

**A Socio-cultural-historical Analysis of Six Korean Students'
Experiences in L2 Learning Contexts:
Learner Agency and Symbolic Power**

**제 2 언어 학습상황에 있는 한국 학생 여섯명의 경험에 대한
사회문화역사적 접근 분석
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ABSTRACT

This inquiry explores six Korean students' personal narratives about their living and learning experiences in their study abroad contexts. My goal is to examine the relationships between learner agency and symbolic power embedded in these six students' second language (L2) sociocultural contexts such as school, home and communities. The theoretical framework is derived primarily from Vygotskian sociocultural theory, Bakhtinian dialogic theory, and Bourdieuan critical approach to language practices. Drawing on an interpretive qualitative approach, I examine social, cultural, historical and political forces that influence the ways these students perceive, evaluate and negotiate their challenges and struggles in their social worlds. In a conventional approach to language studies, students are often seen as passive objects to be controlled by task instructions provided by classroom teachers. A growing number of L2 researchers challenge the artificial distinction between language learners and their social worlds. They emphasize that L2 learning should go far beyond mastery of vocabulary and syntax. However, over-simplified understanding of sociocultural influences on L2 practices can stereotype L2 students from the same cultural background assuming they share similar knowledge, beliefs and values. A reductionistic stance of culture has the danger of neglecting the complexity of L2 individuals' different voices and meaning-making processes. I argue that these L2 learners are far more complex than just 'ESL students' or 'non-native speakers'. I collected the participants' narratives for a six-month period primarily through open-ended interviews, including a variety of documentation such as samples of course work, personal notes, emails, and field notes. The analyses of the data suggests that although all six participants share certain

commonalities such as being Korean and being educated in a Korean national educational system, they are quite diverse in the challenges they experience and types of symbolic power they perceive, evaluate and negotiate in their different social worlds. While engaging in various L2 literacy practices, they were consciously crossing different social spaces, taking different positionings, and negotiating among multiple beliefs, values and meanings about social relations of power. Their agency to negotiate the complex social relations of power manifests in the ways they invest in achieving different forms of capital, such as ‘cheong’ relationships as social capital and searching for meaning in life as spiritual capital. The data implies that L2 students are complex yet active social agents. Thus, these students’ struggles in their L2 learning processes should be conceived as a complex process of exercising learner agency in their multiple social worlds, rather than be attributed only to cognitive capability or lack of motivation.

RÉSUMÉ

Cette enquête explore les récits des expériences de six étudiants coréens qui ont vécu et étudié au Canada dans le cadre d'études à l'étranger. Mon objectif est d'examiner les relations entre moyens d'apprentissage et pouvoir symbolique dans l'apprentissage d'une seconde langue par ces six étudiants dans leurs divers contextes socioculturels (école, maison, communauté). Le cadre théorique provient principalement de la théorie socioculturelle de Vygotsky, de la théorie dialogique de Bakhtin et de l'approche critique de Bourdieu à la pratique des langues. En me basant sur une approche qualitative interprétative, j'examine les forces sociales, culturelles, historiques et politiques qui influencent la manière dont les étudiants perçoivent, évaluent et relèvent les défis de l'apprentissage d'une seconde langue. Traditionnellement, la recherche sur les relations de pouvoir dans les sociétés humaines s'est concentrée sur les relations entre dominants et dominés. Je pense que cette perspective ne reflète ni la nature dynamique multidimensionnelle des relations de pouvoir dans les univers sociaux complexes des apprenants, ni les apprenants comme des agents actifs dans le processus de négociations. Ces étudiants d'une seconde langue sont bien plus que des 'étudiants ESL' ou des 'locuteurs étrangers'. J'ai collecté les récits des apprenants sur une période de six mois à l'aide principalement d'entrevues ouvertes, en y incorporant divers documents externes (exemples de cours, notes personnelles, courriels, notes de recherche). L'analyse des données suggère que, bien que partageant des points communs, comme d'être coréens et d'avoir été éduqué dans le système scolaire coréen, les apprenants sont très différents dans les défis qu'ils doivent relever et dans les types de relations de pouvoir auxquels ils font face dans leurs différents univers sociaux. Durant leur apprentissage, les apprenants

croisent consciemment différents univers sociaux, prennent différentes positions et jonglent avec de nombreux sens, croyances, valeurs sur les relations sociales de pouvoir. Leurs moyens pour traiter avec des relations sociales de pouvoir complexes se manifestent dans les manières qu'ils utilisent pour accumuler différentes formes de capital, tel que la relation 'cheong' comme capital social, et pour donner un sens à la vie comme capital spirituel. Les données impliquent que les étudiants d'une seconde langue sont des agents sociaux actifs complexes. Ainsi, les défis de ces étudiants durant leur apprentissage doivent être conçus comme des processus complexes d'application de moyens d'apprentissage dans de multiples univers sociaux, plutôt que d'être attribués seulement aux capacités cognitives ou à un manque de motivation.

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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

M.A. 하기가 이렇게 힘든줄 몰랐어요...
이건 누구 머리가 더 좋고 나쁘고, 누가
더 일찍 일어나서 도서관에 가고 하는
문제가 아닌것 같아요... 이건 자기
자신과의 싸움이에요. 종종
무너져버리는것 같은 느낌이 들고
그러면 그런기분에서 헤쳐나와야하고...
다른 사람들은 어떻게 하고 있는지
자세히 알수가 없으니까, 남들은 이런
절망감 없이 다 잘하고 있는것 같아요.
그런 생각이 내자신이 남보다 더 멍청한
것 같다는 기분을 들게하는것 같아요.
이렇게 좌절감을 느껴도 괜찮은거라는
생각이 들었으면 좋겠어요. (지영,
인터뷰, 2001 년 11 월 26)

Ji-Young: I didn't expect doing an M.A.
is so difficult like this... this is not about
whose brain is better or who is more
diligent, and what time you wake up and
how early you go to a library to study...
it's about "battling" with myself. I often
feel that I collapse, and then I have to
overcome that feeling... Since I cannot
know actually how other students do in
detail, to me, they look like they are
doing very well without going through
so much frustration. This makes me feel
that I am more stupid than others. I want
to feel it's okay to be frustrated. (Ji-
young, interview, November 26, 2001)

This excerpt emerged in an interview between me and one of the participants, Ji-young. I first met her when I just began to conduct interviews for my inquiry on understanding international students' experiences in their study abroad contexts. Through the interviews with her, I found we have had many similar experiences although she is younger than me by six years. Ji-young and I were born, grew up, and educated in Korea until we came to Canada to pursue our graduate degrees in a Canadian university in Ottawa. We both came from a middle class family background in Seoul, the capital city of Korea, and experienced great support from our parents for pursuing higher education. We have always been well-behaved, independent and hardworking students who achieve high marks, do not cause any trouble in school, and accordingly, have always been recognized by parents, teachers, and peers as "good and responsible" students.

Interestingly, I found that we have experienced similar struggles when we entered a Canadian university. This was the first time we saw a politically, economically and ideologically different side of Korea from what we were told to believe. Trying to understand and embrace that side of Korea, which conflicted with the world we were used to, was quite a challenge for us and caused us a lot of internal pain and confusion.

Coming to Canada and having experienced crossing “cultural borders”, we both realized that we could make sense of our confusions and frustrations. We became aware that multiple interpretations of our belief systems could exist. Not recognizing possibilities for other interpretations was a part of why we were confused and frustrated.

In our last interview, Ji-young said:

Maybe if I were in Korea, I wouldn't have gone through such a process of reflecting on my life and myself. Not because I came to Canada, but anywhere else, I would have experienced the same thing because of the fact that I was far away from my family and friends.
(Interview, April 30, 2002, translated from Korean)

I agree with Ji-young. Since I left my home and my family to come to Canada, I have had many opportunities to reflect on who I am, what I want to believe, and what I want to do in different sociocultural contexts of my learning and living. I think that learning and living in a language that is not a mother tongue is not an easy challenge at all. However, I believe that it is certainly worth investing our time and energy and experiencing constant confusions and frustrations. It is because, as Ji-young said, through crossing borders, we can be led to see, reflect, search and evaluate things we could not have otherwise, since such things are usually not explicitly told, discussed, and shared in our familiar homes, schools, and communities.

In this inquiry, I examine the experiences of six Korean students, including Ji-young, who are learning and living in Canada, as relative newcomers. I am particularly interested in looking into socio-cultural-historical influences on the ways they perceive, evaluate and negotiate the challenges and struggles they experience in their second language (L2) living and learning contexts. I believe that what Ji-young was going through as reflected in her comments, “battling with myself” and “feeling more stupid than others”, is not something we should attribute to her cognitive capability or personal problems. Her struggles as a newcomer are socially, culturally, politically, historically influenced by both her worlds in Korea and in Canada. Through sharing what other students experience and how they deal with their challenges, she deserves to hear that “It’s okay to feel frustrated.”

Background Context of the Inquiry

All participants including me as the researcher in this inquiry are from Korea; we were born, raised and educated there. We are of course very different in many ways as individuals, but do share some social, cultural, historical, and political contexts that are a part of our own lives in Korea. Therefore, in this section I provide general contextual information about Korea, the national education system, and English language education in Korea that I see relevant to understanding my participants’ experiences in their Canadian contexts. I then explain why I conducted a socio-cultural-historical analysis of the participants’ experiences. I describe the Canadian contextual information of the inquiry in Chapter 3.

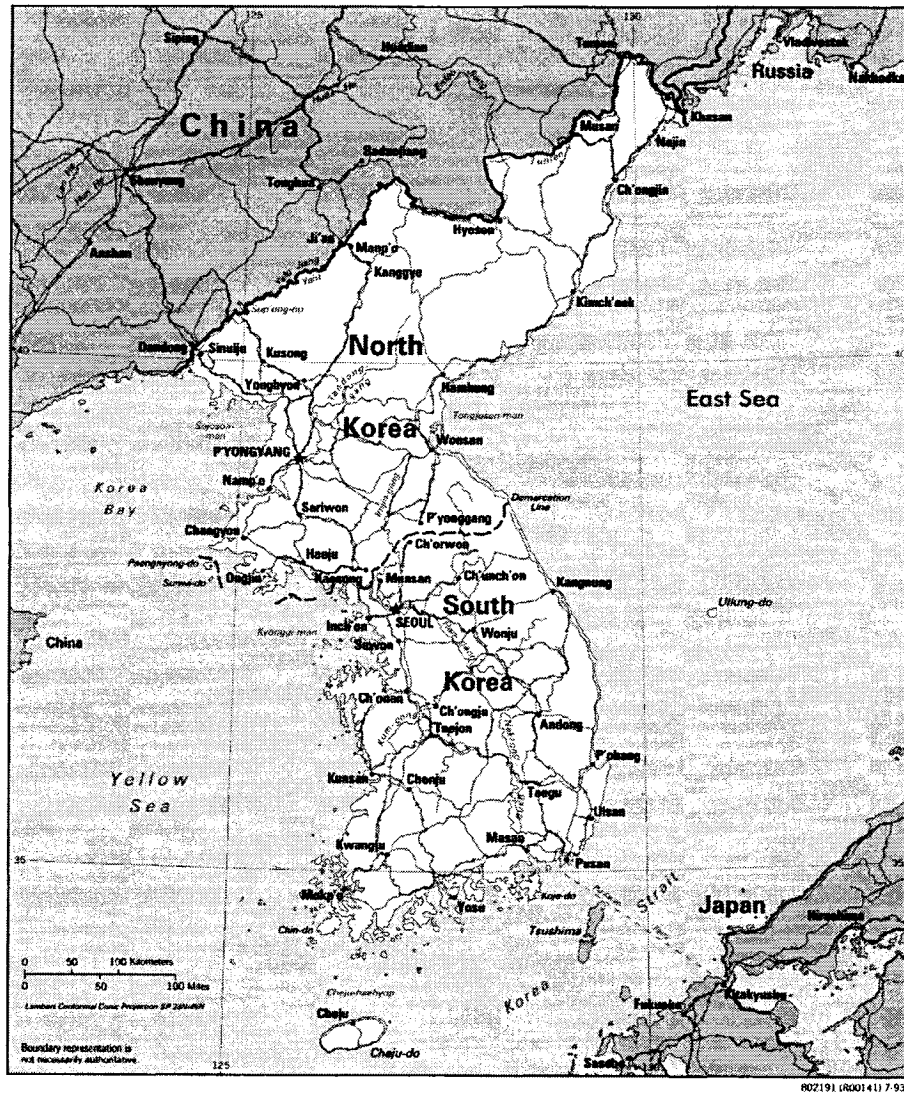
General Information about Korea

The Korean peninsula is approximately 300 km wide and extends 1000 km into the ocean. It is bordered on the North by China, and the West by the South China Sea, on the East and South by the Japan Sea. Korea's proximity to China has meant that Chinese culture spread to Korea and to Japan (See Figure 1). Historically strong cultural links with Buddhism and Confucianism were established within the three countries. Sharing distinct physical characteristics, Koreans are believed to be descendants of several Mongol tribes that migrated onto the Korean Peninsula from Central Asia. The oldest kingdom of Korea, called 'Gojoseon', dates back to 2333 B.C. In the seventh century, the various states of the peninsula were unified for the first time under the Silla Kingdom. Koreans are one ethnic family and speak the Korean language. Such homogeneity may have enabled Koreans to maintain a firm solidarity with one another.

At the end of World War II, the peninsula was divided into a northern zone occupied by Soviet forces and a southern zone occupied by U.S. forces. The boundary between the two zones was the 38th parallel. In 1953, at the end of the Korean War, a new border was fixed at the Demilitarized Zone (DMZ), cutting the peninsula in two halves. Two separate nations were established with very different political ideals. North Korea established itself as a Communist country aligned with the Soviet Union and China, whereas South Korea under the influence of the United States aligned its government with western nations. After the Korean War, South Korea under the leadership of various dictators went through a period of rapid industrialization and urbanization in the 1960s and 1970s. In Seoul, a city just 40 km from the DMZ has grown to 11 million inhabitants and forms the cultural, economic and governmental

Figure 1. Map of Korean peninsula

Korean Peninsula



center of South Korea. Past authoritarian military South Korean governments have constantly warned Koreans of an imminent North Korean invasion. Any dissent against official government policy was often brutally countered, and considered to be instigated by North Korean influences. Consequently, social reforms in the form of unionization of workers occurring in many western nations were outlawed and as a result of the constant

fear of an imminent invasion, fueled the Korean economy to grow at a very fast pace over several decades.

Due to the rapid modernization and industrialization of Korean society, traditional customs and mores have undergone a great deal of change. However, despite these changes, in my view, Korea is still very much a Confucian nation. Traditionally, the oldest male in a family was regarded as a source of supreme authority. No member of the family would question what was ordered or desired by him. Strict instructions were to be obeyed without protest. Reverence and respect for one's elders is a long-held social tradition in Korea. It would have been unthinkable for children or grandchildren to rebel or disagree with the wishes of their elders. Obedience was considered to be natural; in fact, complete obedience was viewed as one of the most important of all Confucian virtues. However, with power came responsibility since in Confucianist thought, a man must represent, support and protect his family.

The importance of hierarchy is still reflected in Korean speech, since the Korean language speaker changes words or verb endings based on whom the speaker is addressing. Thus, the Korean language has developed a complicated honorific system as part of the language that is to be appropriated according to various sociocultural factors, such as social status, age, and distance of relationship. For example, there are three different ways of saying “Good morning” in Korean to distinguish different ages and degrees of respect as well as closeness among the interlocutors:

잘 잤니? [chal-janni] : informal form

(Speaking to familiar younger persons or friends at the same age)

잘 잤어요? [chal-chasoyo]: informal and polite form

(Speaking to familiar older persons or unfamiliar persons who are at the same age or younger)

안녕히 주무셨어요? [annyunghi-chumushasoyo]: formal and honorific form

(Speaking to older person for whom you have to show respect)

In addition, Koreans do not refer to others by their given names except among very close friends. Even among siblings, the younger ones are not supposed to address their elders by given names but rather *eonni* or *muna*, meaning elder sister, or *oppa* or *hyung*, meaning older brother. Naturally for Koreans engaging in Korean discursive practices, it is very important to be aware of to whom they are speaking to.

The Education System in Korea

The school system of Korea. The current school system in Korea was established according to the education law of 1949 and consists of 4 levels: pre-school education (at kindergarten level), elementary education, secondary education (middle schools and high schools), and higher education (universities and colleges). There are four different types of secondary schools, namely academic, vocational, science, and special high schools. Most students in academic high schools prepare intensively for the university entrance exam. Vocational high schools provide vocational training in agriculture, technology, commerce, fishery and oceanography, industry and home economics. Science high schools focus on special training of students with talent in science. Those students who complete two years in a science high school can be admitted to the bachelor's program of the Korea Advanced Institute for Science and Technology (KAIST). KAIST was established under the Ministry of Science and Technology in Korea in 1971 in order to

train particularly gifted students in science and technology. In addition, there are special high schools focusing on specific disciplines such as foreign languages, music, arts, sports, and dance. Higher education consists of four years of university education and two years of college education.

Since the 1970s, there has been a dramatic quantitative growth in Korean education, particularly in the programs of higher education. Between 1971 and 1989, Korean higher education expanded from 136 schools and 179,489 students to 258 schools and 1,353,088 students (Lee, 2000). By the end of 1999, there were 354 college level schools and 3,154,245 students in Korea (Lee, 2000). According to some Korean education scholars (Chong, 1986; Kim, 2003; Lee, 1994), various factors can be examined regarding this rapid expansion in higher education with reference to cultural, socio-economic, and political influences. It should be noted that the Korean government has established such an educational system mainly with the financial support of parents, and thanks to the educational zeal of Koreans. In 1993, for example, there was a total of 279 post-secondary educational institutions formally registered; yet only a handful of the institutions were financially self-sustaining, and approximately eighty percent of their total cost was dependent on student tuition (Chong, 1986).

Sociocultural influences on the national education system. One of the most influential factors on the rapid growth in Korean education is the so called ‘national fever’ for education. The enthusiasm to search for learning is deeply rooted in Korean culture. It may be because Koreans have long been influenced by the Confucian culture of respecting learning through literary skills. Confucian education was focused on

intellectualism, a high regard for knowledge and literary skills, which formed a cultural climate for the admiration of academic intellectuals. Such traditions can be said to have formed a socio-cultural characteristic of Koreans' respect for education. During the Japanese occupation from 1910-1945, Koreans suffered from an oppressive policy, which completely restricted their education. Consequently, when freedom was given to obtain educational training after national liberation in August 1945, most Korean parents showed great enthusiasm by willingly accepting any financial burdens to send their children to school (Chong, 1986).

Another factor underlying the high degree of education fever may be the state examination system that was established in 958 (during the Koryo Dynasty) and sustained until the beginning of the Japanese occupation in the 1910s. Chong (1986), a previous minister of education in Korea, argues that this state exam system influenced Korean people a great deal. The test system was designed to recruit government officials, which, at that time, meant individual acquisition of power, fame and prosperity. Since there were no other ways for "ordinary" people to obtain fame and prosperity, everyone was interested in passing the examination. Eventually, this tradition of the examination system influenced Korean people's view of education as a means for social success, and passing the state exam has become the ambition of many Korean people. This socio-cultural view of passing the national exam as a way to obtain social "success" has continued until the present day with the Koreans' investment to excel in the national university entrance examination.

Political influences on the national education system. During the 1970s and 1980s, the Korean government placed its primary emphasis on the higher education system under slogans calling for ‘modernism’ and ‘industrialization’. Education was regarded primarily as a means of creating national capabilities for applying modern science and technology to the process of modernization and industrialization (Lee, 2000). In other words, education was regarded as the driving force behind the nation’s economic development and in line with the implementation of industrial and technological policies by the central government. For instance, South Korea has been often referred to as an example of an economic miracle. Prior to the financial crisis in November 1997, the GNP (growth national product) of South Korea had increased forty times from around US\$250 to over US\$10,000. Higher education was particularly emphasized under the term of “revitalization of the nation” (Lee, 1994, p.49), which was adopted by those authoritarian governments. The emphasis on higher education was for supplying trained manpower and anticipating the needs of industry during the process of national development.

The government-oriented restructuring of the educational system led to the regulation of school education. Public schooling in Korea has been operated by a strong national curriculum based on “equalization”, which requires every school to follow the same curriculum and the same teaching plan regardless of the difference in the level of achievement of students in the same grade. In the Korean education infrastructure, the Ministry of Education exercises the most power. It plans and coordinates national education policies, including elementary, secondary and higher education policies. It publishes and approves school textbooks, and provides administrative and financial

support for all levels of schools. In addition, it operates the teacher training system and is responsible for lifelong education and developing human resource policies.

This control has resulted in students experiencing the same pattern of schooling and learning under very strong and rigid supervision (Lee, 2002). I believe that the rigid curriculum controlled by the central government has critically influenced Korean teachers and students to take a single traditional approach to the teaching and learning of English without developing various ways that can individually be different and meaningful. Since the dictator does not allow dissension or diverse opinions and perspectives, the national educational system under the dictatorship requires a standardized approach. Therefore, in standardized educational systems in Korea, individually different values, interpretations, and approaches in learning have been discouraged.

Standardized exam oriented schooling. An article in one of the major daily newspapers in Korea reported that recently annually over 60,000 Korean students (middle school and high school levels) have been quitting their public schooling (Digital Chosunilbo: March 13, 2001). In the year 2000, for instance, 60,520 students left school, which means, about 166 students per day! According to the news report, most students expressed that the reason for quitting school was to resist the extreme standardized school system. In the students' view, school was almost like a factory that manufactures the same pattern of human beings under strong surveillance. It was reported that many students perceived that there are so many school rules that restrain almost everything they do, and teachers often punish them physically if they violate these rules. According to the article, many students perceive that there is no space where they can develop their

different personalities, capability and creativity, except for the fact that they do as they were told to do for the sake of a single goal: to pass the university entrance exam (Digital Chosunilbo: March 13, 2001).

As an example, I describe here the daily scholastic life routine of Korean students, drawing on my two nephews', Ho-jun and Wo-jun's, daily routine. Ho-jun is fifteen years old, in his first year of high school, and Wo-jun is thirteen years old, in his first year of middle school. Their day starts at 6:30 a.m. when their mother wakes them up. They eat breakfast quickly and are at school at 7:30 a.m. The school finishes at 4:30 p.m. They rush home to eat quickly and go to their next school called "hakwon (학원)". Hakwon means literally 'study place'. It is a private institute where students get extra instruction in the main subjects, such as English, mathematics, science and Korean, in order to prepare them for the university entrance exam. They work in hakwon from 6 p.m. to 10 p.m. Both boys have experienced this way of living since they were ten years old in order to prepare for the university entrance exam that is eight years away. In the case of Ho-jun, who is fifteen years old, he not only goes to hakwon, but also participates in a private study room immediately after hakwon until midnight or even later.

This grueling daily routine is also difficult for parents since they sacrifice a large portion of their salary for these hakwons to support their children. I want to emphasize that while this robs the children of their childhood from a Canadian perspective, this approach does seem to produce "some results." For example, in the recent OECD (Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development) study of the world state of education, South Korea came in second for problem solving, math and literacy of all the nations surveyed. This "success" does not come without pain. Parents who see this pain

often send their children abroad to live a more gentle educational life as reflected in one of the participant's statements. Kyung-ho explains:

여기에서 오래 살다보니까 캐나다에서
사는 좋은 점이 많이 보이기 시작했어요.
무엇보다도 제 자식들 교육을 위해서
여기에 사는게 좋을 것 같다는 생각이
들어요. 한국과 같지않게, 중학교,
고등학교때 많이 고생하지 않아도 되고,
그러니 더 창의적인 사고를 할 수 있게
되겠지요.
(경호, 인터뷰, 2001 년 11 월 20 일)

As I live here longer, I have started to
see many positive things about living in
Canada as well. Most of all, I can see it
would be good to live here for my
children's education. Unlike in Korea,
they wouldn't have to suffer so much in
middle school and high school, and they
would be able to think more creatively.
(Kyung-ho, interview, November 20,
2001)

I am also a product of the Korean educational system. I spent three years of my high school in exactly the same way as my young nephews spend their time. I spent more than 16 hours per day specifically for the goal of excelling in the university entrance exam, leaving me little time to ponder meaningful questions in life.

English Language Education in Korea

English as a compulsory subject. My experience of learning English, which began in middle school, which was mainly based on traditional approaches such as the 'Grammar Translation Method' and 'The Audio-Lingual Method'. The classroom is teacher-centered. The teacher's instruction is focused mainly on grammar rules, vocabulary, and translation. Dialogues are usually learned by imitating what is heard on an audio-tape, and through repetition and memorization. The teacher reads exercises in the textbook; students are expected to respond with a single answer as accurately and as rapidly as possible.

Nowadays, Korean students start to receive English education in grade three of elementary school. According to the new national curriculum designed during the period of 1992-1999, the Ministry of Education has strengthened the role of communication in school English education. However, English conversation remained neglected in most classrooms, mainly because once the students are older and attend middle and high school, they have to prepare for the high school and university entrance exams. Most Korean parents and students strongly believe that this university entrance exam is a critical deciding factor for whether or not they will be able to obtain a “good” job, meaning achieving social “success” (paid well as well as recognized as “intellectual”). The English test of the entrance exam is standardized and deals mostly with grammar and vocabulary. Therefore, the 12 to 18-year-old students all have to learn how to do well in multiple-choice English tests at school.

Furthermore, some Korean students also take additional private lessons outside of school to learn English through TOEFL (Test of English as a Foreign Language) or TOEIC (Test of English for International Communication), which are tested by the Educational Testing Service in the United States. This is because there are universities that have admission policies that grant extra credit for student candidates with good marks in internationally recognized English tests such as TOEFL and TOEIC. These policies have also influenced many Koreans to believe that achieving a high score in those standardized English tests will bring them entrance to universities and eventually become respected and well-paid professionals. Therefore, good scores on the standardized tests means they will become “successful” later in life.

Trend of study abroad. As the first government directly elected by the people came to power in 1995, and the strong dictatorship lost its power, many Koreans started to express their frustration toward the national education systems. In the past few years, some Korean daily newspapers have reported that an increasing number of Korean students have left their country to study abroad. A growing number of Korean students are expressing that they want to escape from their schools. According to a poll administered by the Korean Gallup with 806 students (consisting of students from grade 4 to 9) in 2001, one out of three students (34.6%) in public school (primary to middle school level) hope to go abroad to study (Digital Chosunilbo: May 3, 2001). According to the report on Chosunilbo, on May 3, 2001, the reason that a number of Korean students do not want to attend school in Korea but rather go to other countries to study appeared to be mostly based on their negative perceptions toward the school curriculum, which is geared only toward the university entrance exam.

Furthermore, due to the significance of English language skills in the current world, even after so much English education, starting from elementary school to college, many Korean students are still unable to carry out a simple conversation in English. As a result, tens of thousands of Korean students go abroad to learn English during school vacation (Chosun-ilbo, June 9, 2000).

In fact, my own reason for coming to Canada was partially to improve my English skills. I obtained my B.A. in English language education in a Korean university, and became an English teacher in a Korean high school upon graduation. In spite of having studied English for ten years (from middle school until the undergraduate level), I still found my knowledge of English was not sufficient for teaching the language. I also

wanted to enhance my knowledge of English teaching methodology. I was fully aware of the limitation of the teacher-centered grammar translation method that most English teachers in Korea have implemented, but I did not know any better methods. Therefore, I decided to go to Canada and left my position as an English teacher in a Korean high school in order to pursue a graduate degree in language teaching methodology.

Locating the Inquiry Theoretically

In this section, I locate my inquiry within various theoretical discussions about how we understand human language practices in sociocultural worlds. I first explain why I believe that a socio-cultural-historical approach is appropriate for analyzing the Korean students' challenges and struggles in their L2 learning and living contexts.

Rationale for Socio-cultural-historical Understanding of Struggles

I explained earlier the social, cultural, historical contexts in which Korean students study English so intensely in order to pass the national exam and to achieve the power of knowledge of English in future job markets. This typical way of studying English, such as rigidly following the school curriculum focused on memorization of grammar and vocabulary without exploring personal meanings, is strongly socially, culturally, economically, and politically influenced. However, many Korean students do not seem to be aware of these influences on their reasons and their approaches to studying English. Rather, they tend to implement or subconsciously apply the same approach in their new learning context even when they have chosen to go abroad to

escape from the previous limited method of learning English. For example, in the following two interview excerpts from two participants in my inquiry, Seong-jin and Sun-young talked about how they studied English when they went abroad.

I read the book [Hong, J.W.'s autobiography] when I was in high school. He was staying in the school dormitory, and he was usually up until two or three AM in order to study. He said he sometimes memorized more than 100 English words one day. I was so impressed. So, I tried to do like him. In high school, I tried to memorize 100 English words everyday, and actually I did! It wasn't so difficult. I had a watch right in front of me on the desk, and I checked constantly whether I was getting one word per three second. One word per three second! . . . [In the book] he said when he was introduced to the class on the first day of the new school [in the United States], his classmates laughed at him because of his English pronunciation. Then, he decided to study English very hard and thought that the only way to master English is to recite. Thereafter, he studied every night very hard. For about nine months after, he became able to speak and write in long sentences. He could laugh while watching a comedy on TV . . . [He was at the age that] he was supposed to enter high school in Korea . . . I still have the book in my room in Korea. I am still trying to study like him. (Seong-jin, Interview, March 7, 2002, translated from Korean)

From the second semester of Grade 10, I was in New Zealand. In those days I had been trying to sit in front of a desk and study all the time. Originally I always loved doing a variety of activities outside. However, since I read Hong J.W.'s [autobiography] 'Chilmak Chiljang', I took what he said [in the book] very seriously, and I decided to study very hard like him. The part I remember so well is when he just started his new school in the States. He felt so frustrated by the fact that he could not speak English very well. So, he decided to study day and night, even studying in the washroom of the school dormitory since the washroom was the only place where light was on at night on the entire campus. I felt bad about myself thinking that, "I am staying in the house with enough light, and nevertheless... [How come I don't study as hard as he does]" . . . he would get cold sweat as he heard a clock was ticking due to the pressure he had on improving his English as early as possible... so then, I tried to study until midnight, too, and if I heard the sound of clock ticking, I would be like "Oh, gee, what shall I do, what shall I do?"... I think I was too preoccupied/ influenced by the book." (Sun-young, Interview, March 8, 2002, translated from Korean)

Seong-jin and Sun-young actually do not know each other at all. In fact, I conducted the two interviews on different days and in different places. However, ironically, they both talked to me about the book called ‘Chil-mak Chil-jang’, an autobiography of a Korean man who went to study in the United States. Both participants recalled Hong’s book as one of the most influential books about how they should study, especially, how to improve their English skills. They both expressed that they were sympathetic towards Hong J.W.’s frustration about not being able to speak English well, and were very impressed by the fact that he studied extremely hard every day until midnight or even later. As shown in the previous excerpts, they both have tried to imitate Hong J.W.’s learning style, as described in the book, in order to improve their English skills when they went abroad.

After the interviews with the two students, I searched for Hong’s book on Korean websites to learn as much as I could about this text. I learned that more than a million copies of the book had been printed in Korea. In this book, Hong described the frustrations and challenges he experienced when he went to the United States at the age of fifteen. He illustrated how rigorously he studied in order to overcome the barrier of language, and how he was finally able to enter Harvard University and become one of the top graduates. This “success” story has influenced a large number of students who were interested in going abroad to study or improving their English skills in Korea, as the cases of Seong-jin and Sun-young show. According to newspaper articles and readers’ reviews that appeared in Korean websites, Hong’s “success” story in a study abroad context has often been referred to by many Koreans as an admirable example of how to achieve and pursue success in life. In particular, his description regarding the strategy he devised to

improve his English vocabulary through memorizing over one hundred words every day, often reappeared in the reviews and blogs of his autobiography on Korean websites.

From Seong-jin and Sun-young's perceptions, I see that they do not include socio-cultural understanding of the L2 learning process. They seem to believe that the simplistic application of a particular "good" learning strategy will work for every individual. Seong-jin and Sun-young also seem to think that the reason Hong was able to acquire good English skills was because he studied so intensively. Therefore, they felt that in order for them to be as "successful" as Hong, they should apply his strategy to their English learning contexts, such as sitting at a desk without engaging in other social activities. I do not intend to criticize the Korean students' naïveté in their understanding of L2 learning processes. In fact, I used to implement a similar approach for my own English learning as well as teaching my students. I remember sitting at a desk for many hours staring at books entitled 'English vocabulary 20,000' or 'Vocabulary 30,000'. Employing this 'brute-force' method seemed the only and most efficient way to achieve what I wanted to achieve.

However, I now realize from my own experiences that learning and living in English in a foreign country requires much more than just sitting at a desk to memorize what I have to study. As Ji-young mentioned in her earlier comments, it is not only about how much I am motivated to study and how many hours I dedicate my time to sit and study in a library. It is about "battling with myself". But, why then do I "battle with myself"? In the traditional classroom I have been exposed to, if I did not perform well in my learning process, I would often blame myself, believing that it is my own problem probably related to my cognitive ability or perhaps even my personality. However, whom

am I battling with if I am battling with myself? I believe that the reason I “battle with myself” is because there are many ‘I’s that are constantly influenced by the complexity of social, cultural, political forces. These forces were never taught, discussed, or shared in my home, school, and communities in Korea. Peirce (1993) argues:

The learning of a second language is not simply a skill that is acquired with hard work and dedication... it is complex social practice that engages the social identities of language learners in ways that have received little attention in the field of second language acquisition. (p.201)

As I reflect on this quote, I am assured that L2 students’ challenges, frustrations, and ways of negotiating complex social practices in their learning experiences need to be openly and formally shared. I believe that there are many students who may go through similar experiences and need to be reassured that “it’s okay to be frustrated”.

Socio-cultural-historical Approach to Language Practices

The socio-cultural-historical understanding of human experiences in language practice is influenced by a number of scholars in various disciplines, such as philosophy (e.g. Foucault, 1980; Taylor, 1989, 1994), anthropology (e.g. Geertz, 1973), psychology (e.g. Bruner, 1990; Vygotsky, 1978, 1986), sociology (e.g. Bourdieu, 1986, 1990, 1991) as well as in literary studies (e.g. Bakhtin, 1981). Some fields of study more directly concerning language and language learning from a socio-cultural-historical view have emerged, such as socio-linguistics (e.g. Gee, 1991; Halliday, 1978), multiple literacy study (e.g. Barton & Hamilton, 1998; Gee, 1991, 2005; Street, 1984, 1994), bi/multilingualism (e.g. Cummins, 1996; Maguire, 1994, 1997, 2005). These scholars all agree that language use means a social action that is constituted as a social practice with

values and meanings in particular social contexts. They have extended the scope of their research contexts beyond classrooms, and focused on a deeper understanding of the social contexts to which the participants of their studies lived and were located.

In this inquiry, I use the term ‘second language (L2) learners’ not only to refer to learners who study abroad to acquire a second language. I also use this term to refer to the students who study other subject matter in a language that is not their mother tongue or their first language. Thus, the students are abroad to study the target language itself or other subject areas in academic disciplines. Therefore, whether they are university students or students in language classrooms, learning the target language is a crucial part of their overall learning processes in L2. In this sense, I include theoretical discussions from not only second language acquisition (SLA) but also from L2 literacy, bilingualism and multilingualism, since what my Korean participants do in their L2 literacy practices seems to be closely interconnected to how they perform in their L2. I view any social contexts they are exposed to abroad as contexts of their L2 practices.

Traditionally, literacy has been defined as an ability to read and write written texts. It has been regarded as an important basic skill for children to acquire in order to receive a formal education, which is a requirement to be able to function as a member of most societies. Recently, however, an increasing number of new literacy theorists (e.g. Barton & Hamilton, 1998; Gee, 1991; Heath, 1983; Street, 1995) question the conventional notion of literacy as a set of skills that can be simply taught by a teacher in a classroom, and ignores the social nature of language. I find the insights from the NLS (New Literary Studies) and theorists who call themselves the New London Group useful for understanding the social contexts of L2 learning process since their emphasis is on

studying literacy in and out-of-school contexts. In addition, the analysis of the NLS often focuses on revealing the interrelations between the meanings of local events to individual members of communities and broader cultural and political institutions exercising power over those individuals (Hull & Schultz, 2001).

An important implication of the new literacy studies is the shift away from the traditional account of literacy skills as an individual attribute to a view of literacy as a social practice intertwined with a number of factors such as political and economic conditions, social structures, and individual ideologies (Gee 1991). It is crucial for language learners to know particular discourse practices in order to acquire the target language, since they play an important role in the learner's literacy practices. Gee points out that a certain type of discourse can be used as an invisible "theory" to control people's minds regarding the normal and appropriate ways of thinking and behaving in particular social settings. According to Street (1994), debates over the meanings of literacy are not only academic issues but are linked to the idea of empowerment. He argues that defining literacy with reference to a "standard" language brings out the concept of 'illiteracy', which has a negative connotation that refers to "a problem as a lack in a certain individual" (p.17). He claims that there is no such thing as a language "standard" and the notion of "dominant" literacies should be adopted instead of "standard." Certain dialects or registers have been assumed to be "standard" and the only proper dialect. The point is to develop awareness of what is involved, of how language works, and of the social and political factors that underlie 'standard' or dominant forms.

Barton and Hamilton (1998) stress that literacy needs to be understood locally and historically, rather than focused on what is universal about literacy practices. It is

important to explore uses and meanings of literacy in everyday life and the ways in which these are changing. School literacy is focused on as an object of study and is explicitly talked about and taught in classroom activities. At home, literacy is experienced in many different activities. It is often incidental to the main purpose of the activity, which may be shopping, paying the bills or finding out local news. Implications from observations about how people use literacy in everyday life is to understand how those people make sense of their social worlds. People use literacy when they confront problems with various social institutions, such as health care, education, housing and government bureaucracy and so on. To interact with these institutions and to have access to the knowledge they control, people engage in literacy activities (Barton & Hamilton, 1998).

