual investigation of transnational multilingual teacher identities. First, given the lack of attention to teachers' language in translingual scholarly conversations, this project drew on NNEST literature in TESOL, which facilitated consideration of the contexts of transnational and global perspectives toward literacy and identity practices. In particular, situating this project within existing NNEST (Nonnative English-Speaking Teachers) literature in TESOL provided insights into global contexts where nonnative language identities of teachers are marginalized through the notion of native speaker fallacy. In Chapter 4, our stories showed that the three of us strategically chose to pass by hiding, masking, withholding, or disaffiliating with our cultural and linguistic identities in order to navigate marginalization of our nonnative English-speaking identities. Both M and I, with our unmarked accents, were perceived as native English speakers until revealing our linguistic backgrounds. M described her status as nonnative English speaker as "unnecessary information" that could possibly lead students to "take liberty [to] challenge [her] authority as an instructor" (M, Interview 2, 10/07/2022). She chose to remain passing as a native English speaker as it came with the privilege of native speakers (i.e., native speakers as the ideal, unchallenged teacher identity). Similarly, Joy intentionally withheld information regarding her transnational and linguistic background in writing classrooms as she felt "uncomfortable to admit" them as a writing teacher. Joy's choice

to pass underscored the uneven power dynamics between her as a nonnative English speaker and students who may assert greater authority and ownership over the English language as native speakers. Given these findings, crossing disciplinary boundaries and seeking insights into teachers' linguistic diversity from other disciplines, such as Second Language Studies and TESOL, could be beneficial in Rhetoric and Writing research looking at such underexplored subject issues.

This study further demonstrates the need for an interdisciplinary approach that attends to the ways identity negotiations are influenced and mediated by racializing discourses and racist ideologies. Some translingual scholars indeed have called for a more race-conscious examination of language identities (Alvarez et al., 2017; Do & Rowan, 2022). Echoing their calls, the findings of this project suggest to look at raciolinguistic biases on writing teachers to move toward greater inclusivity in linguistic justice. As highlighted in the stories of passing in Chapter 4, our teacher identities and authority as Asian women were often dismissed and challenged by students. Given the lack of Asian representation in positions of authority in US educational institutions (Hsieh & Nguyen, 2021; Kim, 2022), coupled with Orientalist stereotypes of Asian women as submissive and passive (Nguyen, 2012), we experienced challenges and tension from students—particularly White students—who did not easily authorize or acknowledge our expertise and knowledge as Asian migrant teachers (Choi, 2021). Another racializing discourse that mediated our identity negotiation was the hegemonic narrative of Asian immigrants and Asian Americans as a monolithic ethnic group. During a visit to the DMV, for instance, I witnessed other Asian women being mistreated by a staff member for their perceived "Chinese accent." To navigate and counter raciolinguistic discrimination against Asian speakers, I intentionally performed English by policing my accent to come across as a native English speaker. However, I was still subject to

being conflated with a homogenous ethnic group when the staff member proceeded to treat me as a Chinese speaker, asking for the written test in Chinese. This story underscores how Asian-bodied individuals, regardless of their nationality or fluency in English, are subjected to homogenous treatment of Asian identities as a monolithic ethnic group with foreign accents (Kim et al., 2023; Sano-Franchini, 2018), a complex racializing context that I must negotiate. Given these specific ways transnational multilingual Asian women engage with and navigate racializing and racist logics and ideologies in predominantly White institutional spaces, adopting an interdisciplinary approach to incorporate linguistic justice perspectives become imperative for a holistic understanding and examination of transnational multilingual teachers whose linguistic identities are also racially marginalized.

The third implication for research in Rhetoric and Writing is related to the importance of critically contextualizing these identity negotiations within the larger ideological structures of power, privilege, and marginalization. Following the advice of scholars in transnational multilingual identity research (Canagarajah 2010; Lee & Canagarajah, 2019; Lorimer Leonard, 2014; Motha et al., 2012), this project attended to the larger ideological contexts mediating our identity negotiations. Consequently, the stories in this project indicated that English literacy in Pakistan and Korea transcends language skill acquisition, representing a gateway to sociocultural and economic values embedded with historical colonialism and US imperialism. Experiencing English as socioculturally and economically powerful values in the web of colonialism and imperialism was an important backdrop for our identity negotiations, where we grappled with romanticized Western world and English language ideologies. For instance, our teacher identity negotiations were often mediated by the notion of native speaker fallacy, which traces back to associating native English speakers with Western ideals and Whiteness through colonialism,

slavery, and displacement (Pennycook, 2007; Phillipson, 1992). Recognizing our nonnative English-speaking Asian identities as challenges in building writing teacher authority, the stories in Chapter 4 highlighted how we navigated such language ideologies, marking our identities as deficit, and chose to negotiate our identities by "passing" as native speakers or non-Asian subjectivities. In these cases of "passing," paying attention to what sort of systems and structures of oppression has led to see "passing" as a strategic choice to survive, rather than deception.

Taking a deep interest in contexts of identity negotiations also aligns with the earlier discussion of conducting race-conscious teacher identity research. Heeding Gilyard's (2016) call to historicize specific contexts of racism and racialization in order to avoid potential erasure of differences in raciolinguistically marginalized subjectivities, I focused on the racialization of Asians—or "Asianization" (Iftikar & Museus, 2018) —the process by which Asians become racially marginalized in the US because of nativistic racism. This contextualization of our experiences as Asian migrants in the US was particularly important as it showcased how our identity negotiations were intricately intertwined with the global colonial and imperial project and influenced how we negotiated our transnational multilingual identities as Asian migrants in the US. Likewise, contextualizing our stories within these larger structural ideologies and regimes that mediate our identity negotiations was crucial for revealing the systemic and structural problems that limit and marginalize us—thereby reframing our narratives not as mere personal or internal struggles.

Implications for Writing Programs and Institutional Practices

The findings in this project not only have implications for research, but also for teaching, curriculum development, and administration. The three focal transnational multilingual writing teachers and their identity negotiations in this project highlight their unique and critical insights

into languages, cultures, and institutional structures and ideologies. These insights should be leveraged and supported in writing and graduate programs to shift from a deficit to an asset-based understanding of transnational multilingual writing teachers.

In doing so, the first implication for writing programs and departments is the need to critically engage with language diversity issues to develop writing curricula that reflect language differences as the norm and a resource for writing. M described that when she learned that the writing curriculum at Midwestern University explicitly welcomed "all kinds of Englishes," she felt supported in her identities as a multilingual person and felt confident to design her writing courses to be "driven by the ideals of language inclusivity and linguistic and racial justice, … question[ing] what it means to learn a "standard" language" (M, Teaching Artifact, "WRA 101 Syllabus Fall 2021").

Another implication was the intricate connection between teacher identities with pedagogical decisions and students' learning experiences. Engaging with language diversity issues, writing programs should also actively recognize the important role teachers' linguistic and cultural identities play in writing pedagogy, which has been overlooked for so long. In theorizing the notion of identity-as-pedagogy, Morgan (2004) echoes that most teacher training programs have ignored how teachers' lived, situated experiences could be utilized in pedagogy, even though "teachers' own ways of theorizing about their practice tend to be narrative in form, anchored in stories and specific … experiences" (p. 177). Related studies, drawing on the concept of identity-as-pedagogy, have demonstrated how teachers' multilingual and globally situated identities serve as pedagogy, whether by design or inadvertently, to enhance students' learning experience (Motha et al., 2012; Zheng, 2017). Similarly, my experience of leveraging my various linguistic and cultural experiences as "living examples" for international students

(Dialogic Autobiography 2, 09/17/2021) indicated great potential for writing pedagogies to be enriched by teachers' rich knowledge in translingual practices and transnational lived experiences.

Thus, this project demonstrates the great potential in mobilizing teacher identity resources for developing writing pedagogy, which writing programs and curriculum development could further support. As Zheng (2017) argues, simply having diverse linguistic experiences does not lead transnational multilingual teachers to see their experiences as pedagogical resources. The extent to which writing programs actively and explicitly support identity-as-pedagogy influences these teachers to see their transnational multilingual identities and lived experiences as something relevant, leverageable, and asset for writing pedagogy. One possible way is to make transnational multilingual identity-as-pedagogy more explicit in spaces such as teacher training and workshops. These teacher socialization and training spaces could serve as important and primary sites to disrupt monolingual ideologies and centralize linguistic diversity in curriculum where transnational multilingual teachers could share their expertise and ideas drawn from their experiences.