Critical language study also emphasizes the examination of the processes of how language conventions and language practices are associated with social relations of power and ideological processes of which people are often unaware. The goal of a critical language study is to provide a resource for developing an awareness of particularly those who are dominated through language use. One of the fundamental assumptions of human language is that language use, which is defined as 'discourse', shapes and is shaped by society. In other words, the use of language is socially determined, and it varies according to different social situations in which it is embedded (Fairclough, 1995). Critical language theorists explain how powerful social forces and groups dominate any type of social organization such as institutions. They claim that language education should focus on critical awareness of ideological processes in discourse, so that people can become more aware of their own practices, and be more critical of the ideologically invested discourses to which "they are subjected (Fairclough, 1989, p.90)." I agree with

the view that existing institutional conventions are the outcome of power relations and power struggle that exists *implicitly* in the conventions constructed by the dominant group often as “common-sense assumptions (p.2)”.

Literacy theorist, Paulo Freire, is another influential scholar for researchers who examine sociocultural influences of institutional power on the context of literacy practices. According to Freire (1970), literacy can empower people only when it renders them active questioners of the structured social reality surrounding them. Freire states:

No literacy is politically neutral, including the institutionally based literacy of church, state, business, and school that continues to undergo the hegemonic process in Western society... literacy always comes with a perspective on interpretation that is ultimately political. (p.38)

My own literacy practices that I participated in during my elementary schooling in Korea can be a good example of how literacy should be understood in its social, cultural, and political contexts.

Narrative vignette: My literacy practices in elementary school
When I was ten years old in elementary school, there was a huge nation-wide social campaign sponsored by the government, one of the military regimes in 1980s, what they called, “Social Purification Campaign.” My school was selected as one of the researched schools for implementing a new school curriculum before it was actually legislated and applied to the other schools in the country. I was told that it was an honor for the school to be selected for the research purpose. In fact, even the national broadcasting company often visited my school to videotape our classroom activities for their news program. I remember that the committee members of the student organization including myself met in school with some teachers after the regular class to discuss what kinds of specific activities the students could do for that nation-wide campaign. The activities that came out of the discussion were like keeping clean around your self at school and in the house, and not being lazy with reporting “bad” people to the police in order to get rid of “the social harm,” such as thieves, robbers,

alcoholics, and street people around you and your neighborhood. The more specific literacy practices for the school kids were to hold the competition of composition or poster painting on the themes relevant to this campaign. As one of the leaders of the student committee of my elementary school, I actively participated in the meetings and competitions, and several times won the prizes for one of the best compositions and posters. I was very proud of myself at those times until I learned the new truth when I entered university. I heard that the government at that time was a coup d'état government, and under the same name of the campaign that I participated in, "Social Purification Campaign," the military regime killed hundreds of people who were against them and sent a large number of homeless people away from the city to a concentration camp in a remote area.

In the case of my literacy practices in elementary school, the institution (government) had the power to dictate what the students should do and in fact think, in order to pacify the public for government actions. I now recognize this, and understand how powerful government propaganda can be, and how it can even infiltrate the classroom. As Street (1994) notes, literacy is not simply a technical and neutral skill but is "imbued with relations of power and ideology and with deep cultural meanings about identity both personal and collective" (p.20).

Socio-cultural-historical Understanding of the L2 Learner

A prime focus in sociocultural research is to understand the relationships between the agent and mediational means in particular social contexts. In a conventional approach to language studies, subjects are often seen as objects to be controlled by task instructions provided by classroom teachers (Roebuck, 2000). For instance, there has been a tendency among SLA researchers (e.g. Canale & Swain, 1980; Long, 1990; VanPatten, 1995) to treat the mental processes of language acquisition as divorced from the social and cultural aspects. Therefore, the socio-cultural aspects of learning a language are considered to be

less important for theoretical explanation of language acquisition (Davis, 1995).

However, a growing number of L2 researchers (e.g. Lantolf, 2000; Maguire, 1987, 1994, 1999; McKay & Wong, 1996; Peirce, 1995; Pennycook, 1990, 2001) are challenging the artificial dichotomous distinctions between language learners and their social worlds. They emphasize that L2 learning should go far beyond mastery of vocabulary and syntax and recognize that L2 phenomena are “deeply rooted in situated, circumstantial, and interactional experiences of the individual as a social being” (Firth & Wagner, 1998, p.92).

However, over-simplified understanding of socio-cultural influences on the L2 literacy practices has often brought about stereotyping of L2 students from the same cultural background, treating them as if they share similar knowledge, beliefs, morals and values. For instance, Kubota (1999) argues that contrastive rhetoric theorists tend to construct “Otherness” in representing cultural characteristics of Asian students by saying that Asian students are intellectually interdependent, inclined to preserve knowledge rather than create new knowledge, and they are good at memorization rather than analytical and original thinking. A reductionistic stance and a static view of culture in understanding socio-cultural aspects of L2 phenomena, such as grouping and categorizing L2 students based on their cultural origin, have the danger of neglecting the complexity of L2 individuals’ different voices and meaning-making processes. For the last decade, increasing research done in the area of SLA (e.g. Kramsch, 1995; Peirce, 1995; McKay & Wong, 1996; Pavlenko & Lantolf, 2000) focuses on the relations between language learning and social identities to understand the relationship between human agency and sociocultural environments to which L2 learners are exposed and live

in. The implication of this research indicates that language learners are far more complex than just 'students' or 'non-native speakers'.

Participants in sociocultural studies are viewed as individual agents who act upon their social worlds and engage in activities, constructing their environments in unique ways. In Bruner's notion, agency is the "conduct of action under the sway of intentional states" (p.9), which implies an "action directed toward goals controlled by agents" (Bruner, 1990, p.77). Van Langenhove (1995) also states that "one of the big differences between physical entities and human beings is that the behaviour of people has a meaning for the people themselves and is mainly intentional" (p.23). Individuals are active agents "seeking order and meaning in social contexts where his or her uniquely personal experiences are challenged to continue developing" (Mahoney, 1996a, p.5).

When viewed as active social agents, learners make choices among various communication tools for meaningful distinctions based on their beliefs and values. Therefore, one person may engage in a particular literacy practice in a different way from another embedded in the same social and cultural context (Ivanič, 1998). Through a multidimensional model for a bilingual writer's identity, Maguire and Graves (2001) illustrate bilingual children's own discourse choices and the way they position themselves as agents in their social worlds. The young individuals in their study show distinct personalities, different presentational styles and their own perceptions of what is significant, and what can be negotiated in different social situations. Conducting a case study of two Korean siblings newly immigrated to Canada, I (Lee, 2002) observe that the two siblings develop completely different approaches to their English literacy practices. While sharing the same family, economic and cultural background, the two children in

the study have different beliefs, values and goals in their daily lives. Accordingly, the siblings show different orientations in using their linguistic and social skills in their various L2 environments. These studies urge the need of deeper understanding about the relationships between language learners and their social worlds, particularly with regard to their agency, voice and evaluative orientations.

The concept of learners' social identities is important in understanding the processes of L2 learners' agency in appropriating cultural knowledge. Identities are a key means for understanding the ways people care about what goes on around them. Therefore, identities become the essential bases from which people create new activities, new worlds and new ways of being (Holland, Lachicotte, Skinner & Cain, 1998). Bahktinian dialogic theory offers a deeper insight into who the learners are as agents and how they are influenced by social relations of power in their L2 literacy practices. This is relevant for understanding why Ji-young was "battling with herself". Bakhtin (1981) notes that social individuals' understandings of words and their usage are shaped by and developed through interactions with others. Therefore, individuals have multiple identities as a consequence both of participating in a variety of culturally shaped literacy events and as a consequence of employing a variety of culturally shaped practices in those events (Ivanič, 1998). Language learners' lives involve having multiple identities, which are socially constructed based on social relations of power that influence the learners' positioning themselves to various social roles in different social contexts. In their two-year qualitative study of adolescent Chinese-immigrant students, McKay and Wong (1996) discuss the students' multiple identities in multiple discourses, in terms of their roles as ESL students, children of their parents, peers, while they are learning a new

language. According to their findings, the students position themselves or are positioned in power relations of discourses, and resist such positioning or attempt repositioning. That is, their negotiations with their multiple social identities are dynamic and sometimes contradictory, which ultimately influence the range of their actions in the process of learning a target language.

Once exposed to particular ways of representing themselves in various social and cultural contexts, L2 learners come to the point where they have to negotiate and decide, through the process of 'strong evaluation' (Taylor, 1985), whether or not they decide to position themselves in a particular style of representing themselves. This process of decision-making involves the appropriation of social identities that are socially, culturally, historically, and politically influenced. Understanding language learning processes with reference to social relations of power has gained growing attention in the area of social views of language research. Pierre Bourdieu, one of the contemporary social theorists, has greatly influenced the current trend in the area of critical approach to language research. Recognizing the importance of the roles of language in social theories, Bourdieu (1986, 1990, 1991) identifies principles and categories of social phenomenon mediated by various symbolic artifacts (including language) with regard to power relations in the human world. He describes power in terms of the forms of capital people have access to, use and produce in different cultural fields; that is, individuals can occupy positions determined by the quantities of different types of capital they possess.

Peirce (1993) discusses the roles of power relations in social interactions between language learners and target language speakers. She argues that the:

[O]pportunities language learners have for practicing the target language are structured by social relations of power within both formal and natural sites of language learning and that such relations can produce or deny different language learning opportunities, notwithstanding the desires of second language learners. (p.4)

In other words, such social relations of power can facilitate, or constrain opportunities of language learning and practice, regardless of the desires and motivations of second language learners. However, when power is exercised implicitly through the cultural norms and beliefs shared by the members of particular social contexts, L2 students who are not familiar with that cultural knowledge may experience confusion and frustration about their literacy practices.

Locating Myself in Understanding Power Struggles and Learner Agency

My theoretical perspectives in this inquiry are derived primarily from Vygotskian sociocultural theory, Bakhtinian dialogic theory, and Bourdieuan critical approach to language practice. My goal is to understand the challenges and struggles experienced by six Korean students' in various L2 learning and living contexts. I will focus particularly on the relationships between learner agency and symbolic power. I believe the major insights from the three scholars can complement one another for my understanding of learner agency from a social, cultural and critical perspective. I regard the six students' "agency" as higher human mental function that is mediated by various sources of symbolic power embedded in their sociocultural worlds. This may be similar to Vygotsky's concept of 'self-regulatory mechanism'. SLA theorists refer to 'metacognitive skills' as human functions that include planning, monitoring, selecting,

problem solving, voluntary/ selective attention, logical memory, and evaluation.

According to Holland, Lachicotte, Skinner and Cain (1998), human agency:

[H]appens daily and mundanely, and it deserves our attention. Humans' capacity for self-objectification – and, through objectification, for self-direction – plays into both their domination by social relations of power and their possibilities for (partial) liberation from these forces. (p.5)

Therefore, focusing on learning agency occurs in everyday lives is crucial for understanding the relations between the participants' challenges and struggles and their L2 sociocultural worlds.

However, critical language theorists have not examined in detail how learners exercise their agency and can, therefore, resist certain subject positions and set up “counter-discourses” (Pennycook, 2001). Although Peirce (1995) implies in her study that her participant Eva, by adopting her Italian language skills, was able to demonstrate her agency, she did not further investigate how and why Eva was able to exercise her agency in particular situations. In order to bring attention to the processes of learner agency, I view the six Korean students in their L2 literacy contexts as “persons-acting-with-mediational-tools”. When I use the term *activities*, I refer to the six students' L2 *literacy practices*. Taking a position as a social constructivist, I believe that the mediational means appropriated by the students in their L2 literacy practices are inherently associated with social, cultural and historical forces embedded in their multiple social spaces. From Bourdieu's perspective, ‘social space’ refers to a field of forces where various types of power relations are imposed on the six students. As social agents, the students exercise agency in their interactions with various forms of symbolic power embedded in L2 literacy practices. They take actions or react to external stimuli from

their social spaces by positioning themselves in various ways according to different social conditions. I take the epistemological position that power appears in specific occasions of mediated actions and is created in the network of many localized instances. Thus, power relations are analyzable in terms of dialectical contradictions in activity systems and manifesting in specific tools-in-use that people appropriate for certain purposes. The notion of using diverse mediational means rather than only 'words' implies that social relations of power can be mediated not only by language, but also by other symbolic artifacts that are either concrete or abstract, such as clothes, drawings, and music. Thus, the participants' literacy practices take place in their L2 social environments that are inevitably influenced by social relations of power.

From a Bakhtinian perspective, the six Korean students have multiple senses of who they are in their L2 contexts. In order to understand their multiple identities, I use the term *possibilities for positioning*, instead of only social identities. 'Social identities' refer to individuals' explicit social roles as the result of their affiliations to particular beliefs and possibilities, such as being a daughter, a wife, a student, and an immigrant. *Possibilities for positioning* embraces the dynamic and multiple possibilities of other identities of individuals that might not have legitimate, official, or explicit social roles and status. For example, some ways of identifying oneself could be to position oneself as a good listener, a debater, a socially passive individual, striving to be a good person, and perceiving oneself to be a minority. These positionings do not have legitimate social titles or status. However, these positionings may also play important roles in shaping individuals and influence how individuals interact with their social environments. These

positionings may be a part of the power struggles for dominance in the students' decision making processes.

Peirce (1995) proposes the concept of 'investment' rather than 'motivation' in order to refer to the desire of language students to learn the target language. The concept of 'investment' captures "the complex relationship between power, identity, and language learning"(p.17). Drawing on her notion of 'investment', I view the six Korean students as "investors" who strive to speculate all the socio-cultural-political factors in their investment in order to maximize the total capital they can obtain from their investment. They constantly seek to evaluate their investment in their L2 learning process and adjust their learning approaches to maximize the outcome of their investment. In order to understand the relations between learner agency and the social relations of power, I focus on the processes of individuals' decision-making and evaluative orientations toward different sources of capital that exercises different forms of symbolic power. The learners' attention, interests, values, or feelings are intimately related to socially and culturally constructed sources of power that Bourdieu referred to as various forms of symbolic capital. Through analyzing the participants' actions and reactions to external environments in relation to symbolic capital, I may gain some insight into my research questions presented in the next section.

Research Questions

My goal is to understand from a socio-cultural-historical view how the six Korean students perceive, evaluate and negotiate challenges and struggles in their study and residency abroad contexts. My initial research questions that I presented in my proposal for ethical acceptability written before data collection were the following:

- 1) What types of power relations do L2 students perceive that they experience in their L2 literacy practices in different social contexts?
- 2) How do the students explain how they deal with power relations in approaching L2 literacy practices?
- 3) How are their views related to political, social, economic forces that they have experienced?

However, the research act is a recursive process. Thus, my questions changed during the process of collection and interpretation of data. From an epistemological perspective, I believe that engaging in qualitative inquiry is an intensively iterative and recursive process that is not linear. As I listened to and analyzed the participants' narratives about their experiences, I noticed a strong sense of their agency and different positionings of who they perceived they are in their L2 living and learning contexts. Therefore, I decided to focus on understanding the relationships between learner agency and various types of symbolic power that influence agency including the roles of the participants' different perceptions about themselves in the ways they exercise their agency.

The revised research questions of the inquiry are as follows:

What types of challenges and struggles do six students perceive they experience? How do they perceive themselves differently in their various L2 contexts of school, home and communities? How do they exercise their agency in those different contexts and what types of symbolic power that may have influenced agency?

Structure of the Thesis

This thesis is divided into six chapters. In this first chapter, I introduce the background context of the inquiry, particularly socio-cultural-historical information of the Korean national education system. I also explain the rationale and research questions of this inquiry as well as principal theoretical concepts I intend to draw on as a conceptual frame. In Chapter 2, I provide a critical discussion of the theoretical framework I used. I present some of the relevant concepts of three theorists, Vygotsky, Bakhtin and Bourdieu, who greatly influenced the way I understand and interpreted the participants' experiences from a socio-cultural-historical perspective. In Chapter 3, I reflect on my personal background and various roles I played while I conducted interviews with the participants. I explain my epistemological and methodological principles that guide the way I collected and interpreted the data of this inquiry. In Chapter 4, I introduce the six participants' personal narratives about their L2 living and learning experiences. I focus on their strong voices as active agents in their social worlds and describe what kinds of challenges they experience and how they deal with those challenges. In Chapter 5, I provide a critical and interpretive discussion of themes that emerged from the six narratives based on the theoretical framework presented in Chapter

2. In Chapter 6, I propose some implications of this inquiry for researchers, policy makers, teachers and second language students by positioning myself in those positions.

CHAPTER 2

CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK OF THE INQUIRY

There is neither a first nor a last word and there are no limits to the dialogic context (it extends into the boundless past and the boundless future). Even past meanings, that is, those born in the dialogue of the past centuries, can never be stable (finalized, ended once and for all) - they will always change (be renewed) in the process of subsequent, future development of the dialogue. At any moment in the development of the dialogue there are immense, boundless masses of forgotten contextual meanings, but at certain moments of the dialogue's subsequent development along the way they are recalled and invigorated in renewed form (in a next context). Nothing is absolutely dead: every meaning will have its homecoming festival. The problem of great time. (Bakhtin, 1986, p.170)

In this chapter, I establish the conceptual framework of my inquiry of six Korean students' experiences in their second language (L2) learning contexts from a socio-cultural-historical perspective. I draw on three relevant theoretical perspectives, Vygotskian sociocultural theory, Bakhtin's dialogic theory, and Bourdieu's critical approach to language practices. Sociocultural theory is appropriate for understanding how sociocultural processes influence the development of human mental functions. Bakhtin's dialogic theory is valuable to understand learners in the contexts of language use and complex social relations. Critical approaches to language practices enhance my understanding of the influences of various social, cultural, and institutional power relations on L2 students' learning experiences.

Sociocultural Understanding of Human Development

Vygotskian Understanding of Higher Cognitive Process

The fundamental basis of sociocultural theory originated from Vygotsky's criticism of traditional psychology (e.g. the Behaviourist or Neo-Behaviourist psychology) that focused on observable human behaviours at a very elementary level without explaining higher mental functioning of human beings. Traditional perspectives of human mental function are often criticized (e.g. Beer & Maguire, 2001) because they use as a paradigm the scientific methods that have eventually lead to prediction, reductionism, and the formulation of universal laws that govern other causal human relationships. From a behaviorist perspective, human beings are perceived as controllable and passive, material objects, and governed by verbal and physical stimuli. Therefore, the role of language and language use in human cognition is neglected or reduced to mere behavioral reaction (Roebuck, 2000). However, Vygotsky draws attention to the sociogenesis of human development by explaining the relations between the nature of human cognition and the cultural and historical development of human society. He perceives that human development is socially and culturally rooted; therefore, social, cultural and historical conditions primarily influence the opportunities for the individual's experiences, and continuously change them over time. He considers the socio-cultural-historical settings as influencing factors in the development of higher mental functions of human beings.

Viewing human development as socially, culturally and historically rooted, Vygotsky believes that the analysis of human mental phenomena should be based on social activities that are culturally mediated by tools such as symbols, signs, and

languages. Language is socially constructed rather than solely internal and intrinsic. Vygotsky is particularly interested in human thinking processes mediated by language, since he believes that human mental capacities, thinking and speaking, are tightly interrelated in a dialectic unity (Vygotsky, 1978). Vygotsky observes that just as the independent analysis of oxygen and hydrogen cannot explain water's capacity to extinguish fire, the dialectic unity of thinking and speaking can not be independently dissected in order to understand human mental capacities. Vygotsky (1978) proposes 'words' as a *unit of analysis* that preserves the dialectic unity of thought and speech, since he believed that meaning is the central component of thought and it is united with linguistic form in the word. Meaning emerges from the particular ways people deploy words in mediating their mental activities (e.g. sensory, perceptual, executive, memory, cognitive, and affective actions; consciousness, personality, memory, thinking, conception, etc.). Vygotsky's concept of words as *a unit of analysis* for understanding human mental functioning have been further elaborated by his colleagues, students, and followers, such as A.N. Leontiev (1978), Luria (1976), and Wertsch (1991, 1998), who have developed Neo Vygotskian theory, which is known as 'activity theory.'

Neo-Vygotskian Understanding of Human Mind and Action

Activity theory is based on Vygotsky's epistemological assumption that human behavior results from the integration of socially and culturally constructed forms of mediation into human activity. Vygotsky's colleague, Leontiev (1978) perceives that Vygotsky's idea about word meaning as the unit of analysis for the study of human mind is too vague for capturing the concrete activity of people in their worlds. He moves away

from a notion of meaning and takes *action as the unit* for analyzing human mental processes, including emotion. In his activity theory, Leontiev refers to activity as doing something that is motivated either by a biological need (e.g. hunger) or a culturally constructed need (e.g. learning). Motive is only realized when there is a specific goal directed action, intentional and meaningful, and is carried out under particular spatial and temporal conditions (Lantolf, 2000). For instance, I seek food when I am hungry. In this case, hunger is a motive for me to take on action to seek food. However, people who are on a hunger-strike do not seek food since hunger does not motivate them to eat. In this way, an activity comprises three levels - the level of motivation, action, and its conditions which motivate the activity (Lantolf, 2000).

Activity theory is useful for explaining how the same task can be interpreted differently by different individuals, and thus, become different activities with different goals and different mediational strategies. A task is a set of research objectives, constrained by several practice considerations. An activity, meanwhile, comprises the behaviour that is actually produced when an individual performs a task. For instance, the task assigned by a teacher has its own set of objectives. However, the students can also have their own objectives, all of which are negotiated during the course of the interactions (Coughlan and Duff, 1994). In other words, the same task can be carried on in different activities by different students, depending on how the group members negotiate and accomplish the goal of the activity. For instance, I observed that Sang-eun and Kyung-ho, two participants in this inquiry, expressed different perceptions about the task they were assigned as their research assistantship in their graduate programs. The task was to take care of a reading room in their departments. Sang-eun interpreted the

meaning of the task as a sign that the department did not want to assign her what she perceived as a more intellectual task due to the lack of her French skills. On the other hand, Kyung-ho showed a positive perception since he interpreted the task as a way to make money for his living.

Cole & Engeström's (1993) version of New Vygotskian theory has been introduced in *the activity system* as a basic unit of analysis of human behaviors of individuals and groups. The premise of an activity system is that human cognition is *distributed* over individuals as a result of the reciprocal interaction among individual, environment, and cultural artifacts. The basic constituents of the activity system are subject, object, and medium. Through the concept map of activity systems, Cole and Engeström (1993) present a way of thinking about the collective nature of human activities. They argue that development and growth of individuals' cognition should not be isolated events; rather the changes entail a reciprocal process. Therefore, other people should be taken into account simultaneously in order to fully understand an individual's cognitive functioning.

According to Cole and Engestrom (1993), an activity system is ongoing, goal-directed, historically conditioned, dialectically structured, tool-mediated human interaction. Activity systems are mutually and historically constructed by participants in the systems, using certain tools, such as speech sounds. The activity system as a basic unit for analyzing groups' or individuals' behaviors allows us to examine how cultural tools mediate the motive and the object of human behaviors and changes in it (Russell, 1997). A newcomer in a certain activity system may appropriate some tools and some ways with words for learning, then carry them back to a familiar activity system.

Closer analysis of apparently unchanging activity systems reveals that transitions and reorganizations are constantly going on within and between activity systems as a fundamental part of the dynamics of human cognition. (Cole & Engeström, 1993, p.8)

These dialectical changes that occur through the appropriation of tools across boundaries are accompanied by conflicts and resistance before the appropriation is established. Also, the dialectical appropriation of tools across boundaries can even change the whole motive of a system. That is, activity systems are not static. They are dynamic and constantly re-created through micro-level interactions *over a few seconds or many centuries*. In this regard, activity theory is called a “cultural-historical theory” (Russell, 1997, p.512).

Wertsch (1995), a scholar who further developed Vygotskian theory in the Western world, views that Vygotsky’s concept of semiotic mediation (using ‘words’ as the unit of analysis of the human mind) is difficult to perceive [as] a mediated process. Instead, he suggests that one way to deal concretely with questions of socio-cultural-historical origin of the mental processes is to focus on the mediational means involved, which carry with them histories of which they were a part. In his view, what is available in individuals’ ‘tool-kits’ depends on their sociohistorical and cultural situations. Wertsch (1991) proposes ‘tool-mediated goal-directed action’ as a unit of analysis, which preserves the dialectic unity of the elements, such as thinking and speaking. Tools in this sense are material, symbolic or cultural artifacts such as language, which mediate individuals’ interactions with their social-cultural environments. Wertsch’s notion of a ‘tool kit’ is useful for examining the diversity of mediational means in human actions. He says:

A tool kit approach allows group and contextual differences in mediated action to be understood in terms of the array of mediational means to

which people have access and the patterns of choice they manifest in selecting a particular means for a particular occasion. (p.94)

Discussing the concept of cultural tools in mediated actions in more detail, Cole (1996) argues that the usual notion of cultural artifact “associated only with material objects seems distant from the study of human behavior and knowledge” (p.117). Rather, cultural artifacts can be seen as ways individuals represent themselves in various sociocultural contexts. He describes three levels of artifacts: primary artifacts are axes, clubs, needles, writing instruments, telecommunication networks, mythical cultural personages; secondary artifacts include preserving and transmitting modes of action and belief, such as recipes, traditional beliefs, norms, constitutions; and tertiary artifacts include play or game. Cultural artifacts have developmental histories by virtue of the activities of which they were previously a part of and mediate in the present. Artifacts assume both an obvious material aspect and an ideal (conceptual) aspect.

A principal focus in sociocultural research is to understand the relationships between an agent and mediational means in particular social contexts.

An appreciation of how mediational means or cultural tools are involved in action forces one to live in the middle. In particular, it forces us to go beyond the individual agent when trying to understand the *forces* that shape human action. (Wertsch, 1998, p.24)

Such forces may appear in specific occasions of mediated action and be created in the network of many localized instances, which are analyzable in terms of dialectical contradictions in activity systems (Russell, 1997). For example, the next quote from my interview with Seong-jin reflects the dialectical conflicts in Seong-jin’s actions when he

tried to appropriate an academic writing style in order to complete an assignment from his writing class.

I like writing based on my instinct feeling. I don't like writing based on logic with putting references. There is always a fixed structure... one day, I tried to write an essay in the Freewriting style. I was of course able to quickly write one and a half pages. But even to me it did not look coherent at all. I tried to write it again a few days later, but couldn't write and gave up. After that, I did not go to the class and studied in the library by myself instead. (Seong-jin, interview, February 15, 2002)

Seong-jin's resistance and "not going to the class and studying in the library instead" might have been dialectically influenced by his two different mediated actions. One action is to try to write appropriating the academic essay style he learned in his writing class. The other action he took was to write an essay appropriating his freewriting style. Since he could not complete the writing assignment from either of the mediated actions he took, he became very frustrated, and this may have influenced his decision not wanting to go to the class.

Vygotskian sociocultural theory pays special attention to human higher mental function and social contexts in human development processes. The notion of mediational means is particularly appropriate for understanding agency (Wertsch, 1991). It informs my understanding of how the participants' agency occurs in their L2 learning environments. A main premise of sociocultural theory is that the participants' actions are mediated by various means that are either material or conceptual. Therefore, I need to consider what kinds of mediational means appear in the participants' interactions with their L2 sociocultural environments. This examination includes the learners' actions

outside the schools in order to understand the processes of their higher mental functions, that is, their learning agency.

However, Vygotskian sociocultural theory does not discuss in detail the influences of the social forms and constraints to the process of human development (Holland, Lachicotte, Skinner & Cain, 1998). Russian literacy theorist Bakhtin offers a dialogic theory to understand the nature of humans as social beings and their use of language. Bakhtinian dialogism is helpful for me to understand how human individuals interact with their sociocultural environments and how socio-cultural-historical forces influence the individuals themselves.

The Learner as Social Being in Language Use

In order to understand how learners develop higher mental functioning in the socio-cultural-historical environments of their learning, it is crucial to be aware of the nature of human beings in such environments. That is, it is important to find a way to explain how human beings interact with various social, cultural, political, and historical factors that influence their learning practices. Here I turn to Bakhtinian dialogism, which has provided a powerful insight into the social nature of human language and language use and its influence on the nature of learners and their social worlds. Bakhtin's theory is also useful for understanding why other people need to be simultaneously included with an individual's consciousness within an activity system.

Bakhtinian Dialogism

Mikhail Bakhtin, a critical literary theorist, describes his philosophy of language through his concept of dialogism. Two key terms in understanding Bakhtin's (1981) dialogic theory are discourse and voice. He observes that human language is stratified into social and ideological language groups, and particular characters of each language group are factors in stratifying a language. In Bakhtin's term, discourse means "the subdivisions determined by social and ideological differences within a single language" (Bakhtin, 1981, p.427). The notion of discourse implies that certain language groups require certain types of formal devices of speech for representing words. In other words, discourse is an individual word and a way of using words. Bakhtin (1981) notes that in order to understand the real meaning of the words of others, it is essential to keep the discourse in which the speech is embedded linked to the contexts of the speech, or the situations the participants are engaged in.

And the entire speaking situation is very important: who is present during it, with what expression or mimicry is it uttered, with what shades of intonation? During everyday verbal transmission of another's words, the entire complex of discourse as well as the personality of the speaker may be expressed and even played with. This representation is always subordinated to the tasks of practical, engaged transmission and is wholly determined by these tasks. (Bakhtin, 1981, p.341)

Voice refers to the speaking consciousness of individuals, which can be understood only in their specific sociohistorical and cultural situations in which a particular discourses are embedded. Voice is the speaking personality recognized, heard, or valued in an utterance or text in a particular context. Therefore, the voice of a speaker or a writer is determined by the sociocultural features of a particular context such as social relationships and ideologies. From a Bakhtinian perspective, voice appears in a

spoken or written utterance within a social milieu that reflects a particular way of viewing the world.

Bakhtinian ‘multivoicedness’ refers to the simultaneous existence of different individual voices as well as the simultaneous existence of an individual voice and the voices of a group. Individuals’ understandings of words and uses of the words are shaped by and developed through interactions with others. The moment of appropriation comes when one’s own accent and own semantic and expressive intentions are involved in the process of language use. Bakhtin (1981) states:

As a living, socio-ideological concrete thing, as heteroglot opinion, language, for the individual consciousness, lies on the borderline between oneself and the other. The word in language is half someone else’s.’ It becomes "one's own" only when the speaker populates it with his own intention, his own accent, when he appropriates the word, adapting it to his own semantic and expressive intention. (p. 293)

Human language is not a neutral tool that “passes freely and easily into the private property of the speaker’s intentions” (Bakhtin, 1981, p.294). In the process of appropriation of others’ words, some of the words can be strongly resisted, remain alien and sound foreign. The social relationships between one and the other(s) are deeply involved in one’s conscious decision in choosing a language, facing contradictions or resistance. In other words, the process of an individual’s appropriation of mediational means is intimately related to the different social relations among different voices in particular contexts.

Bakhtin’s (1981) distinction between ‘authoritative discourse’ and ‘internally persuasive discourse’ is useful for understanding how individuals are “ideologically becoming” (p.342) and experiencing power struggles among the different voices inside

themselves. An 'authoritative discourse' is an official language coming from outside our consciousness. It implies the use of religious, political, and moral appropriation of words including the words of parents, leaders, and teachers. On the other hand, 'internally persuasive discourse' is an unofficial language coming from within our consciousness. It is assimilated forms of both official and unofficial language, as Bakhtin describes as "half-ours and half-someone else's" (p.345). According to Bakhtin, one discourse can sometimes be unified with the other, which leads to the simultaneous presence of the two voices and to heteroglossia. Authoritative discourses are often chosen by the members of each particular discourse community because of their hierarchical authority and apparent power (Bakhtin, 1981). However, there is also a frequent gap between authoritative discourse and internally persuasive discourse. When an individual starts to think independently, "the process of distinguishing between one's own and another's discourse, between one's own and another's thought" (p.345) begins.

This noticing process often develops along with a rejection of, and struggle with others' discourses stimulated by one's own internal persuasive discourse. Such a state of conflict originates from the gap between the authoritative words and internally persuasive words seems inevitable particularly in the process of university students' learning how to write in academic disciplines. Bakhtin (1981) noted that hegemony in the case of scientific thought works somewhat differently from other contexts because students have to deal with another's discourse in the implementation and presentation of their scientific ideas. University students who start intensive reading for their major and developing critical thinking are explicitly or implicitly taught to be aware of judgments and expectations of critics in their fields. For example, students in mainstream program of

EAP (English for Academic Purposes) are often instructed with a typical format of an argumentative essay using a particular organization structure of an essay (e.g. having a thesis statement in each paragraph, supporting one's argument using references). They may struggle with the processes of appropriating the authoritative discourse as they interpret another's words and communicate their own words to others.

Social Construction of Identity in Language Practices

Gee (1991), a sociolinguist and a literacy theorist, also states from a Bakhtinian perspective that any language is stratified into many different social languages and different individuals carry different whos (who they are) and whats (what they are doing) through using different social languages. Gee (1991) uses the term 'discourse' to emphasize language-in-its-social-context, recognizing the role of language in the processes of socialization. He explains that discourse refers to particular ways of specific groups of people's behaving, interacting, valuing, thinking, believing, speaking, reading and writing that are accepted as instantiations of particular roles by the members of particular groups. Human beings create and act out different 'type of people' including multiple types of selves for themselves, by putting words, deeds and values in different specific times and places (Ivanič, 1998). When the term, 'discourse' is used as a count noun, it means "a culturally recognized way of representing a particular aspect of reality from a particular ideological perspective. In this sense, taking the plural form of the term, *discourses* imply ways and forms of human life which integrate words, acts, values, beliefs, attitudes, and social identities, as well as gestures, glances, body positions, and clothes (Gee, 1991). Discourses are a sort of "identity kit" (Gee, 1991, p.127) with

appropriate customs and instructions on how to act, talk, and write for the members of particular cultural groups.

Appropriation of a particular discourse pattern is an expression of personal and social identities. In an interactive practice, individuals come with different social histories, with identifying markers or attributes such as gender, social class, race, religion, and geographical region, and other markers of social and professional groups obtained through the participation in their communities (Hall, 1995). In terms of the use of language, individuals can have multiple identities as a consequence both of participating in a variety of culturally shaped literacy events, and employing a variety of culturally shaped practices in those events (Ivanič, 1998). Individuals' actions, words, or thoughts at certain times are often an internal compromise among several different voices and discourses. Identity is constantly changing and negotiated across time and space (Ivanič, 1998).

Ivanič introduces three ways of talking about writer identity namely a writer's autobiographical self, a writer's discorsal self, and the self as author. All of which are influencing socially available possibilities for self-hood/ subject positions. Although the primary data of Ivanič's analysis is the written texts of eight student writers, I find her insight into the construction of writer identity potentially useful in that my participants may participate in various types of writing tasks as a part of their larger L2 literacy practices. 'Autobiographical self' is shaped by individuals' prior experiences in social contexts, and changes as their life-history develops. It is related to a writer's sense of their roots, of where they are coming from, and their own ways of representing experiences in their life, which influence their current way of being. 'Discorsal self'

refers to the tendency that writers consciously or unconsciously bring themselves into a particular written text. It is constructed through “the discourse characteristics of a text, which relate to values, beliefs and power relations in the social context in which they were written (p.25).” The concept of ‘self as author’ is about the ways writers present their voices as authors in terms of their position, opinions, and beliefs.

When student writers are engaged in constructing different and multiple identities, they may experience some conflicts derived from the power relationships among the identities. Bartholomae (1985) observes that in speaking with authority, student writers have to speak not only in another’s voice but also through another’s language code. They also have to speak in the voice and through the codes of those who have power. They frequently have to do this before they are experienced in using an authoritative discourse. For instance, Ivanič (1998) writes about a student who wrote a course paper using a particular authoritative discourse. The student expressed mixed feelings including sincerity and self-deception, as she took on different discursive identities influenced by her different readers and different contexts. Ivanič attributes this ambivalence of the students to the fact that as an unskilled writer, she struggled in challenging the conventions of the academic discourse and presenting herself as she wanted to appear.

Regardless of a teacher’s explicit instruction about cultural knowledge of a target language, some students may choose not to appropriate that cultural knowledge because it conflicts with their identities that are originally influenced by their home culture. Writing is a site of struggle in which writers are negotiating their identities. In particular, the autobiographical self that writers bring with them to their act of writing must have a crucial impact on students’ becoming academic writers. Second language (L2) students

who are new to their L2 social and cultural contexts may not share the meaning in a particular discourse community. Thus, they may experience conflicts and frustrations in their academic writing. Some might accommodate themselves rather easily to the conventions and expectations in a particular academic discourse community. Others might not be willing to compromise how they position themselves in order to become a member of the authoritative discourse communities. To understand this phenomenon of writer alignment, it is important, as Ivanič notes, to examine students' personal life histories and prior experiences as well as their current interactions with their social environments.

The concept of social construction of identity of individuals in their various sociocultural environments raises critical questions about and challenges to an assumption that has prevailed long in the area of SLA (second language acquisition). A dominant understanding about individual learners in SLA research has been that every person has an essential, unique, fixed and coherent attribute such as introvert/ extrovert and motivated/ unmotivated (Peirce, 1993). For the last decade, there have been an increasing number of researchers in SLA (e.g. Maguire & Graves, 2001; McKay & Wong, 1996; Peirce, 1995) who argue that the language learner's identity is diverse, contradictory, dynamic and changing over time and social space as the individual takes on different "subject positions" influenced by various social relations of power. From a post-structuralist view, Weedon (1987) discusses social identity through the notion of 'subjectivity'. 'Subjectivity' refers to "the conscious and unconscious thoughts and emotions of the individual, her sense of herself and her ways of understanding her relation to the world" (p.32). Weedon explains three characteristics of subjectivity. The

subject has a multiple nature. Subjectivity is a site of struggle and subjectivity changes over time. Taking a poststructuralist approach to second language learning processes, Peirce (1995) views the second language learner as having a “complex social identity that must be understood with reference to large and frequently inequitable social structures which are reproduced in day-to-day social interactions” (p.13).

The lives of individuals in L2 contexts involve a wide array of social and cultural roles and identities as students, as gendered and cultured individuals, as immigrants, as native speakers or nonnative speakers, as individuals with political convictions, and as members of families, organizations, and societies at large. The multiple identities and roles are socially and culturally constructed based on various social relations of power that influence the learners’ positioning themselves in different social contexts (Peirce, 1995). This seems to imply that the sources of symbolic power that learners value the most make them go forward in their learning processes. L2 students may favor specific coping strategies; these strategies also appear to be related to the overall picture of learner's identities (McKay & Wong, 1996).

The theory of ‘dialogical self’ from the area of Narrative Psychology enhances my understanding about the dynamics of the relationships among multiple identities of an individual. Drawing on Bakhtinian dialogism, Hurbert Hermans, a scholar in Narrative Psychology, explains the dynamic processes of conflict and struggle within an individual’s mind. According to Hermans (2001), the dialogical self:

The “I” has the possibility to move from one spatial position to another in accordance with changes in situation and time. The “I” fluctuates among different and even opposed positions, and has the capacity imaginatively to endow each position with a voice so that dialogical relations between positions can be established... As different voices, these characters

exchange information about their respective “Me”s, resulting in a complex, narratively structured self. (p.248)

Different voices produce different valuation systems from their specific perspectives. These different voices may exchange information and so influence one another in a dialogical fashion within one’s self. The dialogical self combines temporal and spatial characteristics (Bruner, 1996). The dialogical self constantly moves across time and space.

Understanding the Social and Cultural Minds of Koreans

As explained earlier in Chapter 1, Korean discursive practices are explicitly influenced by various social factors of particular discursive contexts. Koreans express their awareness of different social relations through their language practices, such as using different verb endings according to age and distance of relationship. In other words, they are trained in explicit ways to be a ‘dialogical self’, that is, ‘self-in-relations’ (Ho et al, 2001). Therefore, it is very much that the Koreans’ mind is strongly socially and culturally constructed and accordingly, influences perceptions and behaviours of many Korean individuals in their social worlds. In this section, I provide some insights discussed in Korean Social Psychology that may help in understanding some of the six Korean students’ perceptions and behaviours in their L2 contexts.

According to Sang-chin Choi, a renowned social psychologist in Korea, the key term for understanding cultural psychology of Korean people is ‘cheong’ (Choi, 2000). ‘Cheong’ is an affectional mind state operating in both inter-individual and intra-individual levels. ‘Cheong’ is inherently dialogical. Korean people develop ‘cheong’

relationships when they sense the caring mind of the other(s) toward oneself. The concept of Korean “we-ness” is necessary for understanding ‘cheong’. The primary goal for Koreans in the development of close interpersonal relationships is often to consolidate into “we-ness” relationships with other individuals and build strong ‘cheong’ together. Family relationships are good examples of the “we-ness” relationships through building ‘cheong’. Once a “we-ness” relationship is established between or among individuals, they become like family members. They regard one another like family members. An ideal “we-ness” relationship usually accompanies unlimited care, mutual dependency, unconditional, and self-sacrificing help. The currency in these relationships is not simply material goods or calculated give-and-take interactions. Between the individuals consolidated with ‘cheong’, it is a sign of a close relationship when the members would be able to implicitly know what the other thinks and needs without explicitly asking the other person. In other words, it is implicitly understood that they can understand each other without explicit explanation. In addition, the “we-ness” relationship can be established even at the first encounter between individuals if they find out that they are from the same home-town, or same school. They then become “friends” very quickly (Choi, 2000).

Choi and Han (2000) note that the “we-ness” relationship without ‘cheong’ refers merely to being collective. Therefore, Korean “we-ness” should be understood as a relational phenomenon. Koreans’ decision-making factors are often relational not rational. In fact, once the ‘we-ness’ relationship is established, the individuals share a great deal psychologically as well as materially. For instance, family members and close relatives are expected to take a responsibility when one goes financially bankrupt. The law of the

responsibility of personal bankruptcy was introduced only very recently. In this regard, it is appropriate to refer to Koreans as relationalists rather than collectivists. Characterizing Korean culture as collectivists in contrast with Western individualists does not embrace the crucial property of dialogical self in Koreans' mind. This 'choeng' psychology in relation to "we-ness" appears in everyday conversations among Koreans. Koreans usually say 'we-us-our' instead of 'I-me-my': our country, our home, our father, our husband, our wife, and so on. (Choi & Han, 2000). In fact, as a Korean I am used to this type of Korean discursive practice. When I first came to Canada and spent time with Canadian friends, I found it very difficult to appropriate the word, 'my', in my conversations with people I perceived as "close friends". I remember that if I heard too often the word, 'my' instead of 'our', in my Canadian interlocutors' language, I used to feel no 'cheong' from them and perceive them as those I would not ask to do any favour for me when I would need it.

Language and Symbolic Power

Bakhtinian dialogism and the concept of social construction of identity are useful for observing how my participants interact with their various sociocultural environments. L2 learners may position themselves differently according to different social-cultural-historical factors involved in particular contexts in which the language is practiced. Bakhtin (1981) implies that one of the crucial factors that influence individuals' different positioning are social relations of power. In other words, social relations of power work as mediational means in the individuals' interactions with their social worlds. Therefore, to understand this mediational process it is imperative to understand power relations the

participants may encounter in their various discursive practices. In this section, I introduce Pierre Bourdieu's understanding of language and symbolic power and his concepts of 'capital', 'investment' and 'habitus', which offer important insights for understanding the relations of learner agency and symbolic power.

Forms of Capital

Pierre Bourdieu, a contemporary social theorist, has greatly influenced the current trend in the area of critical approaches to language research. Recognizing the importance of the roles of language in social theories, Bourdieu (1986, 1990, 1991) identifies principles and categories of social phenomenon mediated by various symbolic artifacts (including language) with regard to power relations in the human world. He describes power in terms of different kinds of 'capital' that are available and realized by individuals as they engage in productive work in different cultural fields. Bourdieu (1986) defines capital as "accumulated labor which, when appropriated on a private basis by agents or groups of agents, enables them to appropriate *social energy* in the form of reified or living labor"(p.241). The four kinds of capital that he distinguishes are economic, cultural, social and symbolic capital. Economic capital such as stocks, shares, and property is material wealth in the form of money or anything directly convertible into money. It has monetary power to gain other forms of capital, such as money for tuition to obtain educational qualification. The 'interconvertability of capital' is a required aspect of all forms of capital. Cultural capital such as educational qualifications, knowledge, skills, and other cultural acquisitions, is institutionalized, including access to training credentials or certificates, cultural artifacts and objects of value. For example, in Korea,

high English language scores on a recognized standard test such as TOEFL, is a form of acquired cultural capital. On the other hand, social capital is made up of social obligations and may be institutionalized in the form of a title of nobility, such as access to particular institutional facilities, social relations and cultures. It refers to sociocultural connections and group membership, and access to those group members or those institutions (families, social connections in business, classes, schools, academic communities, etc.) through participation in rituals of symbolic and economic exchange. For example, the student who scores high on the TOEFL test may acquire social capital by immediately being admitted to a prestigious university. This example highlights Bourdieu's important concept of the interconvertability of the various forms of capital. Symbolic capital is socially recognized power that has been legitimized and is closely related to cultural and symbolic forms of capital. This symbolic power is embodied in discourse as well as postures, clothes, and gestures. All forms of capital are acknowledged as having legitimacy and value within a particular field such as prestige or honour and recognized credit.

Bourdieu (1991) argues that social agents are defined by their relative positions in social space. Within this space, there is a field of forces where a set of power relations is imposed on all the agents. In other words, it is the space in which symbolic power influences the agents' activities. Bourdieu notes that symbolic power is a power that can be exercised only if it is recognized. Power creates the "belief in the legitimacy of words and of those who utter them" (p.170). Therefore, legitimation of capital is the key to power. If capital is not recognized as legitimate, it holds little power. Symbolic power is defined in and through a given relation between those who exercise power and those who

submit to it. In this way, all forms of capital can mediate the exercise of symbolic power through recognition of it in a particular social space.

Bourdieu's notion of space implies a relational understanding of the social world. Social individuals and groups occupy relative positions in a space of relations. Bourdieu (1998) describes a field of forces as a multi-dimensional space of positions. Agents are positioned according to the overall volume of the capital they possess in the first dimension, and the relative weight of the different kinds of capital they possess in the second dimension. In this regard, there are two distinct systems of social hierarchization in modern societies. The first is economic, in which position and power are determined by money and property, the capital one commands. The second system is cultural or symbolic. In this system, one's status is determined by how much cultural or "symbolic capital" one possesses. From a Bourdieuan perspective, culture is also a source of domination, in which intellectuals are in the key role as specialists of cultural production and creators of symbolic power. In the third dimension, social agents are positioned according to the evolution in time of the volume and compositions of their capital, that is, according to their trajectories in space (Bourdieu, 1987).

Bourdieu's concept and understanding of capital helps me to view symbolic power as a multi-dimensional entity. Power can be described in terms of different forms of capital people have access to, use and produce in different cultural fields; that is, individuals can occupy positions determined by the quantities of different types of capital they possess (Bourdieu, 1998). Some forms of capital have a higher exchange value than others in a particular social context. The different valuation of different forms of capital

suggests that in the context of language learning language learners recognize different degrees of power from different types of symbolic capital available in their social spaces.

Concept of Investment

Different valuations of capital can be applied to the investment strategies of L2 learners in their learning contexts. When learners invest in learning a second language, they may do so with the understanding that they will acquire a wider range of symbolic and material resources (language, education, friendship, etc.; capital goods, real estate, money, etc.), which will in turn increase the value of their cultural capital in the social contexts to which they belong. Pennycook (2001) points out that ‘capital’ is not simply something one has but “something that has different values in different contexts, mediated by the relations of power and knowledge in different social fields” (p.123).

Peirce (1995) appropriates the concept of ‘investment’ instead of ‘motivation’ to refer to the desire that language students have for learning their target languages. Conventional notions of learner motivation (e.g. Gardner & Lambert, 1972; Gardner, 1985) imply that the degree of learners’ aptitude and attitude is directly related to success in language learning. In particular, attitude can be understood with reference to different types of motivation, such as instrumental motivation and integrative motivation. Instrumental motivation refers to the desire to achieve an external goal, such as getting and keeping a job, career success, or greater salary. Integrative motivation involves the desire to communicate with or assimilate with a new community. On the other hand, through the concept of ‘investment’, Peirce challenges the traditional concept of

motivation, and stresses the importance of embracing the complex relationship of power, identity and language learning in the area of L2 research. Peirce (1995) argues that:

When language learners speak, they are not only exchanging information with target language speakers, but they are constantly organizing and reorganizing a sense of who they are and how they relate to the social world. Thus, an investment in the target language is also an investment in a learner's own social identity, an identity which is constantly changing across time and space. (p.18)

All human actions take place within social spaces, which are sites for the struggle of resources. In their social spaces, individuals, institutions, and other agents try to distinguish themselves from others, and acquire capital that is useful or valuable for them (Bourdieu, 1998). Peirce (1995) claims “[the] return on investment must be seen as commensurate with the effort expended on learning the second language” (p.17). In this sense, the acquisition of capital of every kind can be seen as a struggle within a social space. An understanding of motivation should therefore be mediated by understanding of learners’ investments in the target language that are closely connected to the “ongoing production of a language learner’s social identity (p.20).” McKay & Wong (1996) mention that adult ESL (English as a second language) learners’ investment can be selective in practicing language skills. They have different values in the four language skills in terms of how their identities are positioned and how well the different skills help meet their social and academic goals and demands. Within different social spaces, multiple identities of a social agent constantly engage in the conservation and transformation of the “exchange rate” between different kinds of capital (Bourdieu, 1998).

Concept of Habitus

Through the concept of 'habitus', Bourdieu explains certain human perceptions and behaviours of which people are only tacitly aware. Bourdieu (1991) refers to habitus as:

A set of dispositions which incline agents to act and react in certain ways. The disposition generate practices, perceptions and attitudes which are 'regular' without being consciously governed by any kind of 'rule'... the dispositions are generative and transposable in the sense that they are capable of generating a multiplicity of practices and perceptions in fields other than those in which they were originally acquired. (p.13)

Habitus works as system of acquired dispositions functioning on a practical level, as categories of perception, assessment, or principles. According to Bourdieu, people in society acquire the dispositions that constitute their habitus through a gradual process of inculcation throughout their lives, such as upbringing and education. Through the routine of training and learning, social individuals acquire a set of dispositions that almost become second nature. Thus, habitus is a necessary condition of action and shared understanding. Similarities and differences that characterize particular social conditions are reflected in the habitus, and this is why there may be commonality among individuals from similar cultural backgrounds or even different backgrounds (Bourdieu, 1991).

Bourdieu (1991) warns against theories that "treat practice as a mechanical reaction, directly determined by the antecedent conditions" (p.73). Cole (1996) interprets the notion of habitus as the universalizing mediation that influences individual agents' practices. The mediation occurs without explicit reasons or intention; it occurs to the agent's mind as "sensible" and "reasonable" (p.79). One of the important implications of the concept of habitus in my inquiry is that this concept works as organizing principle of

human actions. This means that habitus can mediate particular actions or reactions in the participants' L2 practices. In fact, researchers in L2 composition (e.g. Connor, 1996; Gentil, 2003; Grabe & Kaplan, 1996; Hinkel, 1999) have observed that L2 learners' cultural values in learning languages influence their specific strategies and attitudes in the processes of their L2 learning. My Korean participants' particular L2 living and learning practices may be influenced by their Korean habitus, such as 'cheong' psychology and "we-ness" relationship.

Summary

In order to understand the relationships between learner agency and symbolic power in the six students' social worlds, I draw my theoretical perspectives primarily from Vygotskian sociocultural theory, Bakhtinian dialogic theory, and Bourdieuan critical approach to language practice. These scholars can complement one another in understanding learner agency from social, cultural and critical perspectives.

Vygotskian sociocultural theory provides an overall structure of sociocultural processes of human higher mental function, such as perception, evaluation and selection. The elements that consist of the structure are agents, environments, mediational means and actions. Bakhtinian dialogic theory offers insight into human thinking in language use in different social contexts. His concept of multivoicedness may provide an answer to one of my questions: "Why are we battling with ourselves?" It is important to be aware that the multiple identities of a social agent are shaped by and developed through interactions with others. Bourdieuan notions of 'forms of capital' and 'investment' are

useful for analyzing the influences of social, cultural and institutional power on human language practices.

In the next chapter, I describe how socio-cultural-historical theory of human mind also connects to the understanding of human inquiry as I discuss the methodology and method of this inquiry.

CHAPTER 3

METHODOLOGY AND METHODS OF INQUIRY

In this chapter, I present the methodology and methods for this inquiry. First, through describing my background and roles as a researcher, I situate myself in the inquiry and reflect how I have changed over time as I struggle to make sense of my own experiences as a qualitative researcher. I then discuss my methodological and epistemological principles that are fundamental to the way I posed the research questions, and collected and interpreted the data. I also provide information about the research contexts and sites, and the six participants. I explain the methods and the processes of data collection and data interpretation.

Situating Myself in the Inquiry: Background and Roles of Researcher

Reflexivity demands that we interrogate each of our selves regarding the ways in which research efforts are shaped and staged around the binaries, contradictions, and paradoxes that form our own lives. We must question our selves, too, regarding how those binaries and paradoxes shape not only the identities called forth in the field and later in the discovery processes of writing, but also our interactions with respondents, in who we become to them in the process of *becoming* to ourselves. (Lincoln & Guba, 2002, p.283)

Reflexivity is one of the most engaging, but uneasy, issues with which qualitative researchers must deal. As a qualitative researcher, I am aware that I influence the understandings and interpretations that emerge in this inquiry. My roles here are multiple, as an insider, an outsider, a researcher, a researched, a practitioner, and so on. My social

status and diverse affiliations influenced the methodology and methods I selected.

Therefore, my goal is to reflect on the possibilities for who I am as a researcher that the six participants might have encountered during the interviews.

I was born in Seoul, Korea, and went through the Korean national education system from kindergarten to the undergraduate level. I was brought up in an upper-middle class family in Seoul and experienced stable financial comfort because both my parents worked as government employees at relatively high positions. My parents are both university educated and have always been very supportive toward my higher education. I obtained a B.A. degree in English Language Education from a university in Seoul. After graduating from the university, I worked for one and a half years as an English teacher in a high school in Seoul. I enjoyed the job very much. Then, I decided to go to Canada in order to learn more about language teaching methodology at a graduate level. I also felt that being an English teacher, I should improve my own English proficiency. Upon arriving in Canada in January 1997, first, I was an ESL student for one semester, and became an M.A. student for two years majoring in Applied Linguistics in the English medium university in Ottawa. In fact, four years earlier, I was in the same ESL program as a participant, Seong-jin was affiliated with. Two years earlier, I was in the same M.A. program as another participant, Ji-young, for her M.A. degree. I am now a Ph.D. candidate in Second Language Education at an English medium university in Montreal. While pursuing my doctoral degree, I married a Canadian physicist who is half Hungarian and half Dutch. I have also worked as a language teacher educator as well as a Korean language teacher at a foreign language school in which most of the students are Canadian diplomats and government employees.

Given my multiple social roles and affiliations, I am an insider as well as an outsider in my research context. Each of my identities seems to have played different roles, carrying different symbolic power to the participants while I was conducting the interviews. First of all, I was an insider in my participants' eyes in the sense that I am a Korean who is studying as a L2 student in a Canadian university who shares a similar cultural and ethnic background with them. As explained earlier in Chapter 1, I experienced that the ethnic homogeneity of Korean people often influences many Korean people to maintain a firm solidarity with one another, particularly through 'cheong' and 'we-ness' relationships. The fact that I was recognized as a Korean who speaks Korean and is studying abroad like the participants seemed to have played an important role in their decision to agree to participate in my research. For example, Sang-woo, one of the participants told me that the reason why he decided to participate was the following:

When I was studying in a computer room, two Korean girls (referring to Sun-young and her friend) came up to me and asked whether I could help a Korean student's (referring to me) research for her Ph.D. study. So, then I said immediately, "sure, if I can be helpful." (Interview, December 5, 2001)

Sang-woo's comment corresponds to my perception that Koreans often show their solidarity and 'we-ness' as Koreans when they meet outside Korea by expressing their willingness to help each other.

At the same time, I was an outsider as an "unusual" Korean who is married to a non-Korean man. I did not feel that any of my participants had negative perceptions about the fact that I am married to a "foreigner", a non-Korean. Rather, I felt that they were curious about what it is like to live with a non-Korean everyday. Sometimes they would ask questions like, "What do you eat at home?" "Does he eat Korean food?" or

“Can you express to him everything you want to say?” Also, some of them expressed their interest in getting to know my husband as well, and suggested coming over to their places for dinner with him. Thus, my being Korean and having a Caucasian husband may have been a social capital for me and facilitated gaining my access to the participants and maintaining their interest in their relationships with me.

My cultural capital, being a Ph.D. candidate in Second Language Education seems to have played the roles as an insider as well as an outsider. Three participants, Sang-eun (Ph.D. in Interpretation and Translation), Kyung-ho (Ph.D. in Linguistics) and Ji-young (M.A. in Applied Linguistics), told me that they could relate my situation to their own situation and interest in the sense that my study had to do with language as their fields. The fact that I was conducting a Ph.D. study and would write a thesis was an incentive for them to imagine that they might do so in the future. They mentioned to me that they could see meeting with me as an opportunity for them to learn about the process of conducting a doctoral project. Later, however, I realized that I was an outsider in their fields in a sense that I am not familiar with the specific subject matters of their research interests. I believe, though, the fact that I did not know about the subject matter of their fields made them feel rather comfortable in telling about their difficulties toward their study since I was not an evaluator of their knowledge of their fields. Meanwhile, my academic affiliation made the other participants, Sun-young, Sang-woo, Seong-jin, see me as an outsider, as they seemed to perceive me as a researcher, a Ph.D. student from a prestigious institution, who conducts research as their professors or teachers would do. Moreover, I was not familiar with the subject matters of their study, except for Seong-jin’s case as I experienced earlier the ESL program in which he was enrolled.

Intentionally, I tried to be an insider in the participants' sociocultural worlds as much as possible. Surely, I thought my experiences as a former ESL student, an M.A. student and a Ph.D. candidate in Canadian universities must have been interesting to them, since they were enrolled in the university programs in Ottawa. In addition, in order to facilitate their personal past memories, I talked about my own experiences and perceptions when I was going through the Korean national education system. I also talked about how I became a landed immigrant in Canada in 2000 as some of the participants were interested in becoming or had become so during the interview period. I did so because I did not want them to feel that they were the only ones to tell a story and provide information. Through sharing my own stories, I wanted them to feel comfortable towards our interviews and me as an interviewer.

My background and roles as an insider and outsider are not the only factors that influenced this inquiry. Denzin and Lincoln (1994) note that qualitative researchers are guided by particular interpretive frameworks that contain a set of concepts and beliefs about the human world and how it can be understood and studied. In the next section, I explain my ontological, epistemological and methodological stances I adopt in this inquiry.

Methodology

I used an interpretive qualitative inquiry, particularly in the collection of personal narratives through interviews to learn about everyday experiences of the six participants who came to Canada between 1997 and 2000. My inquiry is situated in several interpretive paradigms, namely poststructuralism, social constructivism, and symbolic

interactionism. In the next section, I describe my ontological, epistemological, and methodological principles that have influenced my stance as a qualitative researcher.

My Epistemological Stances

My inquiry is situated within a new generation of qualitative research that embraces poststructural and postmodern sensibilities. I agree with poststructuralist insights about human language and acts of interpretation that there is no one-to-one correspondence between symbol and object, or reality to which the symbol refers (Sarup, 1993). I believe that a symbol can convey many different interpretive possibilities because the interpretation of a symbol is always socially and historically located. Meanings are never stable since the words that make up a text do not have fixed relationships to the concepts the words intend to mean. Such a perspective of symbol and interpretation by poststructuralists can be understood better in comparison to the principal concepts of structuralism, which originated from Saussure's idea of signs and a sign as a unity of 'signifier' and 'signified' (Schwandt, 1997). From a structuralist view, the relationship between signifier and signified is stable and predictable. Structuralists assume that 'truth' is behind or within a text. Poststructuralists, however, view 'signifiers' and 'signified' as continuously breaking apart and producing new combinations. Therefore, meaning never stays the same from context-to-context; there are always prolific interpretations and no interpretation can be claimed as "the truth" (Sarup, 1993).

The term postmodernism is often used in various artistic and academic fields, such as architecture, drama, fiction, photography, philosophy, anthropology, geography,

and sociology (Sarup, 1993). Postmodernism focuses on the diversity and the major transformations, “changes”, which have taken place in modern globalizing social and cultural contexts. From a postmodernist view, representation of knowledge in human society is flexible, individualistic and heterogeneous. Postmodernists disagree with a modernist assumption about knowledge that refers to it as an objective reality that would appear in the same way to any human observer. Postmodernists also criticize Marxism for being too deterministic and having a tendency to create a homogeneous society that can only be brought about through the use of coercion. Instead, postmodernists believe in multiple-realities; and thus, “no one can grasp what is going on in society as a whole” (p.145).

Another important point observed by postmodernists is the major transformations of the medium of human communication, in that there has been great flexibility and variety of representation of human thought and knowledge in modern society. I experience noticeable changes in ways of communicating with other social members, such as the internet, emails, electronic chatting rooms, electronic games, which are recently categorized as ‘hyper-texts’. An implication of such rapid changes in the medium of social interactions is that the examination of the participants’ L2 learning experiences should go beyond simple verbal and written texts analysis and include any effects of symbolic power from various cultural tools in their social worlds. For instance, Sun-young, one of the Korean participants, explains that she believes there are a number of possibilities beside language skills that contributes to the opportunities of her L2 learning experiences:

I believe that you can be a part of the majority group even if you don’t speak English well... It gets easier if you get along with the group of kids

who has power in the class. Do exercise together, dressing in hip-hop styles, and go over to their places... (Sun-young, interview, January 25, 2002)

An important epistemological principle I understand from both poststructuralism and postmodernism for a qualitative researcher is that:

There is no objective observations, only observations socially situated in the worlds of the observer and the observed; Subjects, or individuals, are seldom able to give full explanations of their action or intentions. (Denzin & Lincoln, 1994, p.12)

This principle is also reflected in social constructivism and symbolic interactionism, which have also influenced my epistemological and methodological stance.

For the last two decades, the implications of social constructivism have been greatly influential especially for researchers and instructors in the area of language and education. A social constructivist fundamental belief, originating from the work by Kuhn (1962), is that reality, knowledge, facts and texts which we normally believe as “truth” are constructed by members of society who share the same ideas and values. The “truth” is generated and maintained by the members of a community at a particular time, and thereby, knowledge and the authority of knowledge are generated and maintained also by the social members of the community. Social constructivists believe that neither the world is composed of facts nor that the goal of knowledge is to provide a literal account of what the world is like. They do not believe in the facts such as that the world exists independent of contexts and agents and human beings are able to know these facts. Instead, taking a relativist ontology (there are multiple realities), a subjectivist epistemology (knower and subject cocreate understandings), and a naturalistic (in the natural world) set of methodological procedures, social constructivists view that reality

can be expressed by a variety of symbols and language systems (Schwandt, 1994). In this regard, social constructivism corresponds to a pluralistic and plastic character of reality as assumed in poststructuralist and postmodernist epistemologies.

Bruner (1990) notes the intimate relationships between culture and the meaning-making process of an individual. He observes that human cognition around the concept of meaning and the processes by which meanings are created and negotiated within a community. Bruner (1990) states:

By virtue of participation in culture, meaning is rendered *public* and *shared*. Our culturally adapted way of life depends upon shared meanings and shared concepts and depends as well upon shared modes of discourse for negotiating differences in meaning and interpretation. (p.12-13)

This perspective of culture and individual meaning-making as “shared knowledge and shared concepts” pushes me to think more about what it means by and what it means to be called “natural” and “normal.” If an individual’s meaning-making is always influenced and negotiated by cultures, it is important for an interpretivist researcher to look into how the meaning is “created, negotiated, sustained, and modified within a specific context of human action” (Schwandt, 1994, p.120).

Symbolic interactionists also share some fundamental beliefs with social constructionists that individuals’ experiences are mediated by their own interpretations of experiences in social worlds. These interpretations are created by individuals through interactions with others and used by individuals to achieve specific goals. Symbolic interactionists are interested in understanding how these interpretations are developed and used by individuals in specific situations of interaction (Jacob, 1987). Research focus is on the influence of social interactions on social structures, the way individuals view

themselves, and their cultural identities. It seeks to understand how social individuals recognize, produce, and reproduce social actions, and how they come to share with others an intersubjective understanding of specific life circumstances (Schwandt, 1994).

Symbolic interaction is useful in my inquiry in understanding how participants come to interpret objects, events, and people in their lives, as well as how this process of interpretation leads to their behaviors in particular social situations. As a qualitative researcher, I am intrigued with the complexity of social interactions as expressed in everyday life and with the meanings the participants would attribute to these interactions. This is why I choose natural settings rather than laboratories for exploring my inquiry.

Personal Narratives

My primary source of data are the personal narratives of six Korean students collected through my interviews with them. According to Mishler (1999), the emphasis in theory and research of identity has shifted “from the assessment of “personality” variables to the study of forms and contexts of discursive genres, such as personal narratives and life stories, within which identities are produced and performed (p.16-17).”

I use the term ‘narrative’ to mean:

A way of organizing episodes, actions, and accounts of actions; it is an achievement that brings together mundane facts and fantastic creations; time and place are incorporated. The narrative allows for the inclusion of actors’ reasons for their acts, as well as the causes of happening. (Sarbin, 1986, p.9)

I refer to the six students’ personal narratives as their personal accounts of their daily experiences and actions in their L2 sociocultural contexts while I was conducting interviews with them.

I find their personal narratives invaluable for capturing the contexts of their particular experiences and actions, and understanding the possible reasons and meanings of their actions. Mishler (1999) notes that a primary way individuals make sense of their experiences is by casting it in narrative forms. In personal narratives, narrators are viewed as active social agents going through dialectical processes. They are not simply passive followers of cultural rules; they actively adapt, resist, and selectively appropriate the rules. Through telling their experiences, the narrators make and interact with their worlds, and then become the “objective” conditions to which they need to respond through adapting, making, and transforming both themselves and those conditions (Mishler, 1999). Riessman (1993) also states:

Nature and the world do not tell stories, individuals do. Interpretation is inevitable because narratives are representations... Human agency and imagination determine what gets included and excluded in narrativization, how events are plotted, and what they are supposed to mean. Individuals construct past events and actions in personal narratives to claim identities and construct lives. (p.2)

I believe that through collecting the participants’ personal narratives about their L2 experiences, I can focus on understanding their agency in their complex everyday lives.

Epistemologically, I am opposed to formalistic and reductionistic inquiries based on positivist and postpositivist paradigms. Rather, I am interested in providing “the continuity” of my participants’ experiences including their inner conflicts and the processes of their negotiations in their multiple social spaces. Through listening to the participants’ personal narratives, I can encounter the complexity and dimensionality of human experience in various social and cultural contexts and observe the ways they

interpret and negotiate those experiences. Mishler (1999) states that the identities of human beings are defined and expressed through the ways they position themselves as well as others who shared their networks of relationships. In other words, personal narratives are socially situated actions. It is important for a researcher to pay attention not only to narrators' inner conflicts and resolutions but also to the social production of their multiple sub-identities and the dynamics of their relationships. Listening to personal narratives is an important methodological tool for understanding the contexts of different identity trajectories.

However, I am aware that an individual's narratives are not necessarily consistent from one setting to another. People tell different self-narratives to different people and in different contexts. I am aware of the dialogic nature of interviewing in which meanings of questions and responses are negotiated between the interviewer and the interviewee. Different interviewers and contexts can evoke different self-narratives. The concept of telling implies that the person is part of a dialogical relationship in which the conventional partner co-constructs the person's self-narrative (Hermans & Hermans-Jansen, 1995). In this regard, the traditional positivist notions of reliability or validity do not apply to my inquiry.

As discussed earlier, I believe that social science cannot "be spoken in a singular universal voice." I agree with Riessman's (1993) position on narrative approaches. She states:

Narrative approach is one approach, not a panacea, suitable for some research situations but not others. It is a useful addition to the stock pot of social science methods, bringing critical flavors to the fore that otherwise get lost. Narrative analysis allows for the systematic study of personal experience and meaning, and how events have been constructed by active subjects.(p.70)

Any methodological stance is, by definition, partial, incomplete, and historically contingent. I decided to collect the personal narratives of the six Korean students as primary data of my inquiry. I believe one can learn a great deal from listening to experiences and make interpretations of particular cases.

Research Contexts and Sites

Koreans in Canadian Socio-economic--institutional Contexts

Since going abroad to study became a trend in South Korea in 1990's as I described in Chapter 1, Canada has been one of the favoured countries by Koreans. My participants are enrolled in different post-secondary programs, such as ESL (English as a second language) programs, undergraduate and graduate degree programs. The general information about Koreans' socio-economic-institutional status in Canada including the influences of the 1997 economy crisis on my participants is relevant to this inquiry in the sense that this socio-economic-institutional status of Koreans in Canada may influence the construction and development of their identities in Canadian sociocultural environments.

Recently, there has been a visible increase in the number of travelers, volume of business and trade, and exchange of culture and education between Canada and South Korea. Canada has been one of the most popular countries for Koreans to travel to and to be educated and immigrate since the late 1990's because of its reputation of clean, safe social environments and the beautiful nature. Immigration from South Korea to Canada has been dramatically rising. According to recent statistics released by the Korean

Foreign Ministry, 9,295 Koreans immigrated to Canada in the year 2000, which was greater in number than those who immigrated to the United States in 1999. Since the late 1990s, more and more Koreans prefer Canada over the United States. As shown in Table 1, Koreans have become the fifth-largest immigrant population in Canada after China, India, Pakistan and the Philippines (CAIPS, 2001).

Table 1. Permanent residence for visa issuance in 2000

(Source: Moon, 2003, p.197)

Country	Immigrant Visas issued
China, People's Republic of	37,123
India	27,458
Pakistan	14,641
Philippines	9,852
Korea, Republic of	8,466

Canada is a popular place for Koreans also to pursue their English language training and higher education, because of Canada's good reputation and investment in its higher education programs. Canada's education system has gained a reputation as a safe place to study with lower tuition rates for international students than their counterparts in competing countries (Canadian Education Centre Networking, 1997). When I decided to come to Canada in 1997 to pursue my Masters degree, the primary reason for me to choose Canada over the United States was its good reputation as an educational environment. I was convinced that Canada is a safe country to live by myself; and the quality of Canadian universities is fairly good despite the relatively inexpensive tuition. Furthermore, Koreans are not required to have a travel visa for traveling in Canada less than 6 months. This "No visa" policy between the two countries may also have facilitated motivation for many Korean students to go to Canada to travel as well as take short-term English language courses. According to a recent statistics in 2002, about 150,000

Koreans currently reside in Canada; an additional 150,000 Koreans visit Canada every year as tourists; and about 50,000 Korean students come to Canada to study every year (Moon, 2003).

Most of these Koreans coming to Canada bring their own money to live or to study. They are seldom political or economic refugees to Canada. The Canadian federal government has recognized the benefit especially of having international students on their campuses in terms of their positive influence on the economic, political, and communicational stances of Canada in the global world. In particular, when government subsidies for higher education are not sufficient, the enrolment of international students has been encouraged since it is a source of revenue for post-secondary institutions (Lee & Wesche, 2000). Whether grounded in long-term societal needs or in the shorter-term financial needs of institutions, the Canadian Bureau of International Education (CBIE) considers the acquisition of international students to be a key element of strengthening Canada in international communities (Knight, 1995). According to the national report by CBIE (1997), during the past decade, Korean students have become one of the largest groups of international post-secondary students in Canada.

Economic Crisis in Korea in 1997

However, when the Asian economic crisis hit South Korea in November 1997, it influenced greatly a large number of Koreans' financial situations including some of my participants. In 1997 and 1998, successive currency and banking crises had a disastrous impact on the national economy. Between 1996 and 1998, per capita GNP decreased from U\$11,380 to U\$6,823 because of the economic crisis. Some 100 companies were

reported to have gone bankrupt every day since beginning of the crisis had occurred (Paik, 2002). Accordingly, many Korean parents might have found it difficult to support their children's higher education. Most students studying abroad during this period were funded from home and had financial difficulties. In fact, it was reported that the economic crisis also influenced the reduction of the number of the enrolments from Korea for 1998/ 1999 in the Ottawa region.

All participants in this study came to Canada between 1997 and 2001. Therefore, the critical situation of the Korean economy influenced their financial burden and living and studying in Canada at that time. The participants expressed their financial worries in various degrees. Sun-young, one of the participants, experienced a great deal of difficulty because her parent's business was closed due to the economic crisis. The other three participants, Ji-young, Seong-jin and Sang-woo, also had guilt feelings toward their parents since they were aware of their parents' financial burden to support their study in Canada. The other two participants, Sang-eun and Kyung-ho, who were married and had family, mentioned that the primary reason for them to decide to come to Canadian universities was a financial issue. They received financial support from the schools at their admission while other universities in the United States they had also applied for did not offer financial assistance.

Post-secondary Programs and Korean Communities in Ottawa

The Ottawa region has been one of the popular destinations for Korean students because of its post-secondary institutions and the social and cultural diversity of the city

as a national capital. My participants were enrolled in different post-secondary programs of two universities in Ottawa. One is an English medium university where Ji-young was doing her Masters degree in Applied Linguistics; Sun-young and Sang-woo were enrolled in undergraduate programs respectively in Industrial Design and in Computer Systems Engineering; and Seong-jin was taking an intensive English language course. The other university is a bilingual institution in which students have a choice of using either English or French, or both to study and obtain degrees. Sang-eun was in the Ph.D. program of Interpretation and Translation department; and Kyung-ho was also pursuing his Ph.D. degree in Linguistics at this bilingual university.

According to the registry of 'The Korean-Canadian Association of Ottawa', three hundred thirty-six Korean names were registered in its address book in 2002 - 2003.

There are a few Korean communities in Ottawa organized by different kinds of organization, such as 'The Ottawa Korean Community Church', 'Ottawa Presbyterian Church', 'The Korean Catholic Community of Ottawa', and 'The Ottawa Korean Students' Association.' These communities were regarded as places in which Korean newcomers or residents get together and exchange Korean "cheong" relationships.

Among the participants of my inquiry, Sang-woo was going to the Korean Community Church with his parents every Sunday. Kyung-hoo and his wife were active members of the Catholic Community of Ottawa. Sang-eun and her husband had attended the New Year's Party organized by the Korean-Canadian Association of Ottawa. Sun-young and Sang-woo were members of the Korean Students Association, which had a total of about seventy Korean students.