In recognizing transnational multilingual teacher identity-as-pedagogy, the findings in this project also bring up an important caveat, which is to approach transnational multilingual identities with an understanding of their complexity. As Joy's story exemplified, identifying as Korean did not necessarily mean that she welcomed all affiliations with Koreanness. Across all of our stories, we constantly grappled with a sense of discomfort and the burden of representing our cultural identities to avoid misinterpretation. Thus, it is important to recognize that multilingual teachers are not defined solely by language and cultural differences and to heed

individual motivations and experiences of multilingual writing teachers and how they approach and negotiate their identities for pedagogical reasons.

The third implication of this project pertains to institutional structure in higher education. In her autoethnographic study, Lee (2021) makes a critical argument that her negotiation of teacher subjectivity of transnational multilingual Korean requires "leveraging multiple resources [that] is highly contingent on [her] material conditions" (pp. 105-106). This indicates how material conditions (e.g., whether teachers' cultural and language differences are valued in writing programs or at institutions; and how such de/valuing is reflected in institutional policies such as teaching evaluations, hiring practices, and immigration policies) mediate identity negotiations of multilingual teachers who already occupy vulnerable positions. Thus, beyond program and department levels, institutional policies and labeling of transnational multilingual teachers must be revisited. As the NNEST literature documented frequent discrimination toward NNESTs in hiring practices, how institutional definition of teacher professional qualifications may subscribe to a deficit model on transnational multilingual teachers must be critically examined.

Limitations

In developing this study on transnational multilingual writing teachers, this study was not without limitations. The first limitation relates to the imbalance in the volume of data collected from each teacher in this project. Merging an autoethnographic study with two case studies, I was able to build reciprocal relationships with Joy and M during interviews where I was in conversations with them as a researcher and participant at the same time. However, compared to the vast amount of autoethnographic data, tapping into my own memories and artifacts over about two years, the data collected from Joy and M was relatively thinner and less in volume,

amounting to four to nine hour-long interviews over the course of one to two semesters. Thus, a future follow-up on Joy and M could include more interviews over a longer period of time to provide richer and wider insights into their lived experiences. Furthermore, diversifying data types could have provided a further and richer understanding of Joy and M as teachers. For example, unlike my stories, I was not able to examine how Joy and M's identities interplay with their students in the classroom. Thus, extending the data collection to include their students' stories or/and classroom observations to examine teacher-student identity negotiations may benefit providing more relational identity negotiations. Such potential benefits of conducting classroom observations or collecting student data also pertains to my autoethnography, where I could further situate my stories with my students' perspectives.

The second limitation of this project is the limited number of participants. As a story-centered qualitative research employing autoethnographic and case studies, this project prioritized presenting an in-depth exploration of three transnational multilingual writing teachers. Focusing on a limited number of teachers allowed me to illustrate nuanced, complex, and dynamic identity negotiations contextualized within specific rhetorical situations. However, the findings in this project could be further examined, developed, and refined by inviting broader populations of transnational multilingual teachers beyond Asian migrant women.

The third limitation stems from how Asian migrant representations in this project may be limited by my own positionality and perspectives as an East Asian woman, which may overlook the diversified experiences of Asian migrants. Asian migrants and Asian Americans are incredibly diverse ethnic groups from East Asian, Southeast Asia, and South Asia, each with unique geographic, linguistic, and cultural backgrounds and migration histories (Lee, 2016; Ngo & Lee, 2007). And yet, in US racial discourses, "Asian" identities often primarily refer to people

of East Asian ancestry, thereby erasing Southeast Asian and South Asian groups (Shankar & Srikanth, 1998). My limited understanding of Pakistani cultural, linguistic, and historical perspectives, examining M's stories, may inadvertently reinforce such framing that erases non-East Asian migrant groups. Hence, it would be imperative for researchers to move away from reproducing East Asian-dominated narratives of Asian migrants and to bring South and Southeast Asian representations more centrally into researching Asian identities.