Research Participants

The Participants and Their Backgrounds

Seong-jin, Sun-young, Sang-woo, Sang-eun, Kyung-ho and Ji-young are the six Korean participants and their names are all pseudonyms. They were all born in Korea and raised in Korean families. They have experienced Korean national education systems up to, or past secondary school level. Sang-eun and Kyung-ho completed their M.A. degrees in Interpretation and Translation, and Linguistics respectively in their Korean universities. Ji-young obtained her B.A. in English Language Education in a Korean university. The ESL student, Seong-jin, was enrolled in a Korean university in Political Science for his B.A. degree. Sang-woo finished his high school and was in the first year of his university before he came to Canada. Sun-young had the least years of experience studying under the Korean education system. She left Korea at the age of fifteen when she finished her middle school. All participants seem to have been exposed to some common sociocultural phenomena as described in Chapter 1 and Chapter 2 since they were brought up in Korean families and had experienced the Korean national education system to some extent. In other words, they may have similar dispositions, ‘habitus’, that they have acquired in Korean social and cultural contexts. For example, they may regard education as critical for achieving their social success. They also experienced teacher dominant, government controlled classrooms and national curriculum, and standardized exam oriented schooling. They may have developed the ‘we-ness’ relationship through building ‘cheong’ with their interlocutors in their sociocultural environments as I discussed in Chapter 2.

Table 2 presents the general information of the participants' backgrounds. The participants came to Canada at different times to pursue their study in Canadian

Table 2. Information on the participants' backgrounds

Name	Age in 2001	Sex	Accommodation And Living Situation	Affiliation	Duration of having been in Canada	Prior experien- ce of being abroad
Sang- Eun	29	F	Apartment with husband	First Ph.D. in Translation & Interpretation	1 ½ years	Six months in Columbia
Kyung- ho	32	M	Apartment with wife & son	Ph.D. in Linguistics	1 year	None
Ji- young	24	F	Living by herself in an apartment	MA in Applied Linguistics	2 years	None
Sun- young	20	F	Rent room with a landlady & a roommate	BA in Industrial Design	4 years	One year in New- Zealand
Sang- woo	18	M	House with his parents & a brother	BA in Computer Systems Engineering	1 ½ years	None
Seong- Jin	22	M	Homestay with the owner & two roommates	ESL (BA in Political Science in Korea)	3 months	None

education programs at the time of data collection. Sang-eun, Kyung-ho, and Ji-young were enrolled in graduate programs; Sun-young and Sang-woo were in undergraduate programs; and Seong-jin was in an ESL (English as a second language) program. They were between 18 and 32 in age when I began the interviews with them in November 2001. Sang-eun and Kyung-ho were married and living with their spouses. All the

participants were relatively inexperienced in terms of living outside Korea, except for Sun-young who came to Canada in 1998 after living one year in New Zealand.

Gaining Access: Motivation for Participation in Research

I gained access to these six Korean students in various ways. First of all, I did not try to contact students through professors or teachers, or administration of university. I did not want any pressure on the students to participate neither from the institution nor from instructors as their authoritative figures. Therefore, I decided to look for potential participants in person. I put an advertisement on the website of a local Korean students organization. I also walked around university campus to look for Korean students whenever I could. I asked my Korean friends for help to inform me if anyone was interested in my study.

One of the participants, Sang-eun, showed her interest to participate when she saw my advertisement on the Korean students' bulletin board. Another participant, Ji-young, was introduced to me through a friend of mine. Some of them I met by chance on the university campus. I encountered Seong-jin when I was walking around a library of a university expecting to find some Korean students who might be interested in my study. I saw Sun-young also by chance in a university cafeteria, while she was talking to her friend in Korean. The other participants, Sang-woo and Kyung-ho, were introduced to me through Sun-young and Sang-eun who already had agreed to participate.

The motivation for them to agree to participate varied. Some of them saw possible benefits from making connections to the researcher. They seemed to have perceived that it would be good social capital for them to know someone who is a Korean doing Ph.D.

research. Some of them, probably influenced by the Korean habitus, ‘we-ness’, felt that they should help a Korean who was in need of help. Some of them found my research topic interesting. The consent form for my participants and the letter that was attached to the consent form explaining briefly the aim and the focus of my research are included in Appendix B.

Tools of Inquiry

The Chronicle of the Inquiry

In this section I provide a chronological overview of my inquiry in terms of research time and duration, research activities, and collected data during the activities. I explain how I launched my initial research questions and how they were transformed in the end to the questions as presented in Chapter 1. According to Linde (1993), the chronicle of narrative inquiry is useful for recounting a sequence of events that does not have a single unifying evaluative point. Through writing this chronicle, I came to understand how my research focus has evolved from the day I submitted my application for the Ph.D. program until I started to write up this dissertation. I see there is a “continuity” of my thoughts and understandings in the journey of this inquiry. In the fall 1999 I submitted a preliminary research design of my Ph.D. project to my committee. I wrote:

My doctoral research attempts to investigate how ESL students’ different cultural, rhetorical and linguistic backgrounds influence their progress of learning English academic writing. I will also examine their perceptions of classroom activities related to a composition process, such as selecting topics, critical thinking, conference and revising in peer group work, receiving teacher feedback.

At that time, I was particularly interested in the learning context of academic writing for L2 students. Since I began my graduate study in Canadian universities, I found “good” English writing skills crucial for achieving success in academic learning. However, the skills are difficult to acquire as an L2 student. Therefore, I wanted to understand how L2 students’ different cultural, rhetorical and linguistic backgrounds influence their progress and perceptions of learning to write in their classrooms.

Consequently, from February until March 2000, I conducted a pilot study in order to learn about the structure of an English for Academic Writing class and get to know the students and the teacher of the class. This was to establish the exploratory data for the main study. After I provided an informed consent form (included in Appendix D) to participate in my pilot study, I gained access to observe an English for Academic Purposes (EAP) class at an English medium Canadian university in Ottawa. In the course of this study, I conducted participant observations and took field notes in the classroom. I also collected documents related to the observation to facilitate my understanding of the classroom structure, including the course plan, lesson materials, written instructions of assignments, and students’ written samples. In addition, I exchanged informal discussions (in person or via email) with the teacher and some students of the class regarding learning and teaching English academic writing.

In general, I found the teacher very professional, experienced and enthusiastic. She was always well prepared. I found both her oral and written instruction explicit and clear. Through my participant observation, however, I noticed that while some students were able to follow her instruction well, some others did not. As reflected in the email I

sent to the teacher, I realized that the degree of students' understanding and internalization of a teacher's instruction is individually varied and extremely complex.

Hi, ... I am very impressed that your class is filled with a variety of content and activities to improve students' reading and writing strategies for their study in university... your teaching instruction is, I think, quite explicit in general, which I agree with more than an implicit way of instruction, especially for ESL students. The partial reason of this is because I believe that the ESL students are usually not familiar with their new cultural and learning environment, and therefore, a teacher's explicit instruction would help them a lot to a certain extent ...I am really curious about how much and in which way your students understand your instruction and intention in the class. Of course, the degree of their understanding and internalization would be individually different and extremely complex. And, besides your instruction, there must be many other factors not only inside but also outside the classroom that influence the students' understanding and negotiation in learning academic English. However, I would like to understand all these as much as I can...

(My email to the teacher, March 22, 2000)

At that time, my big question written in my field note was: "Why don't students do as they were told by the teacher when the teacher gave such explicit instructions?" I realized from interviewing the students that regardless of how good a teacher is, there are many other factors outside the classroom that influence the students' understanding and negotiation in their learning academic English. This resulted in a shift in the direction of my research.

I then decided to expand my research context beyond the classroom to understand aspects of students' socio-cultural spheres of influence and try to elucidate the dominant factors that may hinder teachers' success in their teaching practices. I wanted to include students' learning experiences outside the school context, such as the contexts of home and community. Through reading the work of critical literacy and language theorists (e.g.

Fairclough, 1995; Gee, 1991; Street, 1995), I encountered issues of 'power and language', which seemed essential for critical understanding about language learning and practice. I came to view language use as social action that is constituted as a social practice with values and meanings in particular social-cultural contexts. Literacy has consequences as it acts together with a larger number of other social factors, including political and economic conditions, social structure, and local ideologies. Street's (1995) notion of 'literacy practice' refers to "both behaviour and the social and cultural conceptualizations that give meaning to the uses of reading and/or writing" (p.2). I decided to appropriate the term, 'literacy practices', which refers to not only spoken and written language used in an individual's daily experiences but also to the cultural and ideological conceptions of the reading and writing processes.

In the winter of 2001, I revised the theoretical framework of my inquiry and submitted the revised proposal. The proposed focus of my inquiry was:

The study focuses on the investigation of the roles of power in second language (L2) literacy practices of a selected number of Korean students who are attending a Canadian university. Since the literacy practices of the students occur not only at school but also in other social contexts, the research contexts include three different sociocultural situations: school, home and community... Given that every social context has complex social relations of power which influences the degree of opportunity for students to learn a second language, it is crucial to understand how and with what kind of mediational means such power is exercised; and what the impact of power is in various social contexts to which the second language students belong.

In October 2001, I gained access to the six Korean volunteers who were willing to participate in my inquiry. In November 2001, I began my interviews with them.

Collecting Personal Narratives

Primary sources of data in my inquiry are from oral interviews. I conducted individual face-to-face interviews with all six Korean participants. I conducted these in depth unstructured and open-ended interviews from November 2001 until April 2002. All interviews were conducted in Korean and audio-taped. Initially, I told the participants that they could switch to English at any time during the interview process. However, all preferred speaking to me in Korean throughout the interviews. Only occasionally did they use a few English words as they felt this was more convenient to explain their thoughts. In Chapter 4, I present the interview excerpts in two columns: first the actual transcription of the interview in Korean and in the second column the English translation.

I met each participant individually on a regular basis, usually once every other week, in different times and places of their convenience. Sometimes, I met them in their offices on university campuses, or in a cafeteria during their lunch hour. Sometimes we had dinner together at their homes or my apartment. Table 3 shows the total number of interview tapes and interview time of each participant. I originally planned to schedule interviews once every other week at their convenience. Unfortunately, some of the interviews had to be cancelled due to unexpected issues regarding their families, their work, and health problems. Therefore, the range of total interview time for the participants varied between 9 and 15 hours. I did not request more time from particular participants to compensate for the lost interview time since all the participants voluntarily participated in this inquiry. Thus, I found asking more time would have been inappropriate. In addition, I believe having had more time with particular participants

would not have necessarily resulted in better quality of data at the expense of inconveniencing them.

Table 3. Number of participants' interview tapes

Participant	Interview Dates		Total number of 90 minute audio tapes (50 tapes)	Total Interview Time (75 hours)
Seong-jin	Nov16/ 28, Dec 10	2001	10 tapes	15 hours
	Jan 18, Feb 1/ 15, Mar 7/ 12, Apr 1/ 19	2002		
Sun-young	Nov 16 Nov 28	2001	7 tapes	10.5 hours
	Jan 25, Feb 8/ 17 Mar 8, Apr 9	2002		
Sang-woo	Nov 22 Dec 5	2001	8 tapes	12 hours
	Jan 22 Feb 15 Mar 5/ 19 Apr.7/ 22	2002		
Ji-young	Nov 12/ 26 Dec 10	2001	10 tapes	15 hours
	Jan 23 Feb 6/ 21 Mar 8/ 20 Apr 11/ 30	2002		
Sang-eun	Nov 7/ 21	2001	9 tapes	13.5 hours
	Jan 16/ 30 Feb 13/ 27 Mar.13 Apr.10/ 24	2002		
Kyung-ho	Nov. 20	2001	6 tapes	9 hours
	Jan16/ 30 Feb 13 Mar 13 Apr 23	2002		

At the beginning of the interviews, I explained that my focus was to understand their perceptions about various social relations on their L2 literacy practices, and to understand how these relationships impact on their literacy practices. To investigate how they perceive and negotiate the power relationships, I solicited their narratives about their daily experiences without explicitly mentioning my research focus. My usual way of interviewing was to meet with the students and initiate informal conversations with them. I would do this by asking questions about their experiences such as “How is your school progressing? How are your family members or friends? What are the important things you did this week?” Also, I would tell the participants what I had done, so that they do not feel the interview to be a one-way conversation. Some sample interview questions I asked the participants are shown in Appendix C. I wanted them to feel that they could confide in me and feel comfortable in our discussions. I had the utmost respect for the participants and hoped the participants would feel that. I tried to be an attentive listener, and would never judge them while listening to their stories.

From the beginning of the interview, I emphasized that I preferred that my participants tell their experiences in their own ways as they feel each time. Interestingly, every participant had different characteristics in terms of interacting with me as an interviewer. They were exercising different styles of agency in sharing their experiences with me. For example, Sang-eun, Ji-young and Sang-woo usually answered questions that I prepared before the interviews, while Seong-jin, Kyung-ho and Sun-young had usually prepared what they wanted to tell me. Therefore, I did not necessarily use the questions I prepared in the same way for the six participants. The focus of my interview questions

was different according to different participants and different issues they were dealing with in particular temporal and spatial contexts.

The participants' agency in their participation varied. This resulted in the interview data to be more like personal narratives rather than self-reports. A self-report method has been used in the areas of clinical psychology and medicine in order to examine particular individual behaviours or medical treatment episodes. Conducting a self-report method, researchers ask research participants to report on what they have experienced in a particular situation. This self-report method has also been adopted in the studies of second language acquisition (SLA) often examining learning strategies and attitudes (e.g. Avalos, 2003; Cohen, 1998; Chamot, 2004). These researchers present data collected through self-reports usually as supplementary data to a large scale of quantitative study in which they attempt to collect both quantitative and qualitative research data. Self-report questionnaires which research participants are asked to answer for those studies are usually focused on particular research questions of the studies.

Meanwhile, personal narrative focuses on personally meaningful events from the past, such as life-story high points, low points, turning points, and earliest memories. Although the focus of my inquiry was to understand the participants' perceptions of various social relations of power in their L2 sociocultural environments, I did not limit my participants to telling me about their experiences only in their L2 contexts. The conversations I exchanged with the participants include their meaningful memories in their childhood. For example, the following interview excerpt shows Sun-young's reflection on the interaction with her parents and neighbours when she was young, which was very meaningful to her.

When I was young, my family was very close to people in the neighbourhood. Everyone knew each other and cared about each other like family. I was very close to my parents. Every night my dad always came to our bed to tell stories or good lessons, or read books for us. He would always call me and my sister as a 'princess' and an 'angel'. If someone said that he has two daughters, he would then correct it by saying, 'No, I have one 'princess' and one 'angel'. (Sun-young, interview, March 8, 2002)

During the process of interviewing the six participants, I became aware of the incredible diversity and complexity among their past and present experiences and the connectivity to their visions for the future. Accordingly, I became more interested in the rationale of doing 'narrative inquiry' to better understand and describe their dynamic experiences. For example, the next interview excerpt reveals that how Ji-young's meaningful childhood memory was connected to her experiences in her university and her epistemological stances in her life.

When I was very young (nine years old in elementary school), my parents took me to a street ceremony for the memory of the death of a university student who died in a protest against dictatorship of the government. At that time I had no idea what the ceremony was for, but did have a very clear image of the ceremony. Much later, when I went to university, I then started to understand more what was happening in that ceremony and why it was happening as I engaged in some reading and discussion groups in university... But then, I became disappointed with the protesters' linear approach to criticize the government policy and violent ways of solving problems... I always tried to tell my juniors to keep asking "Why" all the time and try to look at social phenomena as carefully as possible, and find out their own answers. (Ji-young, interview, November 26, 2001)

In addition to the formal interviews conducted I also gathered a range of document material. Table 4 shows the various documents I collected, including writing samples for course work (Seong-jin, Sang-eun, Sun-young), personal notes (Seong-jin),

emails exchanged with their friends or professors (Seong-jin, Sang-eun), or myself (all of them), a sample of electronic comic books (Sang-woo) or popular internet sites (Sang-woo, Sang-eun), a sample of a survey designed for research (Ji-young), and immigration documents (Kyung-ho). I also collected written documents including curriculum guides, course outlines, school policies, participants' reading materials and writing samples such as essays, logs, emails, personal notes and so on, only when the participants showed these documents to me and allowed me to photocopy the original texts.

Table 4. Documents collected during interviews

Participants	<i>Types of Documents</i>
Seong-jin	Freewriting samples, personal notes and diaries, emails, teacher comments, study materials, course outline
Sun-young	Samples of course assignment, high school writing sample and drawings
Sang-woo	CV letter, interesting internet sites, a sample of electronic comic books
Sang-eun	Writing sample of course work, emails, professor comments, interesting internet sites, program description
Kyung-ho	Immigration documents
Ji-young	Sample of survey for research

I also had opportunities to engage in informal participant observations when my participants were engaged in various activities. For instance, the participants sometimes talked with my husband and my friends when I invited them for dinner at my home. I also visited some of the participants' homes, and met their family members. Finally, immediately after each interview I took my own notes. In these notes I recorded my thoughts and observations at the time the interviews were conducted. I could reflect on

the way I interviewed a participant in terms of whether I was talking too much or too little during the interview; or whether I was asking appropriate questions.

While writing down some points that were meaningful or interesting to me, I also took field notes on my general impressions of what the participant said at that time. The field notes were a useful heuristic for following up on questions in previous interviews. For example, Figure 2 shows the sample of a personal field notes that I took after I interviewed Sun-young.

Figure 2. Sample of personal field notes

Wednesday, November 28, 2001
Interview with Sun-young. At Uni-Center, 2:30 PM

- Talked about the pros of the courses she takes
- Generally very comfortable with them, exchanging jokes with them
- No emails with them, prefers direct contact (come by their offices)
- Left home and parents at early age; became very independent
- Having many friends with Korean-Canadians; very good English skills; confident
- Very bright, became the top student at Grade 12; currently also very good at course work

I think Sun-young has very good social skills which might have influenced her success in school; How did she acquire such good socialization skills?

Next question: What are your strategies for having good interpersonal relationships? How do you make new friends?

As reflected in the field note, after the interview with Sun-young on November 28, 2001, I was impressed with the fact she had been doing very well with schoolwork and acquired good English skills. She seemed also to get along very well with the professors in her department and as well had many friends participating in many activities. I then decided to ask her in the next interview how she developed her interpersonal skills. In this way, I prepared for the next interviews with different questions for different participants at different times.

Interpreting Personal Narratives

The participants' personal narratives about their life experiences provide the context of their sense of agency since the narrators as active agents select, organize, adapt and present meaningful events among their various experiences. In this section, I explain how I analyzed and interpreted the context in which I encountered their sense of agency during their interactions with their multiple social worlds. During the process of analyzing and interpreting the narratives of the participants, I was interested in listening to what questions their narratives were trying to address. My stance as I approach the data was to try to understand what the data revealed to me. Drawing on this methodological approach, I analyzed the transcripts holistically for emerging themes. I tried to see what experiences seemed to be the most meaningful for them, that is from what Geertz calls an emic perspective and why those experiences were meaningful.

In an attempt to organize but without categorizing the data, I reviewed the interview transcripts and field notes comparing these with other documents I collected so that I could have a general idea of what kinds of information the participants were disclosing in their narratives. At this surface-level of scrutinizing the data, I was able to come up with a list of major themes that I could use for organizing the interview quotes as presented in Figure 3.

Figure 3. List of themes to organize the participants' narratives

- | |
|--|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Name of the participant• Biographical information of the participants<ul style="list-style-type: none">- Age, marital status, affiliation, accommodation type• Date of arrival in Canada and reason to come to Canada• Reason to participate in the study• Information of educational background & current affiliation |
|--|

- Social interactions in home, school and community
 - In Korea: public school life (elementary & high school), university
 - In Canada: school teachers & peers; accommodation (family or home stay family); participation in religious or social organizations
- Perceptions of one's English language skills and learning styles & experiences
- Challenges & goals:
 - Values in life and in their literacy practices (investment; prioritizing aspirations and commitments)
 - The challenges & goals in their L2 literacy practices
 - How to go about with the challenges
 - How to deal with the stress in facing the challenges

In order to organize the interview transcripts, I use a holistic thematic analysis.

For example, I put the following excerpts of the interviews with Seong-jin under the themes of 'perceptions of one's English language skills and learning styles & experiences':

My speaking and listening skills are not so good, although my vocabulary is strong. I read one page a day and memorize new words... and I also read newspapers... (Seong-jin, interview, November 16, 2001)

Heekyeong: Which newspaper do you read?

Seong-jin: The National Post, there are some free ones in front of the library in the morning. And... I have some audio-tapes of AFKN news, so I listen to them and study some grammar... everyday my goal is to memorize 40 words and review 100 words. But it's not easy to do that everyday.

Heekyeong: Wow...

Seong-jin: Yeah, I was able to memorize 100 words in two hours... but since I started to use an English to English dictionary, I can't understand the exact meaning of a word although I understand it in the text. Recently, I try to write down sample sentences using the new word and memorize them... My goal is to study at least 5 hours a day... sometime I do that, about three days a week, I tend to study over 5 hours a day... (Interview with Seong-jin, November 16, 2001)

I used these themes to guide my interpretive process and help me get closer to understanding the stories the participants were trying to tell. By organizing the interview

transcripts holistically and thematically, I could then see new emerging themes that allowed me to make a more detailed analysis of a particular context. For example, I came up with the list of challenges of Seong-jin seemed to be facing:

- Challenge 1: Improving English skills
- Challenge 2: Interacting with Homestay family
- Challenge 3: Dealing with the experience of being bullied

From this list, I noticed that there are some actions Seong-jin took related to each challenge. For example, in his effort to improve English skills, the following four actions are relevant:

- Action 1: Memorizing vocabulary intensively
- Action 2: Reading 'Harry Potter'
- Action 3: Writing freewriting
- Action 4: Writing an argumentative essay

I then analyzed each action with some of the key concepts in the conceptual framework such as particular positionings of the participant, forms of capital and examples of capital embedded in a particular action and the influence of habitus on the action. For example, when Seong-jin was engaged in the action to 'memorize vocabulary intensively,' I viewed him as a hardworking ESL student who aimed to acquire good English skills as cultural capital. His particular learning style may have been influenced by his Korean schooling habitus. After I analyzed other actions/reactions Seong-jin took to deal with the challenge of 'improving English skills', I focused on inter-relationships or inter-connections among the different actions / reactions, evaluations and negotiations. For example, I noticed that Seong-jin's position as a creative writer seemed to influence his negative evaluation about writing an argumentative essay. In this way, I analyzed each participant's narrative in an attempt to answer my research questions regarding the

relations of learner agency and various social relationships of power in their L2 living and learning experiences.

Summary

In this chapter, I presented the methodology and methods of my inquiry. I described my multiple identities with reference to the educational and professional backgrounds in South Korea and in Canada, which might have influenced the relationship between my participants and me as a researcher. I take on a poststructuralist and postmodernist position that there is no single theory that can explain fully all forms of sociocultural practices of the participants in their L2 worlds. In this sense, the goal of my inquiry is not to produce any type of generalization, particularly regarding cultural assumptions, although the participants all come from the “same Korean cultural background” and are exposed to the “same Canadian culture.” I am cautiously aware of the heterogeneity and diversity in everyday experiences of the participants in different sociocultural contexts at different times. Therefore, I pay particular attention to specific and detailed information with reference to ‘who, when, where and how’ of a particular event while observing, describing and interpreting the participants’ L2 experiences. I also position myself as a social constructionist and a symbolic interactionist. I believe that human knowledge and beliefs are socially constructed, and are shared and negotiated by particular members of society at a particular time. Therefore, I intend to understand how social realities and social phenomena are constructed and interpreted in the participants’

perceived worlds. I requested the participants to tell their stories in their own ways and thus, the interviews I conducted were unstructured.

In the next chapter, I present the six participants' narratives of their experiences. I present a range of experiences they shared with me as they went through during the time I conducted the interviews with them, which was from November 2001 to April 2002.

CHAPTER 4

EXPERIENCES OF LEARNING AND LIVING IN L2 CONTEXTS

연출자 역할을 했던것이 아주
재미있었어요. 씨클의 다른 사람들에게
아주 강력한 파워를 행사할 수 있었기
때문에. 다들 제 말을 들어야 했고 제가
하라는 대로 했어야 했어요. 제가 꽤
깐깐하고 요구가 많아서 사람들이
굉장히 싫어했고 불평도 많이 했어요.
근데 공연이 막상 끝나고 나서는
선배들한테 칭찬 많이 들었어요.
선배들이 그러는데 10 년만에 나온 가장
잘된 공연이었대요.
(지영, 인터뷰, 2002 년 3 월 20 일)

I enjoyed the role as a director very
much because it carried a lot of power
over many members of the group.
Everybody had to listen to me and did as
I directed. I was pretty tough and
demanding, so many people were often
very upset and complained about me.
However, at the end when the
performance was all over, I heard a lot
of compliments from my seniors. They
said that it was the best one
[performance] in ten years. (Ji-young,
interview, March 20, 2002)

I believe agency embedded in every human individual is a key resource for the exploration of human potential in the processes of learning. As reflected in Ji-young's comment, she recalled as one of the best moments in her life when she exercised so much power and her agency as a director of a play in her university club activity. She perceived that the opportunity of exercising her agency and power allowed her to explore her potential and led her to be able to produce the good performance of the group in spite of having faced conflicts and criticism from other members.

In this chapter, I present the six participants' personal narratives. As mentioned earlier, I view the participants as active agents playing major roles in their complex decision making processes in their L2 social worlds. I introduce their narratives focusing on their learner agency in their L2 learning and living experiences. My intention is to depict the moments the participants were exercising agency in various sociocultural

contexts. I begin each participant's story by presenting a quote made by each individual that I believe reflects information about who they are and their strong sense of agency.

Seong-jin:

Living through Violent, Creative and Authoritative Worlds

세상에 말 잘하는 사람은 아주 많은데 글
잘쓰는 사람은 별로 없는것 같아요. 전
글 잘쓰는 사람이 생각이 깊은
사람이라고 믿어요. 내생각에는 더
생각이 깊고 좋은 사람이 되려면 글을 잘
쓰는 것이 중요하다고 생각해요. (성진,
인터뷰, 2002년 2월 1일)

I think... there are many people who
speak well but not many who write well.
I believe that a person who writes well is
the one who thinks deeply. In my view,
if you want to be a better person and a
deeper thinking person, it is important to
write well. (Seong-jin, interview,
February 1, 2002)

Seong-jin, as reflected in the interview excerpt above, is an individual who values highly being a good writer and writing as a mediational tool in evaluating how good people are. He came to Canada in September 2001 when he was twenty-three years old in order to take an intensive ESL program at a Canadian university in Ottawa. I met him in November 2001 when I was walking on the university campus looking for possible participants for my doctoral research. By accident, I heard him speaking in Korean and I decided to talk to him. I introduced myself and briefly explained my project. He emailed me a few days later to tell me of his interest in participating. On our first meeting, I asked Seong-jin why he decided to participate in my study. He then told me about an episode he had in Korea. There was a graduate student in his university in South Korea who had asked him to participate in a graduate project. At that time he said 'No.' He felt bad that he rejected the request; this memory came back to him when I asked him to participate in

my dissertation project. Therefore, he decided to accept my request. He also gave me another reason when I asked him why he agreed to participate in my study:

언젠가 사람들이 나를 소극적이고 공부만 하는 책벌레로만 여긴다는 생각이 들었어요. 그걸 고치기 위해 모든일에 더 적극적으로 해야겠다는 생각이 들었어요. (성진, 인터뷰, 2001년 11월 28일)

Sometimes I feel that people (friends and acquaintances) might view me as a passive person, who only studies like a “book worm” without participating in any other activities. I should try to be more active in many things... (Seong-jin, Interview, November 28, 2001)

Seong-jin explained to me that a resolution to become a more active person made him decide to accept my request; it was a way for him to stimulate the active side of himself and become more active in many things.

Prior to coming to Canada, he was a university student in South Korea majoring in political science. In the second year of university, he went to serve for twenty-eight months in the army since it is compulsory for all men in South Korea. After finishing his service in August 2001, he decided to come to Canada for the reason he stated in the next excerpt:

군대마치고 너무 피곤해서 한 반년정도 쉬고 싶었어요... 대학교에 바로 돌아가는 것 보다는 뭔가 다른것을 좀 배우고 싶었어요. (성진, 인터뷰, 2001년 11월 16일)

I was very tired from serving in the army, and wanted to take a break about half a year or so... I wanted to learn something rather than directly going back to university. (Seong-jin, Interview, November 16, 2001)

In Korea, all men are required to serve in the military. They often have to serve when they begin their university in the beginning of their twenties, which often interrupts their academic or professional career. Seong-jin sometimes talked to me about his experiences

regarding them as a “brain-dead” period in his life, since he had had no intellectual stimulation. That is why he felt that it would be very difficult for him to return to university after serving in the army for twenty-eight months.

The intensive ESL (English as a second language) program that Seong-jin was enrolled in was offered in an English-medium Canadian university located in Ottawa, the capital of Canada. According to the website of the ESL program, the official goal of the intensive course is to help students develop English language skills for academic or professional purposes. The intensive ESL students are placed in five different levels of language skills: low and high beginner, low and high intermediate, and advanced.

The institute provides various support systems for ESL students including a counseling office for both academic and personal matters, and a writing tutorial service that is available to any student. During the period of interviews with me from November 2001 until April 2002, Seong-jin took three semesters of the intensive program, fall (high-beginner), winter (high-intermediate) and spring (advanced) semesters. He received financial support from his parents in Korea. The main source of income for his family was the salary of his father who was a civil servant.

Improving English Skills

From the beginning of the interview with Seong-jin, I noticed soon that he was studying English extremely hard mostly through reading ‘Harry Potter’. When the courses were over for the day, he often stayed in the library on the campus in order to study English. The next excerpt shows how intensively he studied English by himself.

성진: 학교에 늦게까지 남아서 공부하려고 저녁으로 먹을 샌드위치를 사왔어요. 집에 가서는 한국 사발면을 먹고 자요.

희경: 홈스테이 비용으로 세끼 식사 비용을 이미 다 냈는데 아깝지 않아?

성진: 공부해야 되기 때문에... 어제는 수업이 오전 8시 30분부터 저녁 8시 30분까지 있었어요. 오후 4시까지 워크숍이 있었고 그다음엔 영어 conversation partner를 만나고 집에 돌아오니까 10시 30분쯤 되더라구요. 그리고나선 저녁으로 사발면 먹고... 샤워하고, 12쯤 다 되서 잤어요. 공부할까 생각해 봤는데 너무 피곤해서...

희경: 도서관에서 혼자 있을때는 뭐를 어떻게 공부하는데?

성진: 하루 종일 영어 공부해요... 해리 포터 읽으면서 단어 공부해요. 영어판으로 사서 여기에 가지고 왔거든요. 한국어로는 한국에서 이미 읽었어요. 해리 포터 읽는게 지겨워지면 신문을 읽고.. 그러다가 다시 해리포터 보고... 제 계획이 매일 단어 40개씩 외우고 100개 단어를 복습하는거예요. 근데 매일 하기가 쉽지가 않아요.

희경: 와...

성진: 예, 영영 사전을 사용하기 전까지는 두시간 안에 단어 100개도 외울수 있었어요. 문맥상으로 의미는 이해가 가도 단어의 정확한 정의는 잘 모르겠어요. 최근에 새단어를 사용한 예문을 적어서 외우려고 시도해 봤는데... 제 목표는 하루에 최소 다섯 시간씩 공부하는 거예요... 어떤때는 그렇게 해요, 일주일에 삼일 정도는 하루에 다섯시간 넘게 공부해요.
(인터뷰, 성진, 2001년 11월 16일)

Seong-jin: I brought some sandwiches to eat for supper so that I could stay late at

school to study. When I go home, I eat Korean instant noodles and go to sleep.

Heekyeong: Don't you regret the fact that you have already paid for three meals for your homestay?

Seong-jin: Because I have to study... Yesterday I had a class from 8:30 a.m. until 8:30 p.m. because there was a workshop until 4 pm, and then I went to meet my English conversation partner, and came back home at around 10:30 p.m. Then, I ate instant noodles for supper... and took a shower, went to bed around 12:00 a.m. I thought about studying but I was too tired...

Heekyeong: What do you study and how when you are in the library by yourself?

Seong-jin: I study English all day long... I study [English] vocabulary through reading 'Harry Potter'. I bought the English editions [in Korea] and brought them here. I have already read the Korean editions in Korean. When I get bored of reading 'Harry Potter', I read newspapers instead, and then switch back to Harry Potter... Everyday my goal is to memorize forty [English] words and review a hundred words. But it's not easy to do that everyday.

Heekyeong: Wow...

Seong-jin: Yeah, I used to be able to memorize a hundred words in two hours until I started to use an English to English dictionary. I can't know the exact definition of a word although I understand the meaning from the context. Recently, I try to write down sample sentences using new words and memorize them... My goal is to study at least five hours a day... sometimes I do that, about three days a week, I study over five hours a day... (Interview with Seong-jin, November 16, 2001)

Seong-jin's strenuous schedule for studying English reminded me of the typical grueling daily routine of the students in Korea as I described in Chapter 1. I found it very interesting to see that Seong-jin, while he was attending a Canadian school, was still implementing an approach to learning English that is very similar to the traditional approach that has been prevailed in Korean public schools. In fact, I was quite shocked when Seong-jin showed me a sample of his study plan from his calendar, which demonstrates how hard he was studying English. As shown in Figure 4, he spent about five hours a day studying English mostly by reading the book, 'Harry Potter' and memorizing vocabulary from the book.

Bourdieu (1991) explains that habitus inclines social individuals to act and react in certain ways. Habitus generates certain practices, perceptions and attitudes that the individuals may take on without being consciously aware of any kind of social or cultural rules that influence their habitus. Seong-jin might have been implementing the particular study method of English influenced by his public schooling experiences in Korea.

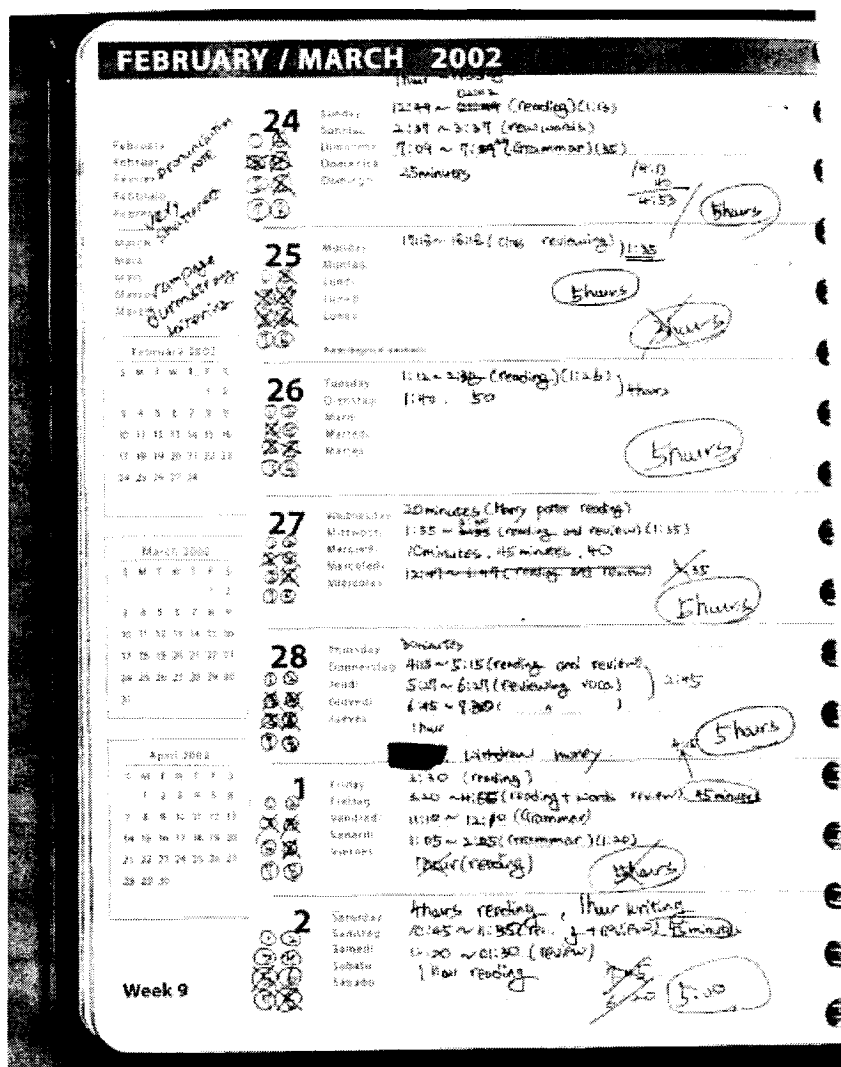
I asked Seong-jin when he decided to start to study in this manner. He said:

제가 원래 계획 세우는 것을 좋아해요.
그리고 고등학교 때 동경 대학에 입학한
일본인 아이가 그 대학교에 어떻게
들어갔는지 합격 수기에 대해서 쓴 책을
읽었어요. 개도 공부 계획 세우는 것을
굉장히 좋아했대요... 그 아이가 공부한
방법에 자극을 받고 그때부터 공부
계획표를 만들어서 공부하기 시작했어요.
(성진, 인터뷰, 2001년 11월 16일)

Seong-jin: I usually like planning things,
and in high school I read a book written
by a Japanese student who got admitted
to Tokyo University. It was about how
he studied in order to get in that
university. He liked very much to make
a study plan... I was very stimulated by
the way he studied, so I have started
making a plan for studying since then.
(Seong-jin, interview, November 16,
2001)

Tokyo University is regarded as a very prestigious university among Korean people. Seong-jin's comment reflects that he may have been attracted by the learning strategy described by the Japanese student because the student had the cultural capital of Tokyo University. Seong-jin's recognition of the prestigious name of the university may have influenced him to implement the strategy of making an intensive study plan for his learning.

Figure 4. Sample of Seong-jin's Study Plan



In the next interview excerpt, Seong-jin makes reference to a book ‘Chilmak Chilchang’, which I mentioned in Chapter 1. This book is an autobiography that had influenced him greatly in terms of how he studied to acquire English skills. He talked about the autobiography when he came over my place for dinner. At that time, he spoke in English since my husband joined the dinner table. He said:

I read the book in high school. He stayed in the school dormitory and he was usually up until 2 to 3 am in order to study. He said he sometimes memorized more than hundred words in one day. I was so impressed, actually, I tried to do like him. In high school, I tried to memorize one hundred words a day, and in fact, it wasn't so difficult. I had a watch right in front of me and I checked constantly whether I was getting a word per three seconds. One word per three seconds... [in the book] he said when he was first introduced to the class on the first day of school, his classmates laughed at him because of his English pronunciation. Then, he decided to study English very hard and thought the only way to master English is to recite. Thereafter, he studied every night very hard. For about nine months after, he was able to speak and write in long sentences. He could laugh while watching a comedy on TV... I still have the book in my room in Korea. I am still trying to study like him...(Seong-jin, interview, March 7, 2002)

This interview excerpt also reflects that Seong-jin's decision to emulate how others study to improve his English skills might have been strongly influenced by the cultural capital of prestigious universities. The fact that the students who wrote the books Seong-jin read were admitted to Tokyo University and Harvard University was a convincing factor that made Seong-jin perceive them as respectable figures and made him want to emulate their study methods. In other words, the two book authors were positioned by Seong-jin as people who have high cultural capital in his social space. That is, Seong-jin seems to have expected that by adopting a similar approach described in the books, he would be

able to achieve similar cultural capital, which is to achieve high educational qualifications.

In addition, I think that Seong-jin tried to study English through memorizing intensively the words and expressions in “Harry Potter” and his spending about five hours everyday sitting in front of a desk seems to have also been influenced by his habitus that he acquired in the Korean national education system. It seems that Seong-jin believed that “reciting English text” is the only way to master English. This statement corresponds well to the social, cultural, historical atmosphere of the Korean education system I described in Chapter 1 that Korean students have to study extensively for passing the national exam in order to become successful. The typical way of studying English is focused on memorization of grammar and vocabulary without exploring personal meanings.

Seong-jin habitus of Korean schooling may have influenced his own “legitimate” way of studying English, which is to improve his knowledge of vocabulary and expressions based on a plan of action that means “sitting in front of a desk”. The next interview excerpt reflects that he did not appropriate watching TV as a way to improve his English even for such skills as listening, speaking and vocabulary.

희경: 가끔가다 영어 배우려고 텔레비전 보니?
성진: 아니오. 텔레비전을 보고 앉아있으면 공부한다는 생각이 안들어서. TV 시청이 좋을거라는 생각이 들긴하지만 시간이 없어서 안해요.
(성진, 인터뷰, 2001년 11월 28일)

Heekyeong: Do you sometimes watch TV to learn English?
Seong-jin: No, not really. I don't feel that I am studying [English] when I am watching [English] TV. I know that watching TV may also be good for learning English, but I don't have time [for watching TV].
(Interview with Seong-jin, November 28, 2001)

Bourdieu (1991) argues that social agents are positioned by the types and amounts of capital they possess in their social spaces. I observed that there was another source of capital that influenced Seong-jin's "position-taking" in his social space, in that one of his primary goals was to receive social attention and recognition as I sensed from his next statement.

어렸을때 제일 존경하던 사람이
나폴레옹이었어요. 전 파워나, 야망,
권력같은 것에 끌리는것 같아요... 사실
사람들의 관심을 받는것을 좋아해요.
무슨 행사가 있으면 중심이 돼야 해요.
중심에 못서게 되면 기운도 없고 기분이
안좋아요. 다른 사람한테 뒤쳐져 있으면
참을수가 없어요. (성진, 인터뷰,
2001년 11월 16일)

When I was young, my hero was
Napoleon. I think I am attracted by
power, ambition and authority ...
Actually, I usually like to get attention
from people around me. I have to be in
the center of people's attention. In
participating in some activities, I get
disappointed if I don't become a center
of the activities. I can't stand the feeling
that I am behind others. (Seong-jin,
interview, March 7, 2002)

Here Seong-jin states that he valued power, fame and popularity as an important capital to define who he is in relation to other people with whom he interacts. As an ESL student, Seong-jin seems to have viewed that a possible way for him to gain social recognition from people around him was to study hard and acquire good English skills in the way the book authors did.

On the other hand, I see there was another source of power, which I believe was the main force in his continuing to work on "reading Harry Potter everyday." He considered the words and expressions he learned from the book very useful for him to improve his skills in writing. As noted in the first quote by Seong-jin presented at the beginning of this section, in order to become a "good" person he values writing skills more than any other language skills, such as speaking or listening. He sees writing as a

powerful mediational tool. Thus, he considered it important to be able to use an advanced level of vocabulary and expressions in his English composition.

ESL 반에서도 영어로 말 잘하는
애들보다는 글을 잘쓰는 아이들을
봤을때 충격을 더 받아요. 평소 얼굴도
못생기고 변변치 않은 아이가 글
잘쓰는것 보면 대단하게 보여요. 글을 잘
쓰면 내가 현명한 사람이 되기위한
중요한 수단이라고 생각해요. (성진,
인터뷰, 2002년 2월 1일)

Seong-jin: ... In the ESL class, I get more impressed by a student who writes well in English than the one who speaks well. When someone who is not so good looking and does not seem particularly special, but happens to have good writing skills, I get to have a great respect for that person. I really believe that to write well is an important tool to become a wise person. (Seong-jin, interview, February 1, 2002)

McKay & Wong (1996) observe that in an adult ESL classroom the four language skills can have different values for different learners depending on how their identities are positioned. I see Seong-jin as highly interested in positioning himself as a “good writer.” Therefore, he invested his time and effort mostly on improving his writing skills by learning new words and expressions. I view his investment in writing exercise as a way of using his learning agency in the sense that even though he was aware that his speaking and listening skills were weak, he still focused on what most meaningful for him. It may be because Seong-jin viewed good writing skills as a primary source for positioning himself, as well as others, in a high status within his social space. In other words, for him good writing skills are very important for assessing people’s educational qualification and how good or wise a person is.

Prior Experience of Being Bullied

When Seong-jin was in elementary school in Korea, he reported that he had an experience of being bullied which I believe has had strong influences on who he was at the time of conducting the interviews. Seong-jin was born in a small city in a southern province of Korea and lived there until his fifth grade of elementary school. His family then moved to Seoul, and he had to transfer to a new school. He recalled that at this time it was not easy for him to adjust to a new environment as he was still very young. He remembered that he had received much attention from his teachers and peers since he was doing very well in his school work including arts and sports. In addition, he was the tallest and the class leader in his grade. He told me that he was one of the most popular and strongest kids. He referred to this time as the happiest period of his life.

However, when he moved to Seoul, he found it difficult to get along with the kids at school. He did not explain to me in detail why it was so difficult, but he told me about an event he experienced, which has since had a strong impact on his attitudes toward socialization. One day he had an argument with one of his peers, the argument turned violent and he was badly beaten by a group of kids at his school. He did not explain to me why the fight happened but often mentioned that event throughout the interview period with me. Since that time, it became uneasy for Seong-jin to trust people and he tended to particularly dislike men. He became very sensitive toward any social interaction he was engaged in. As a way to deal with the incident, he took boxing lessons to be physically strong. Furthermore, he tried to study very hard in order to excel over other students intellectually.

공부 잘 못하는 것에 대한 두려움도 있지만 육체적으로 약한것에도 두려움이 있어요. 고등학교에 있을때 나보다 몸집크고 키 큰 아이들을 보면 겁이 났었어요... 아마 모든 남자들이 다 그럴지도 몰라요... 이런 기분이 드는거 국민학교때 애들한테 집단 폭행 당한 이후로 이러는것 같아요... 그냥 학교 공부 잘하고 신체적으로도 강해서 아무도 우습게 보지 못하는 사람이 되고 싶어요.

(성진, 인터뷰, 2002 년 2 월 15 일)

I have a fear of not only doing school work poorly but also of being physically weak. In high school, I got threatened whenever I encountered a guy who is very big and tall. Well, I think, this is the same almost for every man ... Actually, this fear started when I was beaten by a group of kids in primary school ... I just want to do very well in school work and be physically very strong so that nobody can look down on me.

(Seong-jin, interview, February 15, 2002)

Seong-jin's interaction with the social environment of his school mediated by physical violence seemed to have led him to produce a new attitude and strategies towards his socialization. For example, as shown in the next excerpt he became constantly conscious about what others might think of him and what others might like to do. In order to avoid conflict with others, he started to consciously do favours for others, and in turn, this became his strategy of socialization.

전 주로 어떤 결정을 내릴때 내가 어떻게 생각하느냐보다 다른 사람이 어떻게 생각하나에 따라서 결정을 하는 경향이 있어요. 상대방이 어떻게 생각할까, 기분이 좋을까 나쁠까를 너무 많이 생각해서 좀 짜증이 나요... 전 사람을 잘 안 믿어요. 근데 항상 남들이 날 좋아하게 만드려고 하죠. 무슨 도움을 준다던가 해서, 청소를 해준다던가 그런거요. 남들이 싫어할만한 일은 안해서 항상 갈등이 될만한 생활을 피하려고 해요. (성진, 인터뷰, 2001 년 11 월 28 일)

I often make a decision based on what others think of, not on what I think. I don't like that I always care about what others think and whether they would be pleased or not ... I usually don't trust people, but I always try to make others become fond of me by doing them favours, and always trying to avoid conflicts with others by doing things that others don't like to do.... (e.g. cleaning the house) (Seong-jin, interview, November 28, 2001)

Seong-jin often told me that he felt that he was very conscious about others' perceptions. This often hindered him from making his own decisions based on his own will in various social interactions in everyday life. From the perspective of Bakhtinian dialogism, the concept of social identities implies that people identify themselves by choosing an appropriate voice style according to who they think they are and who their audience is in a particular social context. His awareness of others' impression of him, or more precisely his fear of not being liked or appreciated, made him take on multiple voices, voices to please others and himself. I think that having been positioned as a victim of violence, Seong-jin became strongly aware of his multiple voices in order to find appropriate positions in the various social contexts he was exposed to.

Interacting with the Homestay Family

Seong-jin occasionally talked to me about his interactions with his homestay family. Homestay is a common housing system for ESL students since it offers an opportunity for them to live with a Canadian family. Seong-jin's homestay family was a Caucasian Canadian elderly couple. The landlord was seventy-three years old, and the landlady was sixty-seven years old. In addition to Seong-jin, they had two other tenants. One of these tenants was from Japan and was taking some university credit courses to become a regular student in the same university. The other tenant was from Taiwan and was taking the same ESL program as Seong-jin. The homestay fee was \$675 (CAD) per month, which included three meals per day besides having one's own private bedroom.

At the beginning, Seong-jin's perception about his homestay family was positive. When I asked how he liked his homestay family first time, he said:

홈스테이 주인 부부가 다 건강이 안좋아요. 둘 다 수술을 받았대요... 나한테 잘 해줘요. 나도 잘하려고 하고요. 저녁먹고 설것도 하고 일주일에 한번씩 청소기도 돌리고. 언제 한번은 크리스마스 트리를 세우는걸 도와달라고 해서 도와주고...homestay daddy 가 저녁을 많들지만 아침하고 점심은 제가 부엌에 있는것 아무거나 챙겨 먹어요. 홈스테이 대디가 굉장히 outgoing 한 사람이어서 뭐 숨기는게 없어요. 만약 기분이 안좋으면 기분 안좋다고 바로 말하고 그래요. 진짜 엄마 아빠같아요. 전에는 수업을 빠졌더니 homestay mommy 가 저한테 화가 났더라구요. (성진, 인터뷰, 2001년 11월 16일)

They (the homestay owners) are not well, they both had surgeries... they are very nice to me. I also try to be nice to them. I try to do the dishes after supper and vacuum the house once a week. The other day, they were setting up a Christmas tree and asked me to help them, so I did...The homestay daddy cooks for dinner, but for the breakfast and the lunch I grab whatever I see in the kitchen. My homestay daddy is very outgoing and never hides anything from me. If he is upset about something, he talks about it right away. They are like a real father and a mother. The other day, I skipped a class and then the homestay mommy was very upset with me. (Seong-jin, interview, November 16, 2001)

As reflected in his comments above, Seong-jin's interactions with his homestay family seemed smooth in the beginning. Even when the landlady pointed out the fact that he skipped school, he regarded this as caring rather than offensive. As mentioned earlier, Seong-jin had a specific strategy to develop relationships with others by helping them or doing favours for them, so that they will become fond of him. For example, for his homestay family he vacuumed his room in order to please his homestay parents. However, later on Seong-jin's perception of his homestay family became rather negative. He offered this incident as an example:

성진: 요새 스트레스를 받는 일이 있었어요... 토요일에 내방에서 청소기를 돌리고 있었는데, 자기네 방도 돌리라는 거예요. 나를 가정부처럼 시켜먹는것 같아서 기분이

Seong-jin: I had something that gave me some stress recently. On Saturday I was vacuuming my room, and they asked me to vacuum their room as well. I got pretty upset because I felt they treated

대개 안좋았어요. 지난번에 그냥 도와주려고 집안 전체를 다 청소기를 돌렸는데 맨날 내가 하겠지하고 기대하리라고는 생각 못했어요. 또 지난번에는 자기네 나가야되니까 집에서 집보라고 했는데 집에 안있었어요. 그랬더니 기분 나빠하는 거예요. 그게 또 속에 걸렸죠. 내가 너무 예민하다는거 알긴 하는데 그런일이 생기면 열받는거 어쩔수 없어요... 제 룸메이트, 타이완 사람... 그사람은 다른 사람에 대해 신경을 안써요. 제 방에 자주 와서 자기 인생에 대해서 불평을 해요. 그러면 그사람 걱정거리 들어주느라 전 공부할 시간 뺏기고. 그래놓곤 다음날 아침에 인사도 제대로 안하고, 맘에 안들어요... 이런일로 맘이 상하고 기분이 나빠져요. 사람 관계가 저는 너무 너무 힘들어요.

희경: 여기 ESL 선생님이나 반 친구들에게서도 그런 스트레스를 받니?

성진: 아니오. 학교 친구들하고 잘 어울려요. 집에 가면 자꾸 화가 나니까 집에 있기가 싫어요. 주로 학교에 오래 있게 되요. 보통 학교에 아침 8시쯤 가서 밤 11시 정도까지 있다가 집에 와요. (성진과의 인터뷰, 2001년 12월 10일)

me like a cleaning lady. The other day I vacuumed the whole house just to help them a little bit. But, I didn't want them to expect that I would do that all the time. Also, the other day, they asked me to stay at home since they had to go out, and I did not do that. They then got upset with me, and this made me upset, too. I know I may be too sensitive but I can't help it... My roommate, the Taiwanese guy... he does not care about others. He often comes to my room and complains about his life, and then I lose my time for studying since I have to listen to his worries. But then, the next morning he doesn't even bother saying hello to me. I don't like this guy... These things make me feel uncomfortable and I get upset by that. Social interaction is often very difficult for me.

Heekyeong: Do you get such kind of stress from your ESL teachers and classmates, too?

Seong-jin: No, not really. I get along pretty well with friends at school. Because I get often upset at home, I don't want to be at home. I tend to stay at school longer. I usually go to school around 8:00 am and do not go back home almost until 11:00 pm.

(Interview with Seong-jin, December 10, 2001)

Struggles Between Authoritative and Internally Persuasive Discourses

In the new semester, Seong-jin was placed in the 'high-intermediate level' class. According to Seong-jin, since it was a more advanced level class, the focus of the instruction was more geared toward English language skills for academic purposes.

During this semester, he occasionally talked to me about his difficulty in participating in the class.

Unlike freewriting that Seong-jin enjoyed very much in the previous course, Seong-jin found it very difficult to write an essay in a formal academic style, such as in an argumentative or an explanatory essay. His identity as a creative writer often contradicted the expectations of the formal writing conventions he had learned in his academic writing class. As revealed in the next excerpt, he was aware of what constitutes a good writing sample of an argumentative essay in his writing class.

성진: 전 제 느낌대로 쓰는게 좋아요.
Reference를 들고 논리를 맞춰가면서
쓰는건 싫어요. 형식이 꼭 정해져
있어요. 항상 positive argument'를
쓰고 예문을 들고, 그리고 나선
'negative argument' 쓰고 또 예문을
들어야 하고. 마지막에 가서는 뭐가
제일 좋은 argument 인지 'solution'을
제시해야해요. 이런식으로 쓰는게 소위
말하는 모범답안이에요.
희경: 그럼 writing에서 뭘
요구하는지 다 알고 있네?
성진: 예, 근데 난 그렇게 하기가
싫은거예요. 남들하고 다 똑같이 쓰게
되니까. 그 형식을 똑같이 따라하기가
싫어요.
(성진, 인터뷰, 2002년 2월 15일)

Seong-jin: I like writing based on my intuition. I don't like writing based on logic and by adding references. There always has to be a fixed structure. You have to write 'a positive argument with example sentences' first, and then 'a negative argument with example sentences.' At the end, then, you have to come up with 'solution' stating what is the best argument. This is sort of what they consider as a good writing sample.
Heekyeong: So, you know then what they expect from your writing.
Seong-jin: Yeah, but I don't like to do that. It (my writing) becomes then the same as all the other students'. I don't like to follow the same form as others...
(Interview with Seong-jin, February 15, 2002)

However, Seong-jin did not want to implement the rules he was aware of because he felt his writing would be the same as the other students' work. Choosing an appropriate discourse style is a way people express their social identities (Ivanič, 1998). Ivanič notes that some student writers resist being positioned to write in certain ways in academic

discourse community and may feel that “their real self is protected by the possibility of disowning the discursal self” (p.228). As reflected in his previous comments, Seong-jin had a clear sense of agency in his writing in that he did not want to ‘own the language’ that he perceived would make his writing almost the same as other students’. He believed that through the academic discourse he learned from his writing class he would not be able to identify and distinguish himself in his writing. Therefore, it always took much time for him to finish one essay for his homework. He even started to skip class frequently, particularly when he did not complete the homework assignment.

요즘 바보가 된것 같은 기분이 들어요. Academic writing 을 하는데 포인트를 못잡겠어요. 안한 숙제는 자꾸 쌓이고... 저는 너무 느낌으로 쓰려고 하는 경향이 있어요. 근데 아무 느낌이 안들면 하나도 못쓰겠어요. (성진, 인터뷰, 2002년 2월 1일)

I feel I have become a dummy. I can't make points in an academic writing... The unfinished homework is piling up. I know I tend to write based on my feelings... but I can't write if I don't come up with any feeling. (Seong-jin, interview, February 1, 2002)

그래서 freewriting 식으로 에세이를 써 봤더니 한장 좀 넘게 금방 써지더라구요. 근데 일관성이 없더라구요. 그래서 며칠 있다가 다시 써보려고 하다가 포기 하고 수업에 아예 안들어가고 도서관에 가서 혼자 공부했어요. (성진, 인터뷰, 2002년 2월 15일)

So, one day, I tried to write an essay in the Freewriting style. I was of course able to quickly write one and a half pages. But, even to me it did not look coherent at all. I tried to write it again a few days later, but decided to give up. After that, I did not go to the class and studied in the library by myself instead. (Seong-jin, interview, February 15, 2002)

From a Bakhtinian perspective, Seong-jin appeared to be struggling to balance the ‘authoritative discourse’ and the ‘internally persuasive discourse’. Bakhtin (1981) states that “a variety of alien voices enter into the struggling for influence within an individual’s consciousness” (p.348). It seems that Seong-jin was experiencing ‘double-voicing’. One

voice was suggesting him to appropriate the authoritative discourse and engage in the formal academic writing practice as instructed by his writing teacher. This voice may have been influenced by his identity as a hard-working ESL student who aims to achieve high marks from the course. Additionally, it may be that as a son, Seong-jin did not want to disappoint his parents since they support him financially to study abroad in spite of their difficult situation. On the other hand, another voice was insisting to him the internally persuasive discourse, which may have been influenced by his identity as a creative writer. In this positioning, Seong-jin believes that writing should be produced based on his intuition, rather than form and structure. This voice seemed to be also very strong and did not let him produce an argumentative essay for his ESL class. In this situation, it seems that two contradictory voices are both equally dominant and suppress the others. This internal conflict appeared to paralyze him and make him unable to complete his homework assignment. He became so traumatized by the experience of not being able to write well that he felt “like a dummy.” This may have made him even more frustrated since for him to write well was an important mediational means to become what he views as a “good” or “wise” person.

Dialectic Interplay Among Multiple Identities

During my last interview with Seong-jin (on April 19, 2002), he was still working on reading ‘Harry Potter’ thoroughly. However, Seong-jin told me something that caught my attention.

성진: 해리포터를 2 장만 하는데
3 시간이나 걸렸어요... 수업 중
listening tape 을 듣는데 하나도

Seong-jin: The other day, it took 3 hours
to study only 2 pages [of Harry Potter]...
I could not follow well a listening

이해가 안되는 거예요. 근데 공부는 별로 안하고 여기저기 여행만 다닌 같은반 아이들이 내가 아주 어렵다고 생각한 단어도 다 알고 있다는 생각에 쇼크먹었어요. 그후로는 해리포터를 너무 자세히 공부하지 않기로 맘먹고, 한시간 반만에 10 페이지의 분량을 끝냈어요...

exercise in the class. I then got shocked when I saw some of my classmates who I thought did not study well and rather spent time in traveling around seemed to know a word that I found quite difficult to understand. After that I decided not to study Harry Potter as thoroughly, and tried to read 10 pages in one and a half hours...

요새는 writing 에 그렇게 신경 안쓰기로 했어요. Writing tutorial center 게시판에 붙혀있는 유명한 사람들이 한 말들 읽어 봤는데...
희정: 어떤 유명한 사람들?
성진: 미국 전직 대통령같은 사람들이요. 단어 하나 하나는 제가 다 아는데, 문장으로 합쳐 놓으니깐 굉장히 아카데믹한 것 같아서 다 외워버렸어요. (성진과의 인터뷰, 2002년 4월 19일)

These days I also decided not to care too much about my writing. I had a chance to read some lines made by famous people in the world, which was posted on the board of the writing tutorial center...

Heekyeong: Who were the famous people?

Seong-jin: People like former U.S. presidents. I was familiar with every word in the lines. It looked very academic when the words are combined in sentences. So, I memorized them right away. (Interview with Seong-jin, April 19, 2002)

In this quote I see two interesting events that seem to have triggered Seong-jin to finally take a different attitude toward the practice of writing an argumentative essay. First, he was “shocked” by his classmates who seemed to have acquired better listening skills and known an English word he did not learn although they seemed to have spent much time traveling. This event seemed to have influenced him to feel that he needs to modify his way of learning English, which was to spend much time reading and memorizing ‘Harry Potter’. Instead of spending about three to five hours reading a few pages of the book, he tried not to read so thoroughly and completed reading “ten pages in one and a half hours”. Another event I find interesting was that he showed a positive perception toward formal academic writing when he viewed quotations on the blackboard written by former

American presidents as “academic” and memorized the entire quotes. This event seems to have influenced him to become aware of another aspect of what he perceived as “formal academic writing”. He seemed to have realized that formal academic writing is not only about writing as “the same as all the other students” (Interview, February, 15, 2002), and therefore, he could become less resistant and compromised.

I think these two events have convinced Seong-jin to negotiate among his different identities emerging in his L2 literacy practices. I see each identity is positioned with the aim to achieve a certain amount of capital. Identities such as being a good student in the ESL program in order to obtain good marks; being a creative writer to be a good writer (meaning a “good” or “wise” person) and to become a person with power, have mediated the way Seong-jin practices his L2 literacy. Before these events, probably his sense of self as a creative writer influenced him greatly to study Harry Potter and to not want to follow the rules he learned in the writing class. However, it seems that the two events (mediated by other positioning of his multiple identities) influenced his creative being to be less dominant and mediated him to compromise his approach to his L2 writing practice.

Seong-jin seems to have started to take a different perspective on what he viewed as “academic writing”. He found something attractive in the quotation on the blackboard even though it was still from his point of view “academic” writing. I see at that moment he started to become aware of different aspects of what he believed was academic writing. Lines by famous people seem to influence him to be less resistant toward the formal academic style of writing he was being taught and he saw a reason to invest his effort in formal writing practice. This process of awareness can be understood as a

dialectic change: human identities and agency are constantly changed dialectically and dialogically by different events experienced. In a Bourdieuan sense, the process of becoming aware of the other possibilities can be seen as the awareness of capital that can be obtained by choosing a different activity. For instance, when Seong-jin was engaged in writing an argumentative essay, the position he took was to be a good student and get good grades in the course which would lead to an increase in capital. However, this position seemed to be weaker than his position as a creative writer, therefore he continued to read Harry Potter. I find it important that there appeared to be a compromise in his statement: “After that I decided not to study Harry Potter so thoroughly and tried to read 10 pages (only) in 1.5 hours” suggesting that this was the result of an internal negotiation. In other words, Seong-jin took a new position as a result of a polyvocal negotiation process in which he was engaged. It may also be that while the two events that influenced him were independent, the first event may have made him more susceptible to the influence of the second event.

Sun-young:

Observer, Director and Creator in Multiple Social Worlds

중요한건 게임을 잘해야 해요... 말하는
상대가 누구지 아는것이 중요해요.
(선영, 인터뷰, 2002년 2월 8일)

The important thing is that you have to
play the game well... it's important to
know whom you are talking to. (Sun-
young, interview, February 8, 2002)

The remark presented is stated not by Bakhtin or a Bakhtinian scholar but by one of my participants, Sun-young. She was a nineteen-year old, enrolled in the first year of a

B.A. program in Industrial Design at an English medium Canadian university in Ottawa.

When I was looking for participants in my Ph.D. research, I saw her by chance in the cafeteria of the university, talking to her friend. I immediately noticed that she was Korean. I came up to her and explained my research project and my need for Korean participants. Sun-young promptly agreed to her participation. She told me the reason why she decided to participate in my study was because,

논문 주제에 관심이 있었어요. 제 2
외국어나 언어 배우는 것에 관심이
있거든요. 그리고 한국사람을 돕게 되는
것도 좋다고 생각했구요. (선영, 인터뷰,
2001 년 11 월 28 일)

I was interested in the topic. I am
interested in something like second
language and learning languages. Also, I
thought it's good to help a Korean
person. (Sun-young, Interview,
November 28, 2001)

I was pleased to hear that she was personally interested in second language learning, which made me think that she would be an enthusiastic and active participant in my inquiry. On the other hand, Sun-young seemed to believe that she should help out other Koreans as a part of being Korean. This I see is the influence of Korean social and cultural psychology, the “we” (Cheong) relationship (Choi, 2000) I discussed in Chapter 2.

In addition, Sun-young told me that she believes she has accumulated more experiences than her peers. She left her home and country by herself only at the age of fifteen. First having taken several ESL (English as a second language) programs, she went to high school in New Zealand and completed the diploma in Canada. She then began her university program pursuing her B.A. Besides studying the school subjects very hard and always achieving high grades, she has also worked at a variety of part-time jobs, such as a waitress, cashier, and an assistant cook in a family restaurant. At the time

of her graduation, she participated in the process of making the yearbook for her high school. Her painting selected for the cover of the yearbook was recommended by her Art teacher. She told me that she enjoyed all the experiences she had and regarded them as very good learning experiences:

제 나이 또래에 저만큼 많은 경험을 한 아이는 없을거예요. 그것에 대해 아주 자랑스럽게 생각하고 있어요. 전 경험이 아주 중요하다고 믿어요... (선영, 인터뷰, 2002년 1월 25일)

I don't think there is anyone at my age who has had so many experiences as I have. I feel very proud of myself because of that. I believe [life] experiences are very important... (Sun-young, interview, January 25, 2002)

Probably because of that reason, she seemed to enjoy the interviews with me since she could talk about what she had gone through since she left home at a very young age.

Taking Action to Go Abroad

Sun-young came to Canada in January 1999. Before coming to Canada, however, she first went to New Zealand because she felt that she needed to study abroad. Interestingly, as shown in her comments below, she recalled that ever since she was young, she wanted to leave the Korean school system and pursue her study in another country.

제가 국민학교 3학년 때부터 한국의 대학입시제도에 불만이 있었어요. 시험만을 위해서 공부하는것이 쓸모가 없는것 같고, 그 쓸데없는 공부를 하면서 시간을 낭비하기가 싫었어요. 제가 원래 승부욕이 강하고 활발한데 쓸데없는 공부를 많이 해야된다는 점이 싫었어요. 그렇게 하면 나의 creative

Since I was in the third grade in elementary school, I have been disappointed with the national system of university entrance exam in Korea. I felt that it was useless only to study for the exam, and I didn't want to waste my time for studying something worthless. I see myself as a competitive and very

quality 가 손상되고 눌러질까봐
걱정이 됐구요. (선영, 인터뷰, 2001 년
11 월 16 일)

active person, and I don't want to spend
too much time studying for nothing. I
was worried that [if I go through this
system,] my creativity would be harmed
and suppressed. (Sun-young, interview,
November 16, 2001)

As I described in Chapter 3, students in Korea usually go to elementary school when they are seven or eight years old. Maguire (1994, 1997, 1999) illustrates young bilingual children's ability to engage actively in negotiation processes according to their own evaluative orientations toward their social worlds. Sun-young was only ten-years old when she formulated her own view about the Korean school education system and perceived that public school system in Korea was not appropriate for her. As reflected in the previous excerpt, she did not feel that what she was learning at school was useful. Therefore, she felt it was not worthwhile to remain within the system. She believed that the effect of the social system of the examination would be rather negative on her own creativity. It seems that Sun-young regarded school as a place in which she could develop and explore her cognitive skills, such as her creativity, which she felt was one of the main reasons for her to invest in attending school. However, as she realized that she would not be able to obtain capital commensurate with her investment, she decided to look for another place for her investment.

After this realization, Sun-young started to find a way to escape from the situation. She continued to tell me her story as follows:

그래서 국민학교 6 학년 때 부터
부모님한테 외국에 있는 학교에

So, I kept asking my parents to send me
to a school abroad since I was in grade

보내달라고 얘기했는데 반대하셨어요...
 그러다 고등학교 배치고사 보고 학교
 배정도 다 받았는데 옆집에 살고 있는 제
 부모님과 친한 아저씨가 부인과
 아이들을 1년동안 뉴질랜드에
 가게됐다는 얘기를 들었어요. 그래서 그
 아저씨한테 나도 같이 가게 해달라고
 우리 부모님 좀 설득해 달라고 부탁을
 했더니 됐어요. (선영, 인터뷰, 2001년
 11월 16일)

six in elementary school, but they did
 not allow me to... When I took the high
 school entrance exam and my new
 school was already designated, I heard
 that the neighbour living right next to
 our house who was very close to my
 parents decided to go to New Zealand
 with his wife and children to stay for a
 year or so. Then, I asked him to
 convince my father to allow me to go
 with his family, and that worked. (Sun-
 young, interview, November 16, 2001)

Sun-young could not convince her parents to let her go abroad alone. However, when she heard that the neighbours would go to New Zealand, she estimated that her neighbour's persuasion would be more powerful than her own in obtaining the permission from her parents. Indeed, the fact that their daughter would have a secure place to stay and reliable care by the neighbour convinced her parents to let her go. I find it very impressive the way Sun-young exercised her agency with respect to her own education. She was clearly aware that having creativity is very important for her. She critically observed the negative influence of the rigid standardized educational system on nurturing her creativity. She then made a judgment that she should get away from the system.

Strategies of Learning English and Socialization

Sun-young's experiences of studying abroad began in New Zealand in 1997. She told me how she began to learn English and socialize in her new school context in New Zealand as follows.

뉴질랜드에 처음 도착해서 ESL 을 10 주 정도 들었어요. 뉴질랜드에서 영어학원 다니면서 배운 영어가 많이 도움이 됐어요. 그때 깨달은것이 한국에서 배운 영어는 별로 쓸모가 없다라는 생각이 들었어요... 그리고 거기서 고등학교 다니고요. 작은 사립 여학교 였는데, 여러가지 activity 에 많이 참가하려고 노력했어요. 미술반, 체스 클럽, 토론반, 필드 하키, 스쿼시, 펜싱, 야구 같은거요. 저는 몸 움직이는걸 좋아해요. 전 외국 사람들과 한국 사람들 골고루 사귀려고 노력해요. 한국 사람들하고만 놀려고 하면 소외를 당해요. 그런데 한국사람들도 사귀어야 돼요. 필요할때 속마음을 털어놓을수가 있으니까. (선영, 인터뷰, 2001 년 11 월 16 일).

Upon arriving in New Zealand, I took an ESL course for about ten weeks. I thought learning English in New Zealand was very effective. I found that the way I learned English in Korea was useless... I then went to a high school there. It was a small private girls' school. I tried to participate in a variety of activity clubs, such as art club, chess club, debating club, field hockey, squash, fencing, baseball, etc. I like to move my body. I also tried to get along well not only with foreigners but also with Koreans. If you get along only with Koreans, you become left out; however, you need some Korean friends as well in case you need to talk to somebody. (Sun-young, interview, November 16, 2001)

It appears that Sun-young was clearly aware of what she liked to do and how she could appropriate it in order to gain access to English speaking social groups, which she needed in order to adjust to the new environment and develop language skills. She recognized herself as a person who likes to engage in activities and socializing; therefore, she decided to become a member of activity classes. She perceived it as an efficient way to obtain social capital, to access New Zealand peer groups and to become friends with them. She also saw it as an effective way to achieve cultural capital, English language skills, rather than hanging out only with Korean peers. At the same time, she did not neglect to make some Korean friends as she said, "in case you need to talk to somebody." I interpret her comment as her acting on the "cheong" psychology among Koreans discussed by Choi (2000). I believe she was aware of the particular "we" relationship that was implicitly yet strongly existing among her Korean peers who are the members of the Korean students organization she was affiliated with. She perceived that she could

depend on her Korean friends at a more comfortable level than she could with her New Zealander peers. Therefore, she invested her time and effort to build the friendship with her Korean friends.

Interestingly, Sun-young told me in a much later interview (on March 8, 2002) that she had read the book, 'Chilmak Chiljang' written by Hong (1993), when she was preparing for going abroad for her education. She tried once to implement the approach to study English as described in the book when she had just begun to go to the high school in New Zealand. She talked about how she initially reacted to the book:

10학년 두번째 학기부터 뉴질랜드에 있었는데, 그때 영어를 잘 못하니까 공부를 열심히 해야겠다하고 있었어요. 그래서 책상앞에 앉아서 항상 공부만 하려고 하고 있었어요. 원래는 activity를 다양하게 하는것 좋아하는데 홍정욱의 '7막 7장'을 읽은 후로 괜히 그책을 심각하게 읽어서 홍정욱처럼 공부를 엄청 열심히 해야겠다하고 있었어요. 가장 기억에 나는 대목은 맨 처음에 미국에 있는 학교를 다니기 시작했을때 영어를 못하는게 자존심 상해서 밤이나 낮이나 공부를 했는데, 밤에 기숙사 전체에서 전기불이 나오는 곳이 화장실 밖에 없어서 화장실에서 공부를 했대요. 그말에 저는 불도 잘 나오는 집에서 사는데... 그리고 시계가 틱틱틱 도는 소리를 들으면 식은땀이 났대요. 영어를 빨리 해야하는데 하는 압박감 때문이에요... 그래서 나도 공부를 12시 넘어서까지 하고 있는데 시계가는 소리가 나면, "어머, 어떻게, 어떻게 해", 하고 그랬어요. 제가 그책에 너무 영향을 많이 받았었나봐요. (선영, 인터뷰, 2002년 3월 8일)

Since the second semester of Grade 10, I was in New Zealand, and at that time I could not speak English well. I felt I had to study very hard. So, I was trying to sit in front of a desk and study all the time. Actually I always love doing a variety of activities. However, since I read Hong J.W.'s 'Chilmak Chiljang' and I took what he said [in the book] so seriously, I decided only to study very hard like him. The parts I remember so well is when he just started his new school in the States, he felt so frustrated by the fact that he could not speak very well. So, he decided to study day and night, even studying in the washroom of the residence he stayed since the washroom was the only place where light was on at night on the entire campus. And I was thinking, "I am staying in the house with enough light, and nevertheless... [I don't study as hard as him] ... and he had cold sweat as he heard the clock was ticking because of the pressure he had on improving his English as soon as possible... so then I was also studying until midnight and if I heard the sound of clock going, I would go "Oh, gee, what

shall I do, what shall I do?”... I think I was then influenced too much by the

book. (Sun-young, Interview, March 8, 2002)

While reflecting on her experience, Sun-young said that she thought she was “then influenced too much by the book,” I wanted to ask her what she meant by that.

희경: 그럼 그책에서 뭘 배웠니?
선영: 공부를 진짜 많이 해야겠다.
공부를 열심히 하면 된다... 그런데
지금은 많이 바꿨어요.
희경: 어떻게?
선영: 그렇게 살면 인생이 하나도
없잖아요. 자신에게 너무 스트레스만
많이 주고... 전 예전에 비해 많이
relax 해 졌어요... 그런데 내가 너무
이론적으로만 공부를 많이하면 나의
creative 한 면을 망치는것 같아요.
나는 industrial design
student 이고 그게 좋아서 여기까지
왔는데... (선영과의 인터뷰, 2002 년
3 월 8 일)

Heekyeong: So, then, what did you learn from the book?