Coda

To conclude this project, I would like to return to my story like I began this project with. As I'm departing from this project, I am also preparing to depart for Seoul, Korea, to visit my family, with yet another suitcase filled with "made in the USA" goods as presents for my mom. As I'm packing, I am also mentally preparing myself to be back to the hustle and bustle of Seoul city. In previous visits, my initial appreciation for the liveliness of the people, streets, and city would quickly turn into annoyance in a few days of arrival. Then I would begin to complain to my mom. "There are way too many people in the subway." "That ajumma bumped into me and just walked away." "What's the hurry? Why are Koreans always in a hurry?" "There is no personal space in Korea. Look, people are standing way too close to me."

One day, as my mom and I were about to walk into a mall, the person ahead of us entered and shut the door instead of holding it open for us. I said, "엄마, 한국사람들 진짜 무례해." [*Umma, Koreans are so rude*]." Perhaps my mom had heard enough of my complaints at that point so she said, "너 미국사람 다 됐네. 그냥 미국가서 살어. [*You've turned into an American already. Go back to America and just live there*]."

In my own home country, I was no longer Korean—I am American. “But, umma, in America, I am never American. I’m Korean—no, I don’t even get to be identified that specific; I am an Asian immigrant.” I don’t belong to either world. I am neither Korean nor American. Who am I now that I have two worlds in my life? What have I left behind and gained from either land? I might have “made it in the USA,” but at what cost? These questions remain unanswered as my identities continue to be negotiated within these frictions and contradictions where I can feel only partial belongings. I still have the ongoing desire and struggle to understand my hybrid identities—to understand how “I am Korean” without losing sight of how “I am not Korean.”

So my stories don’t end with this project.

Figure 11. “Resident Alien” Project by Guanyu Xu (https://www.xuguanyu.com/residentaliens)

The artwork above (Figure 11) is by Guanyu Xu (2023), a Chicago-based Chinese American photographer, who visited my apartment to create this piece. Along with two seriously heavy bags full of cameras and lighting equipment, he brought printed photos that I had previously shared with him—photos of different places I've been and lived, people I know and miss, and things I experienced and cherish. Then he took an hour to carefully set the photos up across my apartment and created this incredible photography artwork that reflects my transnational hybrid life. Every time I see this piece (which is nicely framed and hung up in my corridor), I am reminded that I am always living simultaneously in all these liminal spaces with memories from those different places, people, cultures, and languages. I want to conclude this project on that note—the complexities, hybridity, and messiness of transnational multilingual lives and identities.

Departing from this project, in which I have dwelled for the last three years looking at my life up close as well as being in conversations with Joy and M, I want to remind my readers that many transnational multilingual writing teachers continue to grapple with negotiating their cultural and linguistic identities that are positioned at the margins of our field. As the field of Rhetoric and Writing continue working to understand and value the experiences of transnational multilingual writing teachers, it is important for us to consider a more dynamic and nuanced lens to understand their hybrid complexities. Also, to other transnational multilingual writing teachers and scholars out there, I hope the stories in this project resonated with you, and I look forward to hearing yours one day.

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APPENDIX: INTERVIEW PROTOCOLS

Interview Phase 1: Life History

- Where did you grow up and what was your family and schooling situation like growing up?
- When and why did you move to the US?
- How would you describe your language background? How do you use your languages/language varieties where, when, and with whom?
- What motivated you to learn English? What does English represent where you grew up?
- What role has languages played in your personal, academic, and professional life?

Interview Phase 2: Key Teaching Events

- Can you share some memorable teaching moments and events related to your linguistic and cultural backgrounds?
- Can you share some teaching events related to your approach to language difference?
- How do you think your language and cultural background influences your values in teaching writing courses?
- Are there any aspects of your knowledge and experiences of the languages that you bring or don't bring to your teaching? Why?

Interview Phase 3: Teaching Artifacts

- How does your understanding and approach to linguistic diversity reflect on your daily teaching, assignments, and assessment? Can you show me some of the examples?
- Can you show me your syllabus or other materials you've created, and talk about the process and rationale behind their designs?