Sun-young: I should study really hard. If I work hard, I can make it... however, now, things have changed a lot.

Heekyeong: How so?

Sun-young: If you do like the way he did, then there is no life. It can give you only so much stress... I am much more relaxed now than before... If I study only theory, I am afraid that it will damage my creativity. I am a student of industrial design. I have come so far because I like it so much. (Interview with Sun-young, March 8, 2002)

Sun-young’ statement in this excerpt reflects an interesting interplay between different mediated actions. She was very impressed with Hong’s hard work to achieve his success, which I view was mediated by the symbolic power the author carried. As the case of Seong-jin, she seemed to be attracted to the book because of the fact that the author went to and graduated from Harvard University. Therefore, as the case of Seong-jin, she too became interested in appropriating the same strategy as Hong demonstrated in learning English. In other words, Sun-young’s particular English learning practice, sitting at a desk and memorizing a number of words, seems to be mediated by her being a hard working student and

the cultural capital that Hong obtained. However, after having practiced this action, another identity, a person who wants to appreciate life and to nurture her creativity seems to have influenced her decision making process about her L2 literacy practice. She realized that she was experiencing “no life” and “too much stress” and thereby, she felt that continuing such a practice could “damage” her creativity. She was aware that creativity was an important element of who she is, or who she wants to become. She then decided to modify her approach in the future by participating in a variety of activities and socializing with English speaking people. This new action of dealing with L2 literacy practice Sun-young decided to take emerged from the dialectic interplay between two different voices, the voice of a hard-working Korean student and the voice of someone who appreciates life and creative ability.

Sun-young explained her strategies for acquiring English skills. Her initial goal was to gain access to the English speaking social groups without good language skills. She was aware that there were other cultural tools, besides language, that could mediate her interaction with popular groups among her peers:

저는 minority 로서 소외감은 자신이 만드는 거라고 생각해요. 영어를 잘 못해도 “짱”인 group 에 찰수 있어요... 같은반에서 “짱”인 그룹의 아이들과 친해지면 금방 쉽게 되요. 운동 같이하고 힙합 스타일로 옷 입고 친구들 집에 가서 같이 놀고 하지요... (인터뷰, 2002 년 1 월 25 일)

I think that feeling left out as a minority is constructed by myself. I believe that you can be a part of the most popular group even if you don't speak English well... It gets easier if you get along with the group of kids who has power in the class. Do exercise together, dressing in hip-hop styles, and go over to their places... (Interview, January 25, 2002)

Sun-young's comments demonstrate that understanding about cultural tools as a mediational means in L2 literacy practices should include both material and symbolic tools. Her exercise of agency was mediated by "doing exercise together" and "dressing in hip-hop styles" and not only the English language skills. I noticed at times that her English skills were very close to that of native speakers of English. She attributed her fluency mostly to her socialization with her English speaking peers. In the social worlds of young adults, language skills are often not the only means that help them socialize with their friends (Lee, 2002). In Sun-young's social world, doing exercise and dressing in popular style were very effective cultural tools that mediated her L2 practices.

After staying in New Zealand, Sun-young went to Canada in January 1999. In 1997, her father's business was badly hit by the economic crisis in Korea, and therefore, the financial situation of her family became unstable. Before the economic crisis, Sun-young's family had always belonged to the upper-middle class, and never experienced any financial difficulties. Therefore, to experience financial difficulties was quite challenging for her and her family. Despite the lack of economic capital, Sun-young was always very positive, active in learning, and hardworking. Sun-young often talked to me about her parents and the relationships with their neighbours. She had wonderful memories with her family and the neighbours when she was younger, which she appreciates deeply:

어렸을때 살던 아파트 동네 이웃들과
엄청 친하게 지냈어요. 이웃 아저씨,
아주머니, 아이들, 모두와 다 친
가족처럼 지냈어요. 전 제 부모님과 참

When I was young, my family was very
close to people in the neighbourhood.
Everyone knew each other and cared
about each other like family. I was

친했어요. 밤에 잘 때면 아빠가 항상 침대 곁에 오셔서 재밌는 얘기를 해주시거나 교훈되는 이야기를, 아니면 책을 읽어주시기도 했어요. 제 아빠는 저와 동생을 항상 '공주'와 '천사'라고 부르셨어요. 남들이 딸 둘이 있다고 하면 그게 아니라 공주 하나와 천사 하나 있다고 하시면서 교정하세요. 그때 우리 굉장히 잘 살아서 스키장에도 자주 가고 외국에 여행도 가고 했었는데... 원하면 뭐든지 가질 수 있었어요... 요새 고생하고 있는 것 괜찮아요, 어렸을 적에 너무 행복하게 지냈기 때문에. (선영, 인터뷰, 2002년 3월 8일)

very close to my parents. Every night my dad always came to our bed and told us interesting stories or good sayings, or read books for us. He would always call me and my sister 'princess' and 'angel'. If someone said that he has two daughters, he would then correct it by saying, 'No, I have one 'princess' and one 'angel'. Back then, we were pretty well off. We often went skiing and traveled abroad for vacation... I could have everything I wanted ... I don't mind that I am having difficult times these days, because I had very happy times when I was young. (Sun-young, interview, March 8, 2002)

Wertsch (1991) notes that what is available in particular people's cultural tools depends on their sociohistorical and cultural situations. I feel that Sun-young's observation of her parents interactions with the neighbours in her childhood somehow deeply influenced her in ways of interacting with many people and dealing with challenges in her diverse social contexts. During childhood, she observed that her parents built close relationships with their neighbours. This observation influenced her to perceive socialization as an important cultural tool in her social space. During the interviews with her, I often felt that she had great socialization skills and strategies of socializing in different contexts. The following excerpts show that she was aware of her skills and how to appropriate them in different social contexts.

전 성격상 많은 사람들 만나고 좋은 관계를 유지해야 하는 스타일이예요... 일단 사귀게 되면 가끔씩 전화해서 잘 지내나 물어봐서 다 챙기고요... (선영, 인터뷰, 2002년 1월 25일)

Because of my character, I have to meet many people and develop good relationships with them... once I get to know them, every now and then I call them to ask how they are doing... (Sun-young, interview, January 25, 2002)

희경: 사고술에 관한 너만의 조언이 있다면?

선영: 사람들에게 착한일을 많이 하려고 해요. 차를 탈때 안전벨트 매는것도와주는 사소한 일에서 부터 친구가 아프면 집에서 있으라고 하고 노트 정리해서 갖다주고 그래요.
(선영과의 인터뷰, 2002 년 2 월 8 일)

Heekyeong: What are your strategies in socializing?

Sun-young: I try to do good [things] for people, something trivial like helping out fastening a seat belt when you are getting into a car, or when a friend is sick and you then suggest her to stay at home and bring notes of lectures.
(Interview with Sun-young, February 8, 2002)

In 2001 Sun-young commenced her B.A. in Industrial Design. She said that she always liked to draw and paint, and make things ever since she was young, and was probably influenced by her mother who was an interior designer. When she began the program, her status in Canada was as an international student with a student's visa. As mentioned earlier, due to the financial difficulty of her family, the high tuition for international students was a big burden for her to continue studying in Canada. She tried very hard to reduce her living costs as much as she could.

Living with Landlady and Positioning Multiple Identities

In Ottawa, Sun-young was living in a rented room sharing the house with the landlady and another tenant. Her landlady was, in her view, a very “intellectual” person, university educated in political science. She developed a very good relationship with her landlady. As reflected in the interview excerpt presented earlier, her strategy of getting to know people and developing good relationships with them was to find out how she could help them.

집에서는 집 주인 아주머니 많이 도와드리려고 해요. 집 청소하거나

At home, I try to help the landlady by cleaning up the house and the dish-

설것이 하거나 쓰레기 갖다 버리거나...
그러면 아주머니가 한시간당 8 불씩
쳐서 렌트에서 빼주세요. 그래서 사실은
방값으로 300 불 중에서 250 불 정도만
내게 되요. (선영, 인터뷰, 2002 년 1 월
25 일)

washer and throwing away garbage
bags... she then pays me eight dollars
per hour, and deducts it from the rent.
So, I end up paying actually about two
hundred fifty dollars out of three
hundred dollars for my room. (Sun-
young, interview, January 25, 2002)

Sun-young's actions in helping the landlady with her housework can be interpreted from two perspectives. First, from a social-cultural-historical understanding of the Korean mind, Sun-young wanted to develop good relationships with her landlady to nurture 'Cheong' between them. The activity of helping her landlady is most probably influenced by the Habitus that she acquired from her childhood experiences in Korea, as Seong-jin tried the same way for his homestay family. Ironically, when Seong-jin vacuumed his landlord's house, he did not receive Cheong in return. Rather, he was asked to clean another room without being appreciated for what he has already done. So, based on his Korean Habitus, he experienced "Cheong-tadajinda (정 떨어진 다)", meaning that the Cheong between them was shattered. In contrast, Sun-young's helping her landlady was appreciated immediately and even received a discount from her rent. This exchange of social capital and economic capital strengthened their Cheong.

Secondly, it seems that Sun-young exercised her agency to take the action to help the housework in order to obtain social capital as well as cultural capital. Sun-young probably invested her physical labour expecting to obtain a good relationship with her landlady as well as a chance for learning and practicing her English. As she was actively helping her landlady with the housework, she

encountered many opportunities to have a conversation with her, and ask questions each time she did not understand a word from the conversation. Her identities as a tenant, a social person, and an English learner have played in the situation simultaneously.

The next two interview excerpts illustrate Bakhtinian dialogism that one positions oneself in different identities according to different interlocutors in different social contexts. Sun-young was aware of different outcomes that she would gain from her different roles with her professor and with her landlady such as being a good debater and a good listener. Given her social skills and positive attitudes toward learning, she was very much interested in expressing her opinions and sharing ideas with others. For example, in the next quote she was not someone who would hesitate to express her voice, and surely had an ability of being a good “debater”:

전 보통 모르는게 있으면 사람들에게 물어봐요. 어떤 교수님들은 그런거 잘 안좋아하세요. 내가 말을 너무 많이 해서 그럴지도 몰라요. 어떤 교수님은 너는 디자이너가 될거니 아니면 변호사가 될거니 하세요. 물론 농담이긴 한데, 그런말 들으면 내가 말을 너무 많이 하나 싶은 생각이 들어요. (선영, 인터뷰, 2001년 11월 28일)

I usually ask people if there is something I don't know. Some professors don't like it sometimes. It may be because I talk too much... somebody was saying to me, 'Are you going to be a designer or a lawyer?' Of course, it was a joke, but it made me feel that I talked too much. (Sun-young, interview, November 28, 2001)

She then decided to be a good listener when she interacted with her landlady knowing the rationale of positioning herself differently:

중요한건 게임을 잘해야 해요. 사람들과 좋은 관계를 유지하려면 그사람들이 싫어하는 걸 하면 안돼요. 주인 아줌마는 talker 이지 listener 가 아니예요.

The important thing is that you have to play the game well. If you want to keep a good relationship with people, you should not do what they don't like. My landlady is a talker not a listener.

She 말하고 컨트롤하는 걸 좋아하지
 충고를 듣기를 좋아하지 않아요. 그래서
 저는 주로 주인 아주머니한테 제 의견을
 내세우지 않아요. 저도 제 주장이
 강한편인데 아주머니 하고는 절대로 제
 목소리를 내세우지 않아요. 그런데,
 중요한건 누구와 얘기를 하고 있는지
 아는것이에요. 친구들과하고 있을때야 제
 의견을 표현할수 있지만 아주머니하고
 저는 landlady 와 tenant 예요.
 가능한한 충돌이 생기지 않게하려고
 노력해요. (선영, 2002 년 2 월 8 일)

She likes to talk and control, and not
 want to be receive advice. Her ex-
 husband seemed to have a tendency to
 control her. Therefore, I don't usually
 express my own opinions to her. I am a
 person with a strong opinion, but with
 her, I never raise my voice. However,
 it's important to know whom you are
 talking to. You can express your
 opinions to your friend. But, since she
 and I are a landlady and a tenant, I try
 not to get into a conflict as much as
 possible. (Sun-young, February 8, 2002)

Through the process of getting to know the landlady, Sun-young acquired
 strategies to successfully handle the conversations and interactions with her
 interlocutors through a dialectic process of different mediated actions she has
 taken.

중요한건 그사람이 뭘 좋아하는지
 알아내려고 해야해요. 예를들어 제
 주인아줌마는 자기 얘기를 들어주는것을
 좋아해요. 그런데 'How are you?' 나
 'Where are you going?' 이런 질문
 하는것은 안 좋아해요. 그런 질문들은
 사생활에 관한거라서 안좋아 하더라고요.
 전에 한번 어디가냐고 물었더니
 안좋아했어요. 그이후로는 그런 질문
 절대로 안들어보죠. 그래서 지난번에는
 치과 의사 만나고 온것이 기억이 나서
 어땠냐고 물어봤지요. 그랬더니
 어땠었는지 얘기해 주어서 듣고
 있었지요. (선영, 인터뷰, 2002 년 2 월
 8 일)

The important thing is that ... you
 should try to find out what that person
 likes. For example, I know that my
 landlady likes to be listened to.
 However, she doesn't like to be asked
 questions like, 'How are you?' or
 'Where are you going?' She doesn't like
 to be asked such questions, since it's a
 matter of her privacy. Once I asked
 'Where are you going?' to my landlady,
 and she didn't like it. Since then, I never
 ask such a question. So, the other day, I
 remembered that she had been to see her
 dentist, and asked her how it was, and so
 on. She then told me how it went and I
 listened to her... (Sun-young, interview,
 February 8, 2002)

In the first action Sun-young was a Korean student who intended to be friendly to her landlady by asking, “where are you going?” In a Korean discourse among acquaintances, it is usual to ask one another where one is heading for as a part of greeting or a small talk. However, she noticed immediately her way of greeting, probably generated by Korean habitus, was not effective for leading to further conversation with her landlady. She then modified her ways of initiating conversations with her landlady by asking something that she perceived would not cross the boundary of the landlady’s privacy. In this case, Sun-young positioned herself as a tenant who should not ask questions that might be perceived to violate the landlady’s privacy. At the same time, she still continued being a social person and did not give up investing in a friendly relationship with the landlady and practicing her English with her, which had eventually turned out to become social and cultural capital.

Besides their legal relationship, there were more reasons why Sun-young decided to invest in developing a good relationship with her landlady. She explained to me in more detail what she had gained from the interactions with her landlady.

주인 아주머니하고 가까워진 이후로는
여러가지 활동에 많이 끼워주세요.
장보러 가거나 단풍놀이 갈때나
저녁먹으러 가거나 일요일에 brunch
먹으러 가거나 할때... 물론 시간이 날때
친구들과 노는것이 더 재미있지요.
하지만 주인 아주머니하고 같이 있으면
많은것을 배울수가 있어요. 우리가 하는
대화의 주제도 재미있어요. 건강한
라이프 스타일에 관해서, organic
food 에 관해서도 얘기하고...

Since I have become close to my landlady, she often invites me for her various activities, such as going to the grocery store, going to a park to see the color change of trees, going out for dinner, or going out for Sunday brunch, and so on... Of course, it’s more fun to hang out with friends in my spare time. However, I can learn a lot from hanging out with my landlady. Our conversation topics are interesting. We talk about healthy life styles, organic food... She

아주머니가 political science 를 전공을 해서 정치에 관해서나 읽은 책에 관해서도 얘기하고... 아주머니한테서 캐나다에 관해서 더 배우게 되요... 영문학 쪽으로 굉장히 아는 것도 많고... 아줌마가 그러는데 영어 native speaker 들도 어휘를 사용하는 수준들이 다 다르대요. 어떤 단어를 사용하느냐에 따라 차이가 많이 날수 있대요. 특히 업무에서 무슨 일을 하게되는냐에 영향을 준다고요... 반면에 한인 2 세대인 친구들은 쓰는 단어가 제한되어 있고 슬랭을 많이 써요... 전 항상 에세이 제출하기 전에 아줌마한테 proofreading 부탁해요. (선영, 인터뷰, 2002 년 2 월 8 일)

majored in political science, so we talk about politics, and talk about books we read... I get to learn more about Canada from her... She is also very knowledgeable in English literature. She said that even English native speakers have different levels of using vocabulary. Depending on which word you choose to use, it can make a difference in terms of what kind of tasks you would get at work... On the other hand, most of my second-generation Korean friends here speak lots of slang with limited vocabulary... I always ask my landlady to proofread my essays before submission. (Sun-young, February 8, 2002)

What Sun-young saw as symbolic capital she could gain from hanging out with her landlady was good knowledge of the English language and Canadian culture which are very useful cultural capital for her. At the same time, she also believed that developing social relationships and networking in the community of Korean students in Ottawa would bring her valuable social capital as reflected in her next comment:

토론토에 있는 제 고등학교 best friend 가 홍콩계 Chinese-Canadian 이예요. 그 친구는 캐나다에서 태어났는데도 중국말도 아주 잘해요. 제가 보기에 개가 캐나다 주류에도 속하고 중국 사회에도 속하고 발란스를 잘 맞추는것 같아요.

My best friend in high school, Toronto, was a Hong Kong Chinese-Canadian. She was born in Canada. Nevertheless, she spoke very good Chinese. She was well balanced, belonging both to communities, Canadian mainstream and the Chinese local community. (Sun-young, interview, February 8, 2002)

However, the processes of L2 learners' negotiating with their multiple identities are dynamic and sometimes contradictory (McKay & Wong, 1996). Sun-young had

difficult moments she found uneasy to handle as she tried to balance among different identities associated with different capital. According to her, the university program she was enrolled in, Industrial Design, was very demanding. There were many project assignments from studio courses so that she had to often stay up very late at night. Unfortunately she became sick very often during the semester and had to skip a few classes. Because of her frequent illness during the period of the interviews, I had to cancel our interview appointment a few times. She became very frustrated by the fact that she could not invest so much on studying her courses and socializing with her friends as she had:

제 자신에 대한 기대가 너무 높아서
스트레스를 많이 받아요. 내가 어디까지
할수 있는지 궁금해서요... 점점더
욕심이 많아져요. 만약에 A+를 받지
못하면 내 자신에 대해서 막 화가
나구요... 어떤경우는 모든것 다 내버려
두고 스트레스 안받는 어디론가
가버렸으면 좋겠다는 생각이 들어요.
그러면 스스로에게 즐겨야 한다. 공부도
즐기면서 해야 한다고 지꾸 생각하려고
해요... 이것도 해야돼고 저것도
해야하고, 친구들하고 놀기도
해야하고... 자주 아파서 수업도 못가고,
그러면 그것때문에 스트레스 더 받고...
(선영, 인터뷰, 2002년 3월 8일)

I have too much stress from having too much expectation from myself. I get curious about knowing what my limit is... I become even greedy. I get angry at myself if I don't get all A+... sometimes feel like leaving everything behind and go somewhere else from having too much stress. Then, I keep reminding myself that I should enjoy, should study and enjoy doing it... I have to do this and that, as well as hanging out with friends... I got sick often, and then, couldn't go to class, and then I get more stress from that... (Sun-young, interview, March 8, 2002)

In the last interview with Sun-young, she was particularly under a lot of stress since she was preparing for the final exams for the semester when she was not physically in a good condition. While one voice told her that she should work hard, another voice suggested her to take care of her health.

요즘은 엄마가 해주는 밥 먹는게 정말
그리워요... 밀린 빨래도 엄청 많고...
아마 너무 피곤한것 같아요, 해야할
일들이 너무 많아서... 전화카드 살
시간이 없었더래서 어제 두달만에서야
엄마랑 전화 통화를 했어요. (선영,
인터뷰, 2002 년 4 월 9 일)

These days I really miss eating meals
prepared by my mom... lots of laundry
needs to be done as well... I am
probably too tired, there are so many
things to do... It's been two months to
talk to my mom, since I have not had
time to buy a calling card.
(Sun-young, interview, April 9, 2002)

Sun-young's experiences confirms Peirce's (1995) observation that the multiple identities and roles of individuals in second language contexts are socially and culturally constructed based on various social relations of power. Sun-young's different ways of positioning herself in different social contexts help me understand the dynamic nature of the way her social mind resulted in different actions while she interacted with her various sociocultural worlds.

Sang-woo:

Strong Academic Student Searching for Meaning in Life

전 공부하는것이 가장 중요하다고
생각하지는 않아요... 나중에라도 제게
정말로 중요한것을 찾게 되면 그때
공부하는것을 포기할수 있다고 믿어요...
전 공부하는것이 내가 재미있어서 하지
다른 애들한테 지기 싫어서 공부하고
싶지는 않아요. (상우, 인터뷰, 2002 년
3 월 19 일)

I don't think studying is the most
important thing... later on if I find
something really important to me, I
believe that I can then disregard
studying... I want to study because it's
fun for me, not because I don't want to
be defeated by others.
(Sang-woo, interview, March 19, 2002)

Sang-woo, an eighteen-year-old student when I met him, was known as a "very smart kid" among his friends and acquaintances. When I had just begun the interview with Sun-young, she mentioned the name, Sang-Woo, who she thought might be

interested in joining the interviews for my research. Sun-young noted to me that he went to “KAIST (Korea Advanced Institute for Science and Technology)” before coming to Canada. In Korea, he completed the three-year program of high school education in two years and attended the first year of university at KAIST. The name of the university, KAIST, carries special symbolic power in Korean society, since it is recognized as a university where a scientific “genius” would go. Funded by the Korean government, since 1971, KAIST has focused on educating scientifically gifted young Korean students and trained them to become highly qualified experts in science and technology. Frankly speaking, I was indeed interested in getting to know someone who went to KAIST, particularly as a participant in my study. Somehow I had a biased opinion that a student at KAIST must be a “book worm” who does nothing except study. I was curious whether he could be one of those “book worms”, and wanted to find out what sort of frustrations he would go through as a newcomer to a new country. As Sun-young said, Sang-woo agreed to participate simply because she asked her to do so, as well as because he thought it would give him a change to meet more people. As I listened to his diverse voices and observe his possibilities of selfhood through the interviews, I felt ashamed to be prejudiced so easily. He was definitely a bright young man, but was not the one who would do only studying in his life.

Sang-woo was enrolled in the B.A. program in Computer Systems Engineering in the same university in Ottawa as Sun-young’s. He came to Canada in July 2000 after having attended the first semester in university in Korea because his family immigrated to Canada. He was living with his parents and his younger brother. He was receiving a scholarship from his Canadian university that covered his tuition. Thus, he did not seem

to have financial difficulty except that he felt he did not have much money for himself since he was depending on the allowance from his parents. When he arrived in Ottawa the first time, he went to a local high school although he had already graduated from a high school and finished the first year of university in Korea. He told me that he wanted to do so, since he was still very young (seventeen years old) and wanted to meet Canadians around his age and to experience what high school life is like in Canada. Therefore, he registered for the last year of high school, which was Grade 13, and were known as Ontario Academic Courses (OACs). These courses were designed for students who want to go to university after high school. Students in Ontario need to complete at least thirty credits in secondary school in order to receive an Ontario Secondary School Diploma.

Sang-woo made a decision to invest his first year in Canada in attending the last year of local high school, as he expected to obtain social capital, such as making Canadian friends (becoming a member of Canadian youths), getting to know the social lives of Canadian peers, and getting a chance to practice his English as well. However, Sang-woo's investment did not work out well. He could not make many friends nor participate in social lives of Canadian peers as much as he hoped. Later, he realized that the students in the OAC classes had different investments from him: that is, working hard in order to enter university. Therefore, there were not so many social activities among the students and most of them were busy working on their courses.

OAC 반에서는 한사람당 한 책상과 한 의자에 앉기 때문에 반아이들하고 말하게 되는 경우가 별로 없었어요.

In the OAC class, I did not get many chances to talk to the classmates since one person sits on one chair with one desk and they do not sit together in the

처음에 고등학교에 가고 싶었던 이유가
제 또래에 친구들을 사귀고 개네들하고
얘기도 하면서 영어 연습하고
싶어서였어요. 근데 OAC 에 있는 학생들
대부분이 대학 가는것을 목표로 하기
때문에 다들 공부하느라고 바빠요.
모르는거라도 있었으면 질문이라도 하고
그랬을거예요. 근데 다 너무 쉬운데 그냥
말좀 하고 싶어서 질문하고 그러고
싶지는 않았어요. (상우, 인터뷰,
2001 년 11 월 22 일)

classroom [in Korea one student shares a
desk with another and often they become
close friends]. The reason I wanted to go
to a high school at first was to make
friends of my age and also to improve
my English through talking to them.
However, since most students in the
OAC classes intended to go to
university, everyone seemed busy with
studying. If there were something I
didn't know, I would have tried to ask
questions. But, everything was easy for
me and I did not feel like asking them
just to make conversation. (Sang-woo,
interview, November 22, 2001)

Title of Being "Smart"

In the following year, Sang-woo entered the university and began his B.Sc. in
Computer Engineering. Due to the deadline of the application, unfortunately he had to be
registered as a special student and take an English language course as a requirement of
his admission. He initially welcomed the fact that he had to take the ESL (English as a
second language) course since he thought that it would be a good opportunity to improve
his English skills, particularly speaking and listening skills. However, he told me that it
was another case in which his investment for the course did not meet his expectations. He
explained the situation:

신청서 마감일이 지난 다음에 지원했기
때문에 처음에는 일반학생으로
프로그램에 들어가지 않았어요. 그래서
특별 학생으로 등록을 했어야 했고 ESL
코스를 들었어야 했어요. 어차피 영어
듣기와 말하기 실력들을 쌓아야 했기
때문에 괜찮을 거라는 생각이 들었어요.
근데, 그 ESL 반 수업의 중심이

I did not get in the program as a regular
student at first because I applied after the
deadline of the application. So, I had to
register as a special student, which
meant that I had to take an ESL course. I
thought it would be okay since anyway I
needed to improve my listening and
speaking skills. In the ESL class,
however, the focus of the instruction

was 리포트를 쓰거나 에세이를 쓰기에
있었고 대부분의 반 아이들은 이미
말하거나 듣기는 어느정도 실력을
갖추고 있더라구요.
(상우, 인터뷰, 2001 년 11 월 22 일)

on writing a report or an essay, and most
students in the class had already pretty
good speaking and listening skills.
(Sang-woo, interview, November 22,
2001)

When Sang-woo became a regular student, he started engaging in studying the
course work of his program. He found the work rather easy, since most of the subject
matter he had already learned when he was at KAIST. Accordingly, it was not so difficult
for him to get good marks from the course work. Thanks to his good grades, he then
began to gain social recognition from his peers and teaching assistants in the program.

지난 학기에는 올 A 를 받았어요.
지금까지는 코스들이 아직도 제겐
쉬웠어요. 그래서 성적표를 잘 받았는데.
점수를 잘 받으니까 TA 들이 알아보기
시작해요. 제 GPA 가 12 였어요. 나보고
시험 잘봤다고 말해주더라구요. (상우,
인터뷰, 2002 년 1 월 22 일)

I got all A+'s last semester. Until now,
the course work has still been easy to
me, that's why I get good marks. Since I
get very good marks, the TAs started to
recognize me. My GPA was 12. They
told me that 'you've done well on the
exams'. (Sang-woo, interview, January
22, 2002)

As he received high academic achievement in his course work, Sang-woo noticed that he
was getting reputation as a "smart student" in the program. He realized that the cultural
capital of his knowledge to obtain high marks became the mediational means for his
peers to approach to him.

상우: 전 시험기간이 되면 인기가
많아져요. 많은 아이들이 와서 같이
공부하자고 해요.
희정: 개네들이 어떻게 다가 오는데?
상우: 내 전화번호 물어보고... 아니면

Sang-woo: I've become in high demand
during the exam seasons. Many students
come to me and suggest us to study
together.
Heekyeong: How do they approach to
you?
Sang-woo: They ask me for my phone
number... or ask me to explain

뭐 좀 설명해 달라고 하고... 시험 때가 되면 제 몸값이 올라가요. (웃음). 하지만 전 공부는 혼자서 해야 한다고 믿어요, 그래서 다른 사람하고 같이 공부하게 되지는 않아요. (상우와의 인터뷰, 2002년 3월 5일)

something... I've become an expensive person at exam periods. (He laughs). But, normally I believe that you have to study by yourself, so I don't get to study with someone else. (Interview with Sang-woo, March 5, 2002)

However, the fact that his Korean friends and peers in his program recognized his symbolic power of knowledge (e.g. KAIST, good marks) influenced him to believe that he had to live up to their expectations. Sang-woo told me a few times that people's perceptions of him as a KAIST student became a psychological burden for him although he himself seemed to continue to compare his academic progress to his peers' in Korea.

전 항상 제 자신과 제 공부에 대해서 다른 사람들이 갖고 있는 기대감 때문에 부담감이 있어요. 카이스트에 있을 때는 누구든지 다 잘 하니까 별로 부담감이 없었어요. 근데 여기에 오고난 후로 부담감을 더 느껴요. (상우, 인터뷰, 2002년 1월 22일)

I get a certain pressure all the time from people's expectation of me and my study. When I was in KAIST, I did not have much pressure since everyone there is so good. But since I came here, I feel more pressure [since people expect that I am the one who should be very good]. (Sang-woo, interview, January 22, 2002)

한국 학생들이 없는 실험실 수업에 있을 때 전 훨씬 편하고 부담감이 없어요. 카이스트에서 왔다는 것 때문에 한국 아이들이 갖고 있는 저에 대한 선입견을 의식하게 되요. 카이스트에 있을 때는 제 GPA가 B+ 밖에 되지 않았어요. 그런데 여기서는 전부 A+를 받으니까 아이들이 저를 굉장히 우러러 봐요. 하지만 전 [카이스트에 있는] 제 친구들에 비하면 아직도 훨씬 뒤쳐져 있다고 생각해요. (상우, 인터뷰, 2002년 2월 15일)

I feel more comfortable and have no burden in the LAB course since there are no Korean students. I become conscious about my Korean peers' preconceptions of me since I came from KAIST. My GPA in KAIST was only B+. But, here I got all A+ and they look up to me greatly. However, I think that I am still far behind my peers in Korea [at KAIST]. (Sang-woo, interview, February 15, 2002)

From this quote, it appears that Sang-woo's social space crosses oceans, in the sense that he is still very much comparing the cultural capital he earns in Canada to that of his peers in KAIST. The Bourdieuan notion of social space implies a relational understanding of the social world. Sang-woo was aware of his relative positions in his social spaces. He noticed that he was recognized as an outstanding student in his Canadian university social space while perceiving himself as being academically behind other peers in his Korean university social space.

Improving Oral English versus General Knowledge

In spite of his excellent academic achievement, there was something that concerned Sang-woo deeply. He was not yet quite confident about his English proficiency, particularly with his speaking and listening skills. He often found himself feeling uncomfortable when he was exposed to a situation in which he had to speak in English. This excerpt reflects his frustrations regarding his oral English proficiency.

어제 시험 끝난 다음에 질문할게 있어서
TA 한테 갔었는데 아주 쉬운 표현도
말을 잘 못했어요. 제가 너무
한심하더라고요... 전 외국아이드하고는
자주 어울리지 않게 되요. 그래서 어쩌다
영어로 말해야 하는 어떤 사람하고 같이
혼자 있게 되면 굉장히 어색하고
불편해요. 나 말고 다른 사람이 같이
있으면 몰라도. 그래서 그런 상황에서
빠져나오려고 애를 쓰거나 다른 사람을
찾아 보려고 하지요. (상우, 인터뷰,
2001년 12월 5일)

Yesterday, after the exam was over, I
walked up to the TA to ask some
questions, but I could not say well even
the most easy expressions. I felt like an
idiot ... I don't get to hang out with
foreigners so often, so if I happen to be
with someone (who speaks English)
alone, I feel very uncomfortable unless
there are more people than just myself.
So, I try to find a way to get out of the
situation or find another person to join
the situation. (Sang-woo, interview,
December 5, 2001)

Most of the time Sang-woo hung out with Korean peers who were either born in Canada or came to Canada when they were much younger. According to Sang-woo's perception, most of them had very good oral English skills, and he was the only one whose English was not so good.

여기(캐나다)에서 오랫동안 있었던 친구들은 슬랭같은 것도 다 알아듣고 웃고 그래요. 저 혼자만 바로 알아듣지 못하고 있어요... 하지만 중간에 방해하는 것 같아서 물어보고 싶지도 않아요. (상우, 인터뷰, 2002년 1월 22일)

Friends who have been here (Canada) for a while understand everything, such as slang, and they can laugh at it (slang) too. I am the only one who doesn't get it right away... but I don't feel like asking them, since I don't want to interrupt... (Sang-woo, interview, January 22, 2002)

Unfortunately, the fact that Sang-woo has the reputation as a "smart" person from KAIST among his peers and acquaintances seemed to constrain his investment in practicing oral English rather than to facilitate it. He may have been hesitant in investing in oral English because he witnessed that his peers often evaluated amongst themselves other people's English skills and laughed at their poor performance. This experience limited his English conversation with them or in front of them.

제가 같이 다니는 한국 아이들 대부분은 여기에서 오래 동안 살았어요. 그래서 다들 영어를 잘해요. 개네들 자주 주가 영어를 잘하는지 못하는지 어는 TA가 영어를 잘하는지 못하는지 그런거에 대해서 자주 얘기해요. 그런거 듣다보면 그 아이들 앞에서 영어로 말하고 싶지가 않아요... 어떤경우는 자기들끼리 누군가를 가리키면서 '개는 모든지 다 잘하는데 영어만 못한다' 하는 소리를

Most Korean students I hang out with are all those who have lived here a long time. So, they all speak good English. They often talk about who speaks English well or not well, and which TA speaks English well or not, something like that. So, that makes me feel like not wanting to speak English in front of them... Sometimes I hear they say among themselves referring to someone, that 'He does everything well except English.' Then, I can't help thinking

들으면 자꾸 저 자신을 생각하게 되요...
그런데도 전 외국아이드하고 놀고
싶지가 않아요. 별로 재미가 없고
문화적으로 저하고 잘 맞지가 않아요.
그리고 보통 개네들은 자기들끼리 이미
어울리는 그룹이 있어서 그 그룹에
끼기가 힘들어요.
(상우, 인터뷰, 2001 년 12 월 5 일)

about myself ... Nevertheless, I don't
really want to hang out with foreigners.
It's less fun, and culturally they don't fit
with me well, and usually they have
already formed their own groups to hang
out, so it's not so easy to join their
group. (Sang-woo, interview, December
5, 2001)

In the excerpt, it appears that Sang-woo was conflicted by his different identities: as a second language learner he needed to improve his English skills, and another self wanted to stay in the Korean cultural community since his “Korean-ness” did not like what he perceived as “Canadian culture.” These different identities are associated with different sources of symbolic capital that would mediate his decision of taking an action. To be able to improve his oral skills, he was aware that it would be better for him to look for Canadian friends.

However, Sang-woo wanted to stay with Korean cultural contexts since he thought that they were where he feels comfortable. In a Canadian context he feels there are too many cultural incongruities that lead to an uncomfortable feeling. The notion of Cheong psychology explains the comfort he feels with his Korean and Canadian friends. Sang-woo told me that he did not want to look for Canadian friends because he did not like what he viewed as “Canadian culture” compared to what he perceived to be Korean culture. The following interview excerpts reflect how he came to construct his negative perceptions about “white Canadian kids and Canadian culture”.

언제가 버스 정류장에서 버스를
기다리고 있었는데 어떤 애가 다가와서
뭔가를 갖고 있냐고 물어보더라고요. ‘

The other day I was waiting for a bus at
a bus stop. One guy came up to me and
asked whether I have something. I

No'라고 했더니 그게 뭔지 아냐고 물어보는 거예요. 그래서 다시 'No'라고 말했더니 지나가면서 나한테 침을 뱉더라고요. 그 일로 모든사람을 일반화시키는것은 아니지만, 그런일이 생기면 그 나라 전체에 대해서 안 좋은 감정이 생기게 되요. 백인 아이들이 다 그런식이다라는 생각을 갖게 되더라고요. (상우, 인터뷰, 2001 년 12 월 5 일)

said, 'No'. Then, he asked me whether I know what that is, so I said, 'No' again. After that, he walked away spitting at me. Not that I generalize everybody based on that, but you know, this kind of happening can make you feel very disturbed about the whole country. It can make you think that all white kids are like that... (Sang-woo, interview, December 5, 2001)

상우: 전 여기 문화가 별로 매력이 없어요... 여기 문화에 많이 적응된 [한국] 아이들 보면 정이 별로 없다는 생각이 들어요.

희경: 예를 들면 어떤 경우에?

상우: 사람들이 자기 자신만의 편리만 추구하는 것 같더라고요... 늙어서도 자기 혼자서만 살고... 사람이 아닌 개한테 정을 주고 굉장히 이상해요... 또 여기 사람들은 성격 차이가 생기면 쉽게 이혼을 해버리는 것 같더라고요... 아마 제가 한국에 오래 살아서 그럴수도 있겠지만 전 한국 문화가 더 맘에 들어요. 가족과 친척들이 설날에 다 같이 모이고... (상우와의 인터뷰, 2002 년 1 월 22 일)

Sang-woo: I don't find culture here attractive... and I find that the [Korean] students who have assimilated a lot to this culture have little 'cheong'.

Heekyeong: In which case, for example?

Sang-woo: They seem to pursue only their own convenience... they live alone even when they get old... devoting their affection to a dog not to a person, it's very strange... also, people here seem to get divorced easily when there is personality conflict... Maybe it's because I lived in Korea so long, but I like Korean culture more. Families and relatives get together on new year's day... (Interview with Sang-woo, January 22, 2002)

희경: 한국 사람들하고 캐나다 사람들 사이에 뭔가 차이점이 있다고 보니?

상우: 제 생각엔 캐나다 사람들이 나이든 사람들에게 대해서 별로 신경을 안쓰는 것 같아요. 남자와 여자 사이의 관계도 좀 다른 것 같아요. 도덕적 관념이 다른 것 같고... 특별히 싫어하는 것은 없어요. 하지만 전 아직 한국식 스타일이 훨씬 더 좋아요. 나이 차이에 대한 개념이라던가 결혼 관념이라던가... 여기 이혼률은 너무 높아요. 삶에 있어서 너무 편리만 추구하는 것 같고 너무 개인적이에요...

Heekyeong: Do you see the differences between Koreans and Canadians?

Sang-woo: I think Canadians do not care about older people so much. I see the relationships between a man and a woman also being different. The concept of morals seems to be different... I don't dislike something particularly. However, I still like Korean styles much better in terms of the notion of age difference, and the concept of marriage... the divorce rate here is too high. They pursue life too much for convenience, and they are too individualistic... they

나이 차이에 상관없이 똑같은 식으로
말하고, 그런거요. 아마 그사람들은 그걸
더 합리적이거나 실용적이라고
생각하겠지요... 저도 조금씩 익숙해져
가는것 같기도 해요.
(상우와의 인터뷰, 2002 년 3 월 19 일)

talk the same way regardless of age
difference, something like that. Maybe
that's what they view more rational or
pragmatic... I am getting used to it,
though. (Interview with Sang-woo,
March 19, 2002)

Sang-woo's negative perception about Canadian culture in general did not change
during my interviews with him, although he did mention later that he became
accustomed to it. He also continued to hang out mostly with his Korean friends.

On the other hand, Sang-woo's frustration about not being able to speak English
as fluently as his Korean peers still existed. In order to deal with this frustration, he told
me that he decided to spend more time reading a variety of books and gain more
knowledge on general science, social science and literature.

상우: '역사란 무엇이가?' 라는 책을
읽고 있는데 꽤 재미있어요. 어떻게
역사를 다른 각도로 해석하는 지에
대해서 얘기를 해요... 요새는 어차피
친구들 만큼 영어를 잘할수 있기에
늦었으니까 대신 책 많이 읽은 사람이
되어야겠다는 생각이 들어서 책을 많이
읽고 있었어요. 이런 책을 영어로 읽으면
사전으로 계속 단어를 찾아 보아야
하기때문에 짜증이 나요...
희경: 영어를 더 잘 배우기 위해 튜터나
캐나다인 친구를 사귀어야겠다는 생각을
해본적이 있니?
상우: 아니요, 별로. 아마 내가 정말로
필요하다고 느끼면 [좋은 영어 실력]
혼자서 열심히 하면 해낼수 있다고
믿기때문에 그럴지도 몰라요... 또래
아이들 보다는 인생을 어떻게 살아야
할지에 대해서 얘기를 할 수 있는 나이

Sang-woo: I have been reading a book
entitled, 'What is history?' [written in
Korean] It is pretty interesting. It
describes different perspectives on how
to interpret history ... I have been
reading a lot lately thinking that since
it's already late for me to acquire good
English skills compared to my peers
here, I better become a well-read person
instead. If I read such a book in English,
I just get irritated from constantly
looking up the words in the dictionary
Heekyeong: Have you thought about
getting a tutor or making a Canadian
friend in order to learn English better?
Sang-woo: No, not really. It may be
because I believe that if I really need
[good English skills] I will work hard
by myself, and I am able to make it... I
rather meet with older people than my

좀 든 사람들과 만나고 싶어요. 그런
얘기들은 같은 또래 친구들과고는 할
수가 없어요. 왜 그런지 개내들과고는
깊은 대화를 할 수가 없더라고요.
(상우와의 인터뷰, 2002년 1월 22일)

peers, whom I can discuss about how we
should lead our life. I can't talk about
those things with my peers. Somehow I
can't get into serious and deep
discussion with them. (Interview with
Sang-woo, January 22, 2002)

Hermans and Hermans-Jansen (1995) state that each voice of an individual produces different values and perspectives, and these voices may exchange information and influence each other in a dialogic way. In Sang-woo's decision making process at that time, I see there was a multiplicity of voices that seemed to have influenced his decision to invest in reading rather than practicing his oral English skills. The first voice I see is Sang-woo who was aware of the need to improve his oral English, and felt frustrated about his proficiency compared to his peers. Another voice I see from his comment on January 22, 2002 is that he judged the situation realistically and realized it would not be so easy for him to be able to speak in the near term as fluently as his Korean peers. As reflected in the next quote, Sang-woo seemed to have a strategy to look for what is attainable within a situated context and then do his best to achieve it.

성격상 전 별로 도전적이거나
반항적이지 않아요. 그래서 보통 처해진
상황 안에서 최선을 다하려고 해요. 뭔가
해야 할 일이 있을 때, 잘 하려고
해야겠다... 그런 생각을 보통 해요.
(상우, 인터뷰, 2001년 11월 22일)

Characteristically, I am not so
challenging or rebellious, so I usually try
to do a good job within the context that I
am situated. When there is something to
do, I then try to do good job... that's the
thought I usually have. (Sang-woo,
interview, November 22, 2001)

I believe that Sang-woo's strategy was to observe the situation carefully by estimating the capital available to him and by finding out what he could do most efficiently.

Appropriating this strategy as opposed to challenging the immediate problem (i.e. improving his oral English) ensured that he could get a return on his investment. The essence of his intention was to look for “the right battle” within the context that he could eventually win by investing in a different activity with a similar capital volume.

Indeed, there was another issue that was very meaningful for Sang-woo and worth investing his time. As reflected in his statement on January 22, 2002, he started to think about the meaning of his life. Unfortunately, he did not feel that he could share this question with his peers. He then thought that investing his time in reading intensively in order to increase his general knowledge might be more meaningful for him, since he always liked to read and he wanted to become a well-read and intellectual person:

어렸을 때부터 항상 읽는것을
좋아했어요. 카이스트 기숙사에
있었을때 책 읽으려고 도서관에 자주
갔었고. 전 사람들이 나를 문학에 대해서
잘 모르는 전형적인 엔지니어로만
생각하기를 원하지 않기 때문에 자주
문학에 대해서 더 배우고 싶다는 생각을
해요. 전 전반적으로 많은 것을 배우고
싶어요. 캐나다 사람들 사이에서의
교양이나 문학에 관련된 서적을 읽고
싶어요. 꼭 아카데미하지 않아도 돼요.
여기에서 오래 살거면 교양이 있는
사람이 되기 위해 그런거 다 배우고
싶어요.
(상우, 인터뷰, 2001 년 11 월 22 일)

I always liked to read ever since I was
young. When I was staying in the
residence at KAIST, I often went to the
library to read books. I often longed for
learning more about literature, because I
did not want other people to think of me
as a typical engineer who does not know
much about literature. I would like to
learn a lot of things in general. I want to
read something about enrichment of life
and literature for Canadian people. It
doesn't have to be necessarily academic.
I would like to learn about them to be
able to become an intellectual person if I
want to live here longer.
(Sang-Woo, interview, November 22,
2001)

Sang-woo was aware that his strength was to gain more knowledge on a variety of subject matters; and eventually he believed that the knowledge would be useful in the future. Furthermore, as the excerpt demonstrates he wanted to gain cultural and social

capital in the Canadian context by “learning” about Canadian people to become an intellectual person. He also expressed that if he wanted to live longer in Canada he would need this capital to attain a higher position in his social space.

In hindsight, the way Sang-woo exercised his agency can be interpreted in another way. A Korean habitus in which acquiring English skills is regarded as a highly intellectual skill may have made him perceive that he should invest in acquiring these skills. However, after he realized that it would be difficult for him to reach the same proficiency as he had in other subjects. He decided to shift his investment target in order to gain cultural capital from improving his English to becoming a well-read person. I find this ironic because it is the Korean habitus that had perhaps made him feel that improving his English is an important investment. On the other hand, it is the habitus that may also have triggered him to switch his investment target. Wertsch (1991) maintains that the notion of a ‘tool kit’ is effective in examining the diversity of mediational means in human actions. The reason why Sang-woo changed may be because he realized that there are other sources of intellectual capital in his “tool kit” that he could gain to compensate for his perceived difficulty in English.

Dynamic Interplay of Multiple Identities

Sang-woo’s processes of negotiating with his multiple identities was dynamic and contradictory. Sang-woo had difficult moments, maybe just like everybody else. At times, he expressed to me that he felt no desire to do anything and the days went by without accomplishing much.

상우: 요새 자꾸 게을러져요... 사람
만나는 것도 귀찮고... 그냥 집에 가서
잠만 자고 싶어요... 어떤 때는 왜 공부를
하는지 스스로 묻게 되고... 공부하는게
인생에 그렇게 크게 영향을 미치는것
같지는 않아요... 공부 말고도 잘하고
싶은게 너무 많아요.

희정: 공부하는 의미에 대해서 생각해
본게 이번이 처음이니?

상우: 이런 생각 이전에는 별로 해보지
않은것 같아요... (상우와의 인터뷰,
2002 년 1 월 22 일)

Sang-woo: I get lazy often these days...
I don't feel like socializing... I just
wanna go home and sleep... Sometimes
I question myself why I am studying...
It doesn't seem that studying a lot
influences life in a great way... there are
so many things I want to do well besides
studying...

Heekyeong: Is this the first time you
wonder about the point of studying?

Sang-woo: I don't think I had these
kinds of thoughts before... (Interview
with Sang-woo, January 22, 2002)

Sang-woo's perception of his life as being monotonous seems to be influenced by
positioning himself in two areas of his social space. As he mentioned, in the
Korean educational system in which he never had time to think about or speculate
on the meaning of life, he dedicated many hours only to study.

수업이 일주일에 두번밖에 없어서 요새
여유있는 시간이 아주 많아요. 근데 그
남는 시간에 공부를 하는 것도 아니고
운동을 하지도 않아요. 내 자신이 굉장히
멍청하게 느껴져요... 카이스트에
있을 때는 7 과목을 들어서 수업이 매일
아침 8시부터 오후 6시까지 있었어요.
수업이 끝난 후로는 공부를 더 하거나
한국에서는 밤에도 여러가지를 많이
할수 있으니깐 친구들과하고 나가 놀거나
했어요. (상우, 인터뷰, 2002 년 2 월
15 일)

I only have two classes a week, so there
is a lot of spare time these days. But I
don't study in my spare time, nor do any
exercise. I feel very stupid... In KAIST,
I was taking 7 courses and had class
from 8 a.m. until 6 p.m. everyday. After
the class, I would either study more or
go out with friends, since you can still
do many things at night in Korea.
However, these days I just stay at home
and do nothing. (Sang-woo, interview,
February 15, 2002)

Sometimes, the feeling of no desire became worse when he compared himself to
his peers in Korea. He felt miserable about how little he does while having much
more free time in Canada. This period of frustration accompanied his search for

another target of his investment. He searched for where he could be exposed to a similar environment to his social space in Korea, that is a more intellectually challenging environment. He told me:

토론토 대학에 있는 엔지니어 프로그램에 대해서 알아 봤어요. 처음 4 년은 엔지니어 프로그램이고 그 다음에 2 년짜리 MBA 코스를 제공해요. 엔지니어와 MBA 를 통합한 프로그램이에요... 좀더 큰 도시에서 큰 대학에 다니고 싶어요. 자기가 하는 분야에 굉장히 잘하는 학생들이 몇몇 있어서 제가 경쟁할 수 있는... 하지만 2 학년까지는 여기에 있어야 할 것 같아요. (상우, 인터뷰, 2002 년 3 월 5 일)

I have been looking into the engineering program at U of T. The program covers engineering until the fourth year and then offers two-year MBA courses. It's the integration of engineering and MBA... I would like to go to a bigger city, a bigger university. I want to have at least a couple of students who are excellent at what they do, so that I can compete with them... but I think I have to stay here (at the current university) until the second year. (Sang-woo, interview, March 5, 2002)

Sang-woo then told me in our last interview that he became interested in studying again and in fact, more than ever.

공부하는 것에 더욱 관심이 많아진 것 같아요. 카이스트에 있었을 때는 공부하는 것이 재밌다라는 생각을 해본 적이 없는데, 아마 공부에 너무 질려서 그랬었나봐요. 그런데 여기서는 내가 해야될 만큼보다 더 공부하게 되는 것 같아요. 하라는 만큼만 공부하면 다른 아이들보다 잘 할 수가 없잖아요. 그래서 조금씩 조금씩 더 열심히 공부하기 시작했더니, 공부에 점점 더 재미가 붙는 것 같아요... 전 그리고 일반인 수준에 맞춘 물리학에 관련된 과학책들도 읽어볼 생각이예요. 물리학에 관한 기본적인 지식을 얻을 수 있는 책이요. 교과서와 일반 독자를 위한 책 중간 정도의 수준으로 쓴

I think I have become more interested in studying. When I was at KAIST, I never thought that studying was fun. Maybe, I was too tired of it. However, here I get to study more than I am told to do. If I work only as much as I am told to do, I wouldn't be better than the others. So, I have started working harder little by little, and accordingly, I've become more interested... I am also thinking of reading some science books related to Physics aimed at the general audience. Something from which I can obtain the basic knowledge of Physics, something like, 'Einstein's Theory of Relativity' at the level between a textbook and a book for the general audience. Sometimes, I

아인슈타인의 상대성 이론같은 책이요.
어떤때는 일반적인 교양을 더 얻기 위해
사회과학 관련 서적도 읽고 싶어요.
전에는 그런것들에 별로 관심이
없었는데 요즘에는 갑자기 모든지 다
알고 싶고 책도 아주 많이
읽고 싶고 그래요. (상우, 인터뷰,
2002년 4월 22일)

would also like to read social science
books in order to increase my knowledge
of general interests. Before, I was not so
much interested in such things.
However, suddenly these days I want to
know everything and want to read many
books. (Sang-woo, interview, April 22,
2002)

Interestingly, at this moment Sang-woo may have seen “the point of studying”. While he was in Korea, he had to study so much because he was told to do so and accordingly every student did. Through the period of speculation of the meaning of his life, in other words the meaning of studying, he then thought, “If I work only as much as I am told to do, I wouldn’t be better than the others”. He then came to realize that he truly loved learning and knowing a lot and wanted to become a “well-read” person. This realization seems to have influenced him to invest more in studying and reading more than ever, and look for a “better” school where he would be intellectually more challenged.

During this semester, Sang-woo began to think about possibility of transferring his school to another university, which he viewed as a bigger and intellectually more challenging school in Engineering. He expressed to his idea of pursuing a Ph.D. degree in the future. He seemed to be working even harder on his courses in order to get high marks so that he could apply for scholarships for other universities in the future. At this point, I remembered Hong’s autobiography that I referred to in the experiences of Seong-jin and Sun-young. I wondered whether Sang-woo had read the book, and if he had, what his perception was about the approach Hong took to study English.

희경: '7 막 7 장'이란 책 읽어 본 적
있니?

상우: 3학년 때 읽었봤어요. 그사람같은
사람도 있구나하고 놀랐었어요.
굉장히 야심적이고 열심히 사는것
같더라고요. 하지만 전 그렇게 살고
싶지는 않아요. 적극적이고 진취적으로
사는것도 좋지만 전 그사람 인생이
재미가 너무 없는것 같아요. 자기가
원하는 걸 얻기위해 아주 많은 것을 희생
했었을 텐데, 전 제 인생을 그렇게 살고
싶지 않아요... 공부가 저한테
재미있어서 하고 싶지 다른 아이들한테
지기 싫어서 공부하고 싶지는 않아요.
(상우와의 인터뷰, 2002년 4월 22일)

Heekyeong: Have you read the book,
'Chil-mak Chil-chang'?

Sang-woo: I read it when I was in the
third grade. I just thought that it's
amazing that there is such a person as
him. He seemed very ambitious and
enthusiastic. But I don't want to live like
him. It's good to be active and
aggressive in life, but I find he had no
fun in his life. He must have sacrificed
so much to achieve what he wanted, and
I don't want to lead my life like that... I
want to study because it's fun for me,
not because I don't want to be defeated
by others. (Interview with Sang-woo,
April 22, 2002)

From hearing this strong voice of Sang-woo, I believe that his true love towards learning,
knowing and understanding was one of the fundamental sources of his agency.

Sang-eun :

Struggles between Institutional Policy and Personal Vision

제가 할수 있는 것이 인정을 받을수 있는
다른 곳으로 가야겠다는 생각이 들어요.
이런것들 때문에 항상 처져 있는것이
옳지 않다는 생각이 들어요...
(상은, 인터뷰, 2002년 4월 24일)

I think I should go somewhere where
what I can do can be appreciated;
I don't feel right to be down all the time
because of all this...
(Sang-eun, interview, April 24, 2002)

Sang-eun was a twenty-nine year old Korean woman when I met her in November
2001. She was doing her Ph.D. in the Department of Translation and Interpretation in an
English and French bilingual medium university in Ottawa, Canada. As one of the
strategies in looking for participants in my study, I had put an advertisement on the web

board of a Korean students organization in Ottawa, explaining that I needed participants for my Ph.D. research. Sang-eun was the only one who responded to my advertisement. I asked her why she decided to participate in my study and she said:

오타와 한인 학생회 웹사이트를 봤을
때 회경씨가 있는 상황이 저와
비슷하다는 생각이 들었어요. 박사
과정에 있고, 전 여기 오타와에 있는
한국 사람들을 잘 몰라요... 저도
박사 과정 공부를 해야하니 회경씨
상황이 이해가 가더라고요... (상은,
인터뷰, 2001년 11월 7일)

When I saw the website of the
Organization of Korean Students in
Ottawa, I thought that your situation
is similar to mine, you are in the
Ph.D. program, and I don't know
many Korean people here in
Ottawa... Since I also have to work
on my Ph.D., I felt sympathetic
towards you... (Sang-eun, Interview,
November 7, 2001)

I think that Sang-eun may have felt “we-ness” (Choi, 2000) towards me in the sense that we both came from Korea in order to do Ph.D. studies, which is a big challenge; therefore, we needed to help each other.

Sang-eun obtained her Bachelors as well as Masters degrees in Interpretation and Translation majoring in Korean and Spanish in a university in Korea. Her school has been known as a very prestigious place for training professional translators and simultaneous interpreters in Korea. After finishing the M.A. program, Sang-eun worked for a short while as a professional translator. She then decided to go abroad to pursue her Ph.D. degree in the translation field. She applied for admission to a few universities in the States and Canada. One university in Ottawa offered her an admission scholarship covering a four-year tuition fee. Due to her Korean and Spanish background in her B.A. and M.A. degrees, she originally wanted to go to an American university. However, she decided to go to this Canadian university because of the scholarship.

In 1999 Sang-eun came to Canada with her husband. She told me that unlike most most Korean men and husbands, her husband is very supportive and understanding toward her study, and came to Canada in order to help her to pursue her Ph.D. degree. Sang-eun's description about her husband was very positive, as follows:

제 남편은 제가 공부하는것에 대해
굉장히 후원을 많이 해줘요. 그래서 보통
제 공부하는것에 집중을 할 수 있어요.
그렇다고 제가 맨날 공부만 한다는 것은
아니고요. 한국에 있었더라면
가족들이나 친척들 챙기느라고 이것
저것 신경써야될 일이 아주
많았을거예요. 지금은 제 공부에 더
시간을 쓸 수가 있죠. (상은, 2002 년
3 월 13 일)

My husband is very supportive toward my work. So, I can usually concentrate on my study. It doesn't mean that I always do only studying. If I were in Korea, there would be so many things I have to take care of for families and relatives. Now, I can spend more time in my own study. (Sang-eun, March 13, 2002).

Sang-eun's remark about her many obligations for families and relatives can be explained by the roles of a married woman in modern Korean family discussed by Yi (2001). In contemporary Korean societies, most married women are expected to do housework or take care of family matters and take care of important family events such as ancestral ceremonies, relatives' weddings or birthdays, and preparing for presents for those occasions. Even when married sons do not live with their parents, the sons, together with their wives and children, are still considered as the members of the son's parents home. The husband may not visit his parents on their birthday because of his busy work schedule, but his wife should not forget to prepare for his parents birthday parties (Yi, 2001). Sang-eun, as a married woman in Korea, also had to take care of various matters and events of her husband's family. Therefore, upon coming to Canada, she expected to be able to invest most of her time in working on her Ph.D. research.

Meanwhile, Sang-eun's husband was looking for a job since they arrived in Canada. She also had a research assistantship that helped a little for their living costs. I asked Sang-eun whether she thought of going back to Korea (after finishing her degree) and try to become a professor in the field of translation theory. She then told me without hesitation:

전 별로 한국에 돌아가고 싶은 생각이
없어요. 한국에 있는 교수들은 별로
열심히 일하는 것 같지 않아요. 그리고
여자로서 한국에서 직업을 구하기도
쉽지가 않고. 여기 [캐나다]에서도
영어나 불어 native 가 아닌
사람으로서는 직업 구하기가 쉽지는
않지만 그래도 일자리를 찾아보려고
노력하고 여기에서 살고 싶어요. (상은,
인터뷰, 2001년 11월 21일)

I don't really want to go back to Korea. I think the professors in Korea do not work hard, and it's not easy to get a job as a woman there. Even though it doesn't seem so easy to get a job here [in Canada] as a non-native speaker of English or French, I would like to try to as a woman there. Even though it doesn't seem so easy to get a job here [in Canada] as a non-native speaker of English or French, I would like to try to look for a job and live here. (Sang-eun, interview, November 21, 2001)

Sang-eun's comment reflects her negative perception about her working possibility as well as working social environment in Korea. She seems to have viewed Korean professors as authoritarian figures rather than hard-working scholars. I believe that because of her negative perception about the Korean habitus she was exposed to, Sang-eun preferred looking for a job in Canada even though she was aware of its difficulty.

Dealing with Four Languages and Learning French

The Canadian university she chose to do her Ph.D. degree in Translation was an English and French bilingual school. Thus, Sang-eun was exposed to four different languages at the time the interview was conducted. Her mother tongue was Korean, and

she obtained her Bachelor's as well as Master's degrees in Korean and Spanish Interpretation and Translation. According to Sang-eun, there were five Ph.D. students in her program. She hung out mostly with three of her colleagues. One of them was from Peru and spoke mostly Spanish with Sang-eun. However, the most common language in which Sang-eun communicated with her colleagues and professors in the program was English.

상은: 우리 과에는 3개국어 이상을
구사하는 사람이 많이 있어요. 이전에는
영어하고 붙어만 다뤘었는데 최근에
스페인어도 포함시켰어요. 최근에
'Masters in Spanish Translation'
이라는 새로운 이름으로 스페니쉬
디플로마 과정이 있어요. 이처럼
스페인어도 받아주는 것 같더라고요.
통역 프로그램으로는 영어와 붙어밖에
없어요. 영어나 붙어 모국어자만 그
프로그램에 들어갈 수가 있어요...
희정: 예...
상은: 아니면 다른 언어가 모국어인
사람들도 그 둘중의 언어중의 어느
하나에 fluent 하면 들어갈 수가
있어요. 이건 통역학 프로그램의
경우이고... 번역학 프로그램에서는
Anglophone 이거나, Francophone
이거나, Hispanic 이여야 해요.
Anglophone 으로서 입학할 하면
붙어도 알아야 하고,
Francophone 으로서 입학할 하면
영어를 할 줄 알거나 스페인어를 할 줄
알아야 하고, Hispanic 으로서 들어가면
영어나 붙어중 하나를 할 줄 알아야 해요.
희정: 상은씨는 한국어가 모국어인데
어떻게 들어가신 거예요?
상은: Hispanic 언어 구사자로
들어왔어요.
(상은과의 인터뷰, 2001년 11월 7일)

Sang-eun: In our department there are
many people who speak more than three
languages. Before, they (the department)
dealt only with English and French.
Recently, they included Spanish as well.
There is a program of Spanish diploma,
which was recently renamed: Masters in
Spanish Translation. They seem to
accept Spanish language. As for the
programs of interpretation, there are only
for English and French. Only native
speakers of either English or French can
get in the programs ...
Heekyeong: I see...
Sang-eun: Or, although you are the
native speaker of the other language, you
can get in if you are fluent in either of
the languages. That's for the programs
of interpretation... as for the programs
of translation... they have to be
Anglophone, Francophone or Hispanic.
Then, if you get in as an Anglophone,
you are expected to know French as
well. And if you get in as Francophone,
you need to know either English or
Spanish, as Hispanic, you need to know
either English or French.
Heekyeong: What about you, Sang-eun,
since your mother tongue is Korean?
Sang-eun: Yeah, I got in as a Hispanic.
(Interview with Sang-eun, November 7,
2001)

As a bilingual school in Canada, the policy of Sang-eun's university requires every student to have proficiency in one of the two official languages, and at least some passive knowledge of the other. This passive knowledge implies the ability to follow courses in both official languages. For example, students may be required to read some of their course material in French in a course given in English, and vice-versa. In general, except for the cases justified by the nature of the course, students are allowed to produce their work and answer examination questions either in English or in French, whichever they feel more comfortable in. Sang-eun chose English as a principal language for her to carry out various tasks in her program, such as course work, administration, her thesis proposal, since her French was not so strong.

However, Sang-eun was very much aware of the necessity of French language skills not only because of her program requirement but also for her own cultural tool to mediate her interactions with people in her department. Therefore, she was highly willing to invest her time and effort in learning the French language. From the beginning of her Ph.D. program, she had taken several courses in French and would even think of taking extra courses outside her school. She said:

첫번째 학기에는... qualifying year
에는 여섯 과목이나 들어야 했어요...
그중 다섯 과목은 번역 이론에 관한거고
다른 하나는 불어였어요... 하지만 전
불어를 잘 못하니까 두 학기동안 불어를
들었어요. 마지막으로 불어를 공부한
적이 고등학교 때 었어요. 지난 학기에는
'Advanced Intermediate French'

The first semester... I had to take six
courses during the qualifying year... five
of them were related to translation
theory and the other was French ... But,
I took the French courses during the two
semesters since I am not good at French.
The last time I studied French was in
high school. Last semester I took

를 들었는데, 여러가지 프리젠테이션과 토론같은 것들이 있었어요. 근데 전 수업중에 말을 별로 많이 안 했어요. 전 말하는 연습을 더 해야 돼요... 이민자들을 위한 불어 코스를 들을까 생각중이에요... 그리고 올 해에는... 세 과목을 듣고 있어요. 다음 학기에는 'guided research'를 듣고 필수 과목 하나 더 들을거예요. 그리고 아마 불어도 다시 들을까봐요.
(상은, 인터뷰, 2001년 11월 7일)

'Advanced Intermediate French' and there were various presentation and discussion activities, but I did not talk much in that class. I need to practice speaking more... I am thinking of taking the French courses for immigrants (offered by the provincial government)... And this year... I am taking three courses. And next semester, I am going to take a guided research and one more compulsory course, and maybe French class again. (Sang-eun, interview, November 7, 2001)

Nevertheless, Sang-eun's challenge to acquire a new language as an adult learner was no easy for her to handle, since she felt that most of her colleagues in the department already seemed to have French language skills at a functional level. This fact began to make her feel that she is a minority in her program and that she is disadvantaged.

제 지도 교수님은 Francophone 이예요. 제 과에 있는 사람들 대부분은, 교수나, 학생들이나, 스테프나 비서들이나 다 불어를 해요. 그 사람들이 제가 불어도 못하는데 어떻게 이 프로그램에 들어왔는지 의아해 할지도 모르겠다는 생각이 들었어요. TA 랑 RA 씬을 나눠줄 때 대부분의 일이 불어로 해야되는 일이라 문제가 있었어요. 그래서 난 랩 조교나 할 수 있겠구나 생각을 했었죠... 그런데 과에 있는 reading room 을 관리하는 물리적으로 굉장히 단순한 일을 주는 거예요.
(상은, 인터뷰, 2001년 11월 7일)

My supervisor is Francophone, and most people in my department; professors, students, staffs and secretaries, all speak French. I felt they might be wondering how I could get into this program without being able to speak French. When assigning TA or RA assistantships, it was a problem because most jobs needed to be done in French. So, I thought I might be able to do at least a Lab assistant job... Then, a very simple physical task was given to me, taking care of the reading room in the department. (Sang-eun, interview, November 7, 2001)

Sang-eun felt that she was positioned as a person, "who cannot speak French well", and believed that this caused her only to do simple physical tasks that had not much to do

with exploring and implementing her academic knowledge. She perceived that since it was unusual to have a student who does not speak French well, she was not so welcomed in the department. In her view, simply taking care of a reading room as a research assistant was a sign to marginalize her from the other students in the department who speak French well. She also believed that this would eventually constrain her opportunities to gain an access to social and cultural capital in her social space, such as teaching a course or having research experiences as a graduate student.

Her frustration in acquiring French skills continued during the process of doing her Ph.D. even though she was proficient in English.

상은: 그 교수가 자기 프리젠테이션을
불어로 하더라고요. 물론 영어로 질문을
하면 영어로 답변을 하긴 했지만... 전
불어로 하는 프리젠테이션이 불어
강의보다 따라가기가 더 힘들더라고요.
강의야 미리 책을 읽어둘 수가 있고 또
언어가 informal 해서 따라가기가 더
쉬워요.
희경: 와우... 스트레스 굉장히 많이
받으시겠어요. 보통 불어 공부는 어떻게
하세요?
상은: 요새는 별로 안해요... 불어 공부할
시간도 없어요. 어떤 때는 어떤 추상적인
관념들은 영어로도 이해하기가
힘들어요... 이번 학기에는 좀 나아요.
불어로 듣는 코스가 하나만 있는데
구체적이고 실용적인 개념들을 다루어서
더 쉬워요. 그리고 교수님이 벨기에에서
오신 분인데 전 유럽사람들이 쓰는
불어가 훨씬 더 이해하기가 쉽더라고요.
제 불어가 그동안 늘어서 그런지도
모르지만... 그 교수님이 질문을 하면 전
영어로 대답해요. 불어로
대답하고

Sang-eun: The professor did her
presentation in French, although she did
answer in English to a question spoken
in English ... I found [French]
presentations more difficult to follow
than [French] lectures since for lectures I
can do some readings in advance and
also the language is informal, so I can
catch up more easily.
Heekyeong: Gee... it must be very
stressful for you. How do you usually
study French? Sang-eun: I don't really
these days... I don't have time to study
French. Sometimes I don't understand
some abstract concepts even in English
... This semester is better since there is
only one course in French and it deals
with concrete and practical concepts.
Also, the professor is from Belgium and
I found European French easier to
understand. It may also be that my
French has gotten better... When the
professor asks me a question, I then
respond to it in English. I don't feel like
trying to answer in French, it makes me
feel that I have another handicap...

when 싶지가 않더라고요. 괜히 제가
헛티캡 하나 더 있는것 같은 생각이
들어서... 다른 사람들 다 자연스럽게
function 하는데 저만 알아 듣는 것도
힘들어 하고 있어요... 이민자 비자가
나오면 퀘벡에 가서 이민자들을 위한
무료 불어 강좌를 들을 거예요.
(상은과의 인터뷰, 2002 년 3 월 13 일)

when everybody functions naturally, I
am struggling just to be able to
understand... When I get the landed
immigrant status, I am going to a
Quebec area to take a free French course
for immigrants. (Interview with Sang-
eun, March 13, 2002)

Besides the difficulty of learning French in order to survive in her program, Sang-eun was experiencing other problems that are typical to any graduate student, such as writing academic papers, and working on her dissertation project. In the next sections, I describe what it was like for Sang-eun to deal with such challenges.

Writing Academic Papers

Writing an academic paper is not an easy task for any graduate student regardless of whether or not it is to be written in their mother tongue. Sang-eun also had a lot of difficulty in writing her course papers and research proposals. Wertsch (1991) notes that availability of particular individuals' cultural tools depends on their sociohistorical and cultural situations. The reason Sang-eun did not initially have knowledge of how to write an academic paper for her Ph.D. courses, it may be because writing an academic paper was not so much valued in her M.A. program in her Korean university since professional skills of interpretation and translation were more appreciated there. In fact, she told me that she did not have much experience in writing academic papers in any of the four languages she was exposed to. When she was completing her M.A. program ('Interpretation and Translation in Korean and Spanish') in Korea, she took an exam as a requirement of graduating from her program instead of writing a research paper.

Accordingly, it was a big challenge for her to write an academic paper for her graduate courses. Moreover, she was not aware of general expectations of formal academic writing in a North American English context.

희경: 그러면... 지난해에 한 다섯번 정도 term paper 를 쓰셨겠어요, 그죠?

상은: 예, 근데 중간 고사 페이퍼도 있었으니까 다섯개보다는 더 쓴것 같아요. 그 중 하나는 스페인어로 썼고, 네개는 영어로 썼어요.

희경: 영어로 페이퍼를 쓰는데 가장 어려운점이 뭐였어요?

상은: 처음에는 페이퍼를 제출할 때 proofreading 을 안하고 냈어요. 그랬더니 페이퍼 여기 저기에 교수님이 피드백으로 "It's not clear" 라거나 "I am not sure..." 라는 커멘트를 많이 주시더라고요. 그때는 점수를 별로 잘 받지 못했어요... 교수님들 커멘트에 종종 문장이 명확하지가 않다거나 아이디어가 애매하다고 하더라고요... 전 처음에 주석이나 참고문헌을 어떻게 다는지도 몰랐어요... 어떤 단어가 아카데미 페이퍼에 적절하고 부적절한지 잘 모르겠어요. 제 말은 formal 스타일과 informal 스타일의 writing 을 구분하기가 어렵다구요. (상은과의 인터뷰, 2001 년 11 월 7 일)

Heekyeong: So... you may have written about five term papers last year, right?

Sang-eun: Yeah, but since there were also mid-term papers, I must have written more than five papers. One of them I wrote in Spanish, and four of them I wrote in English.

Heekyeong: What was the most difficult thing in writing a paper in English?

Sang-eun: At first, I submitted a paper without proofreading. Then, there were "not clear" or "I am not sure..." and I didn't get good marks then . . . I saw often in my professors' comments on my papers that some sentences are not clear and ideas are vague... I did not know even how to put a footnote and bibliography... I am not sure which words are appropriate or inappropriate for academic papers. I mean, it's difficult to differentiate between formal and informal styles of writing.

(Interview with Sang-eun, November 7, 2001)

Through the process of preparing essays for course work, Sang-eun became aware of several aspects of academic writing, which she did not know before. First of all, Sang-eun learned quickly the importance of having someone to proofread her papers before submission. Later, Sang-eun was informed that there was an academic writing help center associated to the university in order to help students who need help with academic

assignments. However, she was also told that unfortunately the help was no longer available for the students in her department due to the nature of program. She said:

전에는 우리 과에도 proofreading 서비스를 제공했대요. 그런데, 요새는 더 안해주대요. 왜냐면 어떤 사람이 문제 제기를 하기를 이 과는 번역하는 과인데 그냥 리서치 페이퍼가 아니라 번역 페이퍼라는 거죠. 그래서 우리 페이퍼를 proofreading 해줄수가 없대요. (상은, 인터뷰, 2001 년 11 월 7 일)

They (the writing tutorial centre) used to provide proofreading service for my department. However, these days, they don't do that any more. It's because, somebody argued, this is the department of translation, so it's not just a research paper, it's a paper of translation. Therefore, they can't proofread our papers. (Sang-eun, interview, November 7, 2001)

Later, Sang-eun found a colleague who was a native speaker of English and was willing to proofread her papers. Through the proofreading process as well as receiving feedback from her professors and her colleague, she started to become more aware of some expectations of English academic writing.

교수님이 써주신 커멘트를 읽어보면 내가 어떤 용어들을 쓸 때 좀 더 조심해야 겠구나 하는 생각이 들어요. 예를 들어 어젠가는 내가 어떤 근거에서 라틴 아메리카 문학이 'peripheral' 하다고 언급을 하는지 그런 것을 물어라구요. 그리고 나중에 내 주장의 근거를 대기 위해서 이론적 논리를 설명하려고 했는데 제 스스로의 voice 와 point 가 없다고 지적을 하더라구요. 내 voice 를 넣어보려고 하면 이론적 근거가 없다고 하고... 이런것들 때문에 discourage 가 되요. (상은, 인터뷰, 2002 년 2 월 27 일)

From the comments made by the professor, I realize that I have to be more careful in using certain terminologies. For example, once it was asked that in which premise I was referring to Latin American literature as 'peripheral', and so on. And later when I tried to explain theoretical arguments to provide premises of my argument, then it was pointed out that my voice and points are not present. If I try to raise my voice, then they say there is no theoretical base... I get discouraged by these things... (Sang-eun, interview, February 27, 2002)

As reflected in the excerpt, Sang-eun found it particularly challenging to include a theoretical analysis in her course papers and to balance theoretical arguments and her own opinions. University students who learn how to write in academic disciplines may often go through the processes of struggling due to the gap between authoritative words and internally persuasive words. Sang-eun was clearly experiencing her struggling as she started to notice the strong existence of power of authoritative voice in her academic field and she had to acquire how to balance it with her own voice:

교수님들한테서 제 페이퍼에 대해
비판적인 커멘트를 받으면 맘이 많이
상하고 난 이론으로 나가면 안되겠다는
생각이 들어요... 그래도 교수님이
하시는 말씀을 들어야지요.
제가생각해도 전 이론적인 면 보다는
실용적인 면으로만 생각하려는 경향이
있는 것 같아요. (상은, 인터뷰, 2002 년
3 월 13 일)

When I see the critical comments on my
paper from the professor, I feel hurt or
feel that I should not go for theory... I
should listen to what the professor says,
though. I do feel that I tend to think only
about the practical aspects of an issue
rather than theoretical aspects... (Sang-
eun, interview, March 13, 2002)

Later on, Sang-eun realized that the academic discourse of her Canadian Ph.D program was different from that of her M.A. program in Korea. According to her observation, what is regarded important from within the two different academic contexts is different. She realized that she might have been influenced by her habitus of her M.A. program in Korea:

30 페이지 정도되는 페이퍼를 세개를
쓰는데 굉장이 힘들고 time
consuming 같다는 생각이 들었어요.
한국에서는 이론에 밝은 사람보다는
실제로 번역을 잘하는 사람이 더 인정을
받아요. 이론보다는 실용성에 더 중점을
두어요. 그래서 제가

I found it very difficult and time
consuming to write three papers that
were about 30 pages long each. In
Korea, a person who can be good at
actual translation is more appreciated,
rather than the one who is
knowledgeable in theory. They focus
more on practice than on theory. That's
why it was particularly difficult for me

페이퍼를 쓸때 이론을 넣는것이
어려운가봐요.
(상은, 인터뷰, 2002 년 1 월 16 일)

to include some theory in my paper.
(Sang-eun, interview, January 16, 2002)

As a Ph.D. student in the Canadian university and an M.A. student in the Korean university, Sang-eun was influenced by different and rather contrasting expectations (theory vis-a-vis practice) from the two universities. Interestingly, I had an impression that Sang-eun did not want to lose her Korean habitus (i.e. tend to focus on practice) completely and “adopt” the theoretical approach. It may be that she thought theory would not be so useful in Korea in case she were to look for a job in Korean university contexts. Even though she told me initially that she would not want to go back to Korea after her study, I felt that she was constantly exposed to her two different social spaces, Canadian and Korean in the field of Translation and Interpretation, whenever she needed to make decisions in her L2 literacy practices. This exposure to different social spaces is discussed further in the next section.

Mother Tongue, Ph.D. Topic, and Supervisor

Another major frustration Sang-eun had as a Ph.D. student was to choose her dissertation topic and write up her proposal. The reason why she could not choose a topic for her thesis had a lot to do with the expectations and policy of her institute. According to Sang-eun, because of the nature of the field itself, the graduate students must find a supervisor who has good knowledge of the target languages they are interested in. Unfortunately, there was no professor in her program who had knowledge of the Korean language. Throughout the interview period, Sang-eun often expressed that she could not make a decision on choosing her research topic because of the complicated pros and cons

of each option. The interview excerpt shows how complex her situation and frustration was:

상은: 제 모국어가 한국어라서 제 지도 교수가 될수 있는 사람이 없어요. 한국어 부분을 지도해 줄 수 있는 사람이 없어요. 그래도 전 제가 스스로 한국어 지도 교수를 구하거나 과에서 한국어 교수를 구하거나 하는 조건하에 한국어언어를 사용하는 연구를 하고 싶어요.

희경: 그러면 상은씨 박사 논문이...

상은: 예, 전 한국어와 영어로 할 수도 있고 영어와 스페인어로 할 수 있어요. 하지만 제 모국어가 한국어이기 때문에 아마 한국어와 영어로 할 것 같아요.

희경: 예... 스페인어보다 영어로 하는 것이 더 자신있으세요?

상은: 아니요, 그래서가 아니라 [이 분야에서는] 한국어와 스페인어를 위한 마켓이 없어요.

희경: 아, 그래요?

상은: 그래서 연구를 하고 싶으면 그 연구 결과가 그 분야에서 뭔가 쓸모가 있는 것이어야 돼요. 그래서 전 한국에서는 영어와 한국어에 관련된 연구하는 것이 더 쓸모가 있다고 생각해요. 그리고 또 저한테 한국어와 스페인어로 연구하는 것이 별로 의미가 없어요.

희경: 스페인어 나라에 살고 있는게 아니니까...

상은: 예, 맞아요. (상은과의 인터뷰, 2001년 11월 7일)

Sang-eun: There is no one who can be my supervisor because my mother tongue is Korean. There is no one who can supervise for the Korean language. Nevertheless, I can still do my research in the context of Korean language, under the condition that I find a Korean supervisor by myself since they do not have to find a Korean supervisor for me. Heekyeong: So, your Ph.D. thesis would be...

Sang-eun: Yeah, I can do it in Korean and English or English and Spanish. However, because of my mother tongue, I will probably be doing it in Korean and English.

Heekyeong: I see... Do you feel more confident with English than Spanish?

Sang-eun: No, that's not why. There is no market for Korean and Spanish [in this field].

Heekyeong: Oh, is that right?

Sang-eun: Yeah, so if you want to do research, the result of research should be something useful in the field. So, I believe that the work on English and Korean is more useful in Korea [than the one on English and Spanish]. Also, it is not meaningful for me to do research on Korean and Spanish...

Heekyeong: Since you are not in a Spanish country...

Sang-eun: That's right.

(Interview with Sang-eun, November 7, 2001)

Sang-eun's comment clearly reflects that she positioned herself as a person who wanted to find a job in Korea as well as in Canada. Aware of the possibilities of working either in Korea or in Canada in the future, she was estimating the currency of different

capital of different research topics of her Ph.D. Bourdieu's (1991) notion of social space implies an agent's relative understanding of their social worlds. Sang-eun was clearly aware of relative weight of different kinds of cultural capital she possesses in her different social spaces.

When Sang-eun had just started her Ph.D. program, her supervisor was diagnosed with cancer and had to be in hospital for quite a while. The department arranged for Sang-eun to have another professor who could help her with Ph.D. work on behalf of her supervisor. Unfortunately, Sang-eun was not feeling very comfortable about her interaction with her new supervisor:

새 지도 교수님 좋으세요, 내가 부탁하는 것은 다 들어주시고, 근데 전 아직도 교수님에게서 거리감을 느껴요. 아마 사람이 젊어서 그럴지도 몰라요... 다른 교수님들은 어떻게 제가 지내는지 생활이 어떻게 되가는지에 관해서도 물어보시는데, 어떤 교수님은 제 지도 교수가 아닌데도 제 논문이 어떻게 되가는지에 대해 가끔 물어봐 주세요... 전 라틴계나 프렌치계 사람들이 더 편하게 느껴져요. 웬지모르게 앵글로폰 사람들하고는 항상 거리감이 느껴지더라고요. 케이트는 빼고요. 개는 내가 기분이 안좋을 때는 눈치를 채고 별일 없는지 다 꿰찬은지 물어보곤 해요. (상은, 인터뷰, 2002년 3월 13일)

The new supervisor is very nice to me whenever I ask something, but I still feel distance from her. Maybe because she is young... while other professors sometimes ask me about my personal life, how things are going with me, and one professor even asks me how my thesis is going although he is not my supervisor... I feel more comfortable with Latin people or Francophone people. Somehow I feel always distant from Anglophone people, except for Katy (who is the proofreader of her paper). If she senses that I don't look good, she then asks me how I am feeling or whether everything is okay with me... (Sang-eun, interview, March 13, 2002)

Sang-eun's feeling of distance towards her new supervisor was influenced by her interactions with others in the department who she perceived showed more care about her by asking specific questions in person. Sang-eun may have hoped to

establish a “we” relationship (Choi, 2000) with her new supervisor through building ‘cheong’. One of the common ways for Koreans to develop ‘cheong’ with a new member of a group is to show a sense of caring for the other by frequently interacting for a certain period time (Choi, 2000). She described to me how she felt about her interactions with the supervisor as follows:

희경: 그래도 뭔가 물어볼게 있을때는 새
지도 교수님에게 가서 물어보세요?
상은: 글썄요, 교수님이 항상 바쁘셔서
가급적이면 귀찮게 하지 않으려고 해요.
보통 질문할게 있으면 모아두었다가
미팅이 있을때만 물어보고요. 문제는
교수님이 proactive 하지 않으세요...
전에는 과에 있는 새로운 정보에 대해서
말씀을 드렸더니 그거에 대해서 이미 다
알고 계시더라고요, 그거보면, 제가 먼저
물어보지 않는한 그런 정보는 먼저
알려주는 사람이 아니예요. 사람이 너무
바쁘니까 그런거 갖이 저랑 나눌 시간이
없어서 그런가 보다 해요...
희경: 그런 생각이 들고나서는
교수님에게 어떤식으로 접근하셨어요?
상은: 제가 먼저 물어볼것을
준비해야돼요. 그렇지 않으면, 아무것도
얻어낼수가 없어요.
(상은과의 인터뷰, 2002 년 1 월 30 일)

Heekyeong: But, when you have
something to ask your new supervisor,
do you go to her and ask?
Sang-eun: Well, she is always very busy
so I try not to bother her. I usually keep
all the questions and ask them only when
we have a meeting. The thing is that she
is not really proactive... once I started to
talk about something or new information
(in the department), I often realize that
my supervisor already knew about it.
She is not the person who would tell me
about such information unless I ask her
first. I then just think she is too busy to
talk to me to share those.
Heekyeong: Once you realized that, how
did you approach her afterwards?
Sang-eun: I have to prepare something to
ask first. Otherwise, I cannot get
anything out of her. (Interview with
Sang-eun, January 30, 2002)

Sang-eun seemed uneasy not to feel distant from her supervisor since she felt that she could not have frequent interactions with the supervisor and accordingly, it became difficult to develop a “we” relationship.

In our second interview, Sang-eun told me that she had been thinking of a few ideas for her Ph.D. research topic since she had to present it in one of her courses. However, she felt that none of them seemed so clear to her. What she mostly wanted to

do for her Ph.D. research was to develop software that analyzes a ‘corpus’ or a translation memory tool either in Korean and English or in Korean and Spanish contexts. This idea seemed to have been strongly influenced by her intention to obtain capital that would be useful in the job market either in Korea or in Canada in the future. The next interview excerpt reflects the constant influences of her multiple positions in two of her social spaces on the processes of her decision-making:

한국에서는 전문 번역사나 통역사가 굉장히 똑똑한 사람들로 여겨지는데, 여기서는 [캐나다] 그걸 전문 직업으로 보지도 않아요. 전 자신을 언어실력만이 아니라 컴퓨터 같은 다른 기술에 지식을 갖춘 사람으로 보이고 싶어요. 논문을 ‘terminology’ 분야에 대해서 쓸까 생각을 해봤는데 과 동료들 중에 이미 ‘terminology’에 대해서 연구하고 있는 사람들이 있어서 그사람들 따라하고 싶지는 않아요... 게다가, ‘terminology’ 자체는 한국에서는 여기와 달리 전문 분야로 받아들여지지 않아요.
(상은, 인터뷰, 2002년 2월 27일)

In Korea, professional translators and interpreters are not so highly regarded [as intellectuals], although here [in Canada] it is considered as a professional job. I want to be able to present myself as someone who has knowledge in technology (computer skills) rather than just has language skills. I thought about writing my thesis related to ‘terminology’ field, but there are already some of my colleagues who are working on ‘terminology’ and I don’t want to repeat what they are doing... moreover, ‘terminology’ itself is not considered as a specialized field in Korea, unlike here. (Sang-eun, interview, February 27, 2002)

Unfortunately, there was another dilemma Sang-eun faced. In her view, the department did not seem to support her potential topic because it would be difficult for her to find a supervisor who could look into Korean texts. She realized that if she really wanted to do research in relation to a Korean context, she would need at least to find a co-supervisor who has good enough knowledge of Korean to supervise the Korean context.

In a later interview, Sang-eun told me about the meeting which was organized among the professors and graduate students in the department in order to discuss some

issues concerning the policy of the Ph.D. program. When a professor was explaining to the students about the policy of having a co-supervisor in the Ph.D. program, she often referred to Sang-eun as an example of having a co-supervisor. At that time, Sang-eun had mixed feelings since she could have two different interpretations about why her name was mentioned. On one hand, the discussion at the meeting made her feel that she was positioned as a minority in the department since it appeared that her situation was a particular case. On the other hand, she felt that the professors might have some expectations about her because of her unique background. The fact that the professors remembered her name and her background information – Korean, English and Spanish language skills – made her feel that they might have been paying attention to her. This perception was reinforced by another impression she had. She felt that her professors showed their interest when she wrote a paper with reference to Korean contexts because of its uniqueness.

미팅 중에 co-supervisor 에 대해서 얘기가 나오면 교수님이 계속 제 이름을 예로 들으세요... 그러면 제가 minority 라는 생각이 들어요... 반면에, 제 백그라운드가 유니크해서 교수들에게서 관심을 받는구나하는 생각도 들어요. 교수들이 제 화일에 대해서 follow-up 을 하고 있고 저에 관한 정보에 대해서 기억을 하고 있다라는 사실에 교수들이 저에 대해 어떤 기대감이 있나보다 하는 생각도 들고요... 하지만 어떤때는 내가 trouble maker 처럼 여겨진다는 생각도 들어요. (상은, 인터뷰, 2002 년 1 월 30 일)

During the meeting, when it comes to the issue of 'co-supervisor', the professor kept mentioning my name as an example... and this made me feel that I am a minority... On the other hand, I felt that I am getting some expectations from the professors because of my unique background. The fact that the professors are doing a follow-up on my file and remember the information of my background makes me feel that they are expecting something from me... However, sometimes I feel that I am regarded as a trouble maker. (Sang-eun, interview, January 30, 2002)

It is interesting that Sang-eun saw two sides of a coin with respect to her Korean background. She perceived that it could be her strength as well as her weakness. From a Vygotskian perspective, I believe that the cognitive process of Sang-eun's perception was socially, culturally and historically influenced by the reciprocal interaction among herself, her institutional environment, and her language background.

In February, Sang-eun became very frustrated because she had still not come up with a clear idea for her thesis. Moreover, it became clear to her that because of the power of institutional policy it would not be good for her to have a Korean language context in her thesis. She talked to me after having a meeting with the director of her department regarding her Ph.D. topic:

상은: 한국에 있었으면 한국어와 영어에
관련된 연구를 했을거예요. 하지만
여기서는 그 아이디어를 안좋아
할거예요. 지도 교수를 찾기가
힘들어서요. 며칠전에 프로그램
디렉터와 제 논문 주제에 대해서
얘기했었어요. 디렉터는 과에서 지원을
할수 있도록 영어나 불어나 스페인어에
관련된 연구주제를 정해보라고
하더라고요...
희경: 영어나 스페인어에 관련지어서
연구해보시지요?
상은: 그러면 제 유니크한면을 살릴수가
없게돼요, 그리고 funding을 받기도
어렵게 되구요. (상은과의 인터뷰,
2002년 2월 27일)

Sang-eun: If I were in Korea, I would
work on a Korean and English context.
However, here they would not like the
idea. It's very difficult to find a
supervisor for me. The other day I spoke
to the director of the program about my
thesis topic. She suggested I should
work on English, French or Spanish
contexts so that they can support me.
Heekyeong: Why don't you then work
on English or Spanish contexts?
Sang-eun: Then, my uniqueness will
disappear and thus, it will be difficult for
me to get some funding. (Interview with
Sang-eun, February 27, 2002)

It was unfortunate that Sang-eun could not find a co-supervisor who could supervise Korean texts. In fact, she did try to contact a professor from her previous university in Korea to be a co-supervisor. According to Sang-eun, the

professor responded that she would be willing to read her thesis as one of the thesis committee members not as a co-supervisor since it would be too much of a burden for her. However, having the Korean professor as one of the committee members was not enough for the department policy. As stated in the excerpt above, it was very difficult for Sang-eun to give up her original topic since she saw high cultural and economic capital in her topic with a Korean context. Sang-eun also thought of transferring to another program. However, she decided to discard the idea because she would then have to give up her admission scholarship she had been receiving.

Until the last interview I had with her, Sang-eun was still under stress due to the situation she was under in her Ph.D. program:

회경씨야 주변에 국제 학생들이 많이 있지만 제 경우는 저만 과에서 동양인이예요. 아랍권 학생이 하나 있기는 한데, 자기는 아랍인인 것에 대해 자랑스럽게 여긴다고 하는데, 내가 한국인이라는 것이 자랑스럽지 않다는 것이 아니예요. 제 말은 그것 때문에 제게 불이익이 많다는 것이죠... 그래서 이게 제가 맞는 학교가 아니라는 생각이 들어요, 제가 있을 곳이 아닌거 확요. 과에 있는 사람들이 나한테 어떻게 잘못했다는게 아니예요. 그 사람들도 어쩌겠어요. 학교가 정부에서 후원받는 영어 불어 bilingual 학교인데... 제가 할수 있는 것이 인정을 받을수 있는 다른 곳으로 가야겠다는 생각이 들어요. 이런것들 때문에 항상 처져 있는것이 옳지 않다는 생각이 들어요...
(상은, 인터뷰, 2002년 4월 24일)

You (the interviewer, Heekyeong) have many international students around you, but in my case, I am the only Asian in the department. There is one Arabic student and she says to me that she is proud of being Arabic. I don't mean that I am not proud of being Korean. I mean because of the fact (being Korean) there are many disadvantages for me... So, I feel that this is not a right school for me, it's not a place I should stay. I don't mean that they [people in the department] did something wrong to me. What can they do, this is a bilingual school funded by the government of which English and French are the main languages... I think I should go somewhere where what I can do can be appreciated; I don't feel right to be down all the time because of all this... (Sang-eun, interview, April 24, 2002)

Sang-eun's frustration regarding her selection of a Ph.D. topic and a supervisor illustrates a clear power struggle between her agency that sees the value of cultural capital in which she wants to invest and the institutional policy that does not correspond to her investment. Her new thinking, "I should go somewhere where what I can do can be appreciated" seems to have emerged as she became aware that she could not negotiate any further with the institution. Sang-eun's agency was still strong and she did not give up on her value; and therefore, she looked for another social space in which to invest.

Kyung-ho:

Ambivalent Roles as Family Supporter and Prospective Linguist

체 힘의 근원은 내 자신에 대한 자신감인
것 같아요. 내가 하고 싶은 뭔가가
있으면 난 그걸 해 낼 수 있다는...
(경호, 인터뷰, 2002년 3월 13일)

The source of my energy is the
confidence I have about myself,
so that when there is something I like to
do, I am able to do it...
(Kyung-ho, interview, March 13, 2002)

Kyung-ho was a thirty-two year old Ph.D. student when I met him, enrolled in the Department of Linguistics in the same Canadian university in Ottawa as Sang-eun's. Sang-eun introduced Kyung-ho to me as another participant in my research. Shortly after Sang-eun had the first interview with me, she told Kyung-ho about the interview and my research. He expressed to her his interest in participating in my study because he thought that we could mutually benefit from exchanging information about our studies. He came to Canada in August 2000 with his wife and a five-year-old son in order to pursue his

Ph.D. study. When I began the interview with him in November 2001, his wife was three months pregnant with their second baby.

Responsibilities as a Father, a Husband, a Ph.D. Student

As a father, Kyung-ho was responsible for obtaining financial support for his family. He originally hoped to go to an American university to pursue his Ph.D. study in Linguistics. However, he decided to come to this Canadian school since the university offered him some financial help in the form of a research assistantship from his department. The department offered a variety of tasks for teaching or research assistantships to financially support the graduate students. His task was to take care of the reading room of the department. I remembered that Sang-eun also took care of the reading room as a research assistant, presumably, due to her limited knowledge of the French language. I noted that she found it very unpleasant since she felt that she was marginalized and it would limit her opportunities of exploring her academic skills. Unlike Sang-eun, however, Kyung-ho did not express to me any negative feelings toward this research assistant task. In fact, he told me:

제가 연구 조교로 이일을 택했어요. 아주 수준 높은 영어를 요구하지 않으니까. 2 학기때는 연구 조교일 하나를 더 했어요 돈 더 많이 벌려구요. 근데 한 사람당 연구 조교 할 수 있는 시간량이 한정되어 있더라고요. 그래서 연구 조교 한명이 할 수 있는 시간으로 두개의 조교일을 하니깐 돈을 더 많이 벌지는 못했어요. (경호, 인터뷰, 2001 년 11 월 20 일)

I chose to take this job for my R.A. since it didn't seem to require high level of English proficiency. In the second semester, I took one more R.A. job hoping to make more money, but the hours of R.A. for one person was limited. So, I couldn't make more money since I had two R.A.s for the same amount of hours as one R.A. (Kyung-ho, interview, November 20, 2001)

It was interesting for me to see Sang-eun and Kyung-ho's different reactions to a similar situation: that is, working on the same task for their research assistantship. It seems that while Sang-eun perceived research assistantships as a way to gain social capital (e.g. connection and access to people and resources within her academic field), Kyung-ho seemed to view research assistantships more as a way to obtain economic capital (e.g. money for living). He did mention to me that originally he wanted to work for something related to publishing in the journal of the department, but could not get it because of high competition for the position. However, despite his awareness of the social capital of other research assistant's tasks (working for publishing the departmental journal can be useful for his academic career), he still valued the economic capital of his task (taking care of the reading room). It seems that it was because his financial responsibility of caring for his family was critical; therefore, at that time he compromised his investment for his academic career.

However, this assistantship from the department was barely enough for him, since Kyung-ho had to pay very high tuition as an international student. He had applied for a Canadian landed immigrant status hoping to receive help with the financial burden of paying the international student tuition. He told me that his son goes to kindergarten and his wife also wants to pursue her B.A. degree in a Canadian university when they could financially afford to do so. This seemed to have influenced him to a certain extent to feel that his financial situation was always his highest priority, which I observed to influence his investment in his own research. He was taking another research assistantship by helping with his supervisor's work that was not exactly matched to his own Ph.D.

research interest. In addition, he was helping a Korean student prepare for the TOEFL test as a private tutor twice a week. He often said to me, “I have to make as much money as I can” (Kyung-ho, interview, November 20, 2001).

Kyung-ho’s multiple social identities seemed to have mediated his decision making process in various situation. For example, when I asked him what he wants to do after finishing his Ph.D. program, his different identities, a prospective scholar in linguistics and the father of his young son, seemed to have all influenced his perspective on his future plan as reflected in the excerpt:

여기 오기 전에는 제 박사 과정이 끝나면 당연히 한국에 돌아가는 것이 저희 계획이었어요. 제 대학 선배들 중에 외국에서 학위받고 와서 교수된 사람들을 봤거든요. 저도 그렇게 되고 싶어요. 근데, 여기 오래 살다 보니까 캐타다에 사는 좋은 점들도 많이 보이기 시작했어요. 무엇보다도, 아이들 교육을 위해서 여기에 사는게 좋을것 같아요. 한국과 다르게, 중학교와 고등학교 때 고생을 많이 하지 않아도 될테니까, 그리고 더 창의적으로 사고도 할수 있게 될거구요. (경호, 인터뷰, 2001년 11월 20일)

Before coming here, we planned that we would definitely go back to Korea after my Ph.D., because I saw some of the senior colleagues from my university who finished their degrees abroad and have become professors. I wanted to become like them. However, as I live here longer, I have started to see many positive things about living in Canada as well. Most of all, I can see it would be good to live here for my children’s education. Unlike in Korea, they wouldn’t have to suffer so much in middle school and high school, and they would be able to think more creatively. (Kyung-ho, interview, November 20, 2001)

Kyung-ho’s comments illustrate that the decision making process of an agent for their actions are mediated by different capital influenced by different identities of their selfhood. Kyung-ho’s identity as a prospective scholar in Linguistics influences his action, going back to Korea in order to pursue his career as a linguist in academia. This identity seems to be mediated by gaining social recognition as well as his fulfillment of

his intellectual capability. On the other hand, Kyung-ho's identity as being responsible influences another action: staying in Canada because he sees many positive aspects of his family life there. Particularly, as a father, he found it very important that in Canada the children's education system was less rigid, whereas in Korea even young children have to always study hard rather than enjoy their childhood and simply having fun. However, he was not so optimistic about the chance for him to get a teaching job in Canada since he is not a native speaker of English.

Kyung-ho's research interest was related to the area of 'lexical semantics' recommended by his supervisor. He became interested in this area since it is related to the areas of Cognitive Science and Psychology of which he was fond. Kyung-ho was introduced to his supervisor through one of his professors in his university in Korea. However, he did not seem to be completely satisfied with his Ph.D. topic in the sense that it is different from his supervisor's research interests. He told me that sometimes he thought about a possibility of looking for another professor or another research topic. In general, he had little interaction with his professors in his program except for his supervisor. He said:

제 생각엔 다들 (과 동료들) 성격과 스타일이 다른 것 같아요. 어떤 학생들은 교수들과 자주 접촉을 하기도 하는데, 저랑 친한 동료들 대부분은 제 office mate도 그렇고 교수들과 같이 많이 하지 않는 것 같아요. 전 그런 건 사람의 언어 능력 보다는 그 사람 성격에 더 관련이 된다고 봐요. (경호, 인터뷰, 2002년 1월 30일)

I think everyone (referring to his colleagues) has different characteristics and styles. There are some students who interact often with professors. But, most of my close colleagues including my office mate do not seem to have frequent contact with professors. I see it (interacting with professors) has more to do with one's personality than to do with one's language proficiency. (Kyung-ho, interview, January 30, 2002)

Cole & Engeström (1993) argue that human cognition is distributed as a result of reciprocal interactions among individuals, environments, and cultural artifacts. Kyung-ho's perception about the need of interaction with the professors can be explained from the point of view of distributed cognition. The reason why Kyung-ho did not see much importance in frequent interactions with professors may be due to with the social environment to which he was exposed. Because of the fact that he perceived that his colleagues did not often have meetings or daily interactions with their professors, Kyung-ho might not have seen much symbolic capital to be gained by investing in those interactions.

I would like to note that, unlike Sang-eun's situation, Kyung-ho did not need to have French language skills for his Ph.D. studies because it was not a prerequisite for his program. In addition, unlike Sang-eun he did not talk much to me about his difficulty in writing papers for his courses. When I asked him about his difficulties in writing in English, he said:

전 코스 페이퍼 써야 할 때를 제외하고는 영어로 writing 해야 할 경우가 별로 많지 않아요. 지도 교수님하고도 이메일 일주일에 한번 정도만 하고... 학교에 academic writing help center 가 있다는 얘기는 들어 봤는데, 한번도 거기 서비스를 이용해 본 적은 없어요. 만약 컨퍼런스에서 발표해야 할 페이퍼나 저널에 출판해야 할 페이퍼라면 제가 쓴것에 더 주의를 기울이겠지만, 그냥 코스 페이퍼라면 저 혼자 써서 그냥 제출해요. (경호, 인터뷰, 2001년 11월 20일)

I don't get many chances that I need a lot of writing in English, except when I have to write a course paper. I exchange emails with my supervisor only once a week or so... I heard about the academic writing help center in the university, but I've never used the service. If it was a paper for a conference presentation or for publishing in a journal, I then would pay more attention to my writing. But, if it is just a course paper, I write it by myself and submit it. (Kyung-ho, interview, November 20, 2001)

As he mentioned, writing a paper for his course work was not such a challenging task as it was for Sang-eun. However, it may also be that he did not discuss it with me because of the fact that I am a woman from the same cultural background and this may have made him feel uncomfortable.

On the other hand, Kyung-ho talked to me about his need to improve his oral skills. He often mentioned his office mate who was originally from Tunisia. He spoke both English and French very well, so Kyung-ho believed that it was helpful for him to talk to his office mate in terms of improving his oral English skill. As a second language learner, Kyung-ho was more interested in investing in improving more his fluency of informal English than formal English for academic purposes.

수업 강의를 따라가기에는 문제가
없는데 가끔씩 캐나다인 과 동료가 하는
말을 못 알아들을 때가 있어요. 과
친구들중 한명에게 제 튜터가 되달라고
부탁할까 생각 중이에요. 항상
개네들에게 네 영어에 실수가 있으면
교정해 달라고 부탁을 해요. 제 office
mate 가 영어 native speaker 는
아니지만 개랑 말하는 것도 제 영어
실력을 높이는데 도움이 많이 되는 것
같아요. 사실 그것 때문에 얘기 하면서
실수를 해도 맘이 편해요... 제
reading 과 writing 은 코스를
따라가기에 괜찮은 것 같아요. 하지만 제
의견을 표현하는 것이 아직은 그렇게
편하지 않아요...
(경호, 인터뷰, 2002 년 1 월 16 일)

To follow course lectures is not a
problem, but sometimes I don't
understand completely what my
Canadian colleagues say. I am thinking
about asking one of them to be my
English tutor. I always ask them to
correct my mistakes. Talking to my
office mate is also, I think, very useful
for me to improve my English, although
he is not a native speaker of English.
Actually, because of that, I feel more
comfortable talking to him when I make
mistakes... I feel okay with my reading
and writing skills for the course work.
But, in terms of expressing my opinions,
I don't really feel comfortable about that
yet... (Kyung-ho, interview, January 16,
2002)

I think the reason why Kyung-ho was more interested in investing in improving
his oral English skills was probably because he saw the immediate usefulness of

English fluency in his everyday life. Through the daily interaction with his Canadian colleagues in the department he felt that he should invest in practicing more his oral skills. In addition, while he was doing errands in various social situations, he encountered having difficulty understanding and expressing fluently in English as shown in the next excerpt:

항상은 아니고, 가끔씩 과에 있는
사람이나 쇼핑 센터에서 너무 빨리
말을해서 그사람이 뭘 말을 하는지 잘
못알아 들으면 짜증이 나요. 그런 날이면
사람들이 내가 영어를 잘 못해서 무시를
한다는 생각이 들어요. 그러면 아무것도
하기가 싫어지죠. 그후에는 나
스스로에게 저사람들은 한국말 할 줄
모르고 영어로 말한다는 것 외에는
아무것도 잘하는게 없다라고 말하면서
신경 안쓰려고 노력해요... 어떤때는
내가 그럴 필요가 없는데도 'I am
sorry'를 너무 자주 말한다는 생각도
들어요...
(경호, 인터뷰, 2002년 2월 13일)

Not always, but sometimes I get
frustrated when someone in the
department or in a shopping center
speaks to me too fast and I don't
understand what he or she is saying...
Some days like this, I feel that people
disrespect me because I don't speak
English well, then, I don't feel like doing
anything. Afterwards, I try not to care
about it by forcing myself to think that
they don't know how to speak Korean
and they have nothing they are good at
except speaking English... Sometimes I
feel that I say 'I am sorry' too often and
unnecessarily when I don't have to do
that... (Kyung-ho, interview, February
13, 2002)

I also find it interesting the way Kyung-ho coped with his unpleasant feelings about the situation where he perceived he was disrespected by being positioned as a non-native speaker. His strategy was to imagine positioning his interlocutor in the same position as a non-native speaker of Korean and not to value English skills more than necessary. I think his perception about the need of English fluency was influenced by his active social interactions in his daily life. It seems that for him, oral English skill was a very useful mediational tool in his variety of social activities as discussed in the next section.

Active Social Skills

I observed that Kyung-ho had very good social skills in the sense that he was good at obtaining information by asking people he encountered in various social environments, such as a Korean community and his university department. Probably influenced by his Korean habitus in which a group of social members often interact like family through sharing and exchanging ‘cheong’, Kyung-ho seemed to value social capital highly and to consider it to be very useful in his life. For example, he had a close interaction with the local Korean community, particularly with people in a Korean Catholic church in Ottawa. According to Kyung-ho, there were around 100 Koreans who came to this church, and every weekend a new family or student was introduced. Upon arriving in Ottawa, he had already contacted a priest in the church. In fact, the priest came to the airport to pick up Kyung-ho’s family and found a place for them to stay.

Kyung-ho told me that he often obtained useful information about everyday life in Canada from talking to the people in the church and in his department:

새 아파트를 찾고 있어요. 새 아기가 곧
태어나면 더 좋은 아파트에서 살고 싶기
때문에... 사실 교회에 있는 사람들이
어떤 지역은 살기 좋고 살기 나쁜지
얘기를 해주었어요. 과 사무실에 있는
사람들을 통해서 어느 유치원이
좋은지도 알게 되고요. 유치원은 다
똑같은 줄 알았는데 그게 아닌가봐요...
학교가 어디에 위치해 있느냐에 따라
아이들한테 좋은 학교가 있고 나쁜
학교가 있대요.
(경호, 인터뷰, 2002년 2월 13일)

I was looking for a new apartment since
we will have a new baby soon and we
want to live in a better apartment...
Actually, some people in the church told
me which area is good or bad in the city.
I found a good kindergarten for my son
through a person in the department
office. I thought schools (kindergartens)
are all the same, but I guess not... There
were good schools and bad schools for
kids depending on in which area the
school is located. (Kyung-ho, interview,
February 13, 2002)

I think that through the positive interactions with people in Canada as well as in Korea, Kyung-ho came to strongly believe in the value of active social interactions and acquired a positive attitude toward having various social experiences.

Dealing with Financial Difficulties

In winter semester, Kyung-ho's financial situation had become worse. One of his research assistantship ended for the semester and the student he was tutoring went back to Korea. In other words, he lost his two income sources. Therefore, his worries and psychological burdens became bigger:

오월 중순경에 두번째 아이가
나올거예요... 근데 요새 저희 경제적
사정이 별로 좋지 않아요... 지난
학기에는 제가 T.A.도 하고 R.A.도 해서
괜찮았는데, 이번 학기에는 R.A.로만
일하고 있어요. 그래서 박사 공부보다도
어떻게 돈을 벌까하는 생각만 하고
있어요. Emergency loan 도 알아
봤는데 충분하지 않더라고요.
오백에서 육백불 밖에 주지 않아요. 지도
교수님한테도 이미 도움을 청해
두었구요. 그리고 international
student advisor 란 얘기 해보고
학생회에 경제 요청 지원서를
제출했어요. 최소 3월까지만 어떻게
버티야 되요. 3월 이후에는 과외일을
다시 할 수 있을테니까.
(정호, 인터뷰, 2002년 1월 16일)

My second baby's due day is in the
middle of May...but our financial
situation is not so good these days...
Last semester it was better because I was
working as both a T.A. and an R.A., but
this semester I have only one R.A. So, I
have been thinking more about how to
make than about my Ph.D. study. I have
looked into an emergency loan, but it
didn't seem enough. It offers only five to
six hundred dollars. I have already asked
my supervisor for some help. Also, I
have talked to the international student
advisor and submitted an application of
financial help to the students association.
I need to hang on at least until March, as
I will be able to do the tutoring job again
after March. (Kyung-ho, interview,
January 16, 2002)

His financial difficulty greatly affected the time and the energy he could invest in his own Ph.D. study. His identity as a father of a family who is responsible for their financial support became dominant in his decision-making process.

Accordingly, his first priority at that moment was to find out about financial aid to cope with the situation. As I am a Korean person who is also doing a Ph.D. and a full-time student, I felt very badly towards the situation he found himself in. I was concerned how he would be able to continue his study in such circumstances. I asked him how he was able to manage to keep up his study considering his financial burden and responsibilities as a father.

제 힘의 근원은 내 자신에 대한 자신감인 것 같아요. 내가 하고 싶은 뭔가가 있으면 난 그걸 해 낼 수 있다는, 나중에 잘 살건 못 살건예요. 그런 희망이 있고 자신감이 무의식적으로 있기 때문에 돌봐야 할 가족들이 있음에도 불구하고 여기까지 올 수 있었던 것 같아요... (경호, 인터뷰, 2002년 3월 13일)

The source of my energy is the confidence I have in myself and that there is something I like to do and that I am able to do it, regardless of being well-off or not in the future. Because I have such hope and a sense of confidence unconsciously, I believe that I have come so far in spite of having a family to take care of... (Kyung-ho, interview, March 13, 2002)

As reflected in his statement, I found it very interesting that even though the identity as a father became dominant, the identity associated with his desire to pursue an academic career also seemed to exist. This may mean that dominant identities whose valuation contradict one another could still coexist and become dominant at specific times without being suppressing one another. Kyung-ho, facing severe financial uncertainties, including his regular responsibilities of a father and pursuing his academic career, seemed to have found an anchor in the confidence he had in himself. While other participants seemed to have negotiations producing no compromise, Kyung-ho seemed to have evaluated which positionings had dominance at very specific times and could make a decision on what is a priority. It is as if he had found a compromise that when

necessary, or when it is an emergency, his position as a father took precedence over all the other positionings. This may be not surprising since it was a matter of survival.

Fortunately, in the next interview, I noticed that Kyung-ho was in a better mood. He told me that he received a letter from the Canadian immigration office indicating that his family's application was almost in the final stage. In addition, he received a confirmation note that he would get a financial aid of two thousand dollars. He also told me that some of his colleagues collected some money in order to help his family's financial problems. In fact, it was his office mate who organized this among his colleagues in order to help his situation. Kyung-ho was very touched by this and thought he could not imagine meeting such warm-hearted colleagues if he was in Korea.

전 원래 한국 사람만 진짜 친구로 여길 수 있다고 생각 했었어요. 그런데, 제 office mate 때문에 맘을 바꿔야 겠어요. 지난번에 우리 둘 다 굉장히 처져 있어서 가게에서 맥주 몇병 사서 사무실 문 잠가 놓고 같이 마셨지요. (경호, 인터뷰, 2002년 1월 30일)

I initially thought that I could consider only Korean people as my "real" friends. However, I should change my mind because of my office mate. The other day we both were very down. So, we bought a couple of bottles of beer from a store and drank together with our office door closed. (Kyung-ho, interview, January 30, 2002)

In the following interview in March, Kyung-ho told me that he had started working in a convenience store owned by a Korean person because the student he had expected to tutor did not come back from Korea. Working in a store as a cashier would not bring him much money. However, Kyung-ho still sounded excited to have this job even though he would not earn much money and it could reduce time working on his Ph.D. He talked about his experience as a cashier as follows:

편의점에서 일하는 동안 손님들과
영어로 말할 기회가 있어요. 하지만
하루에 똑같은 표현만 계속 말하게 되니
그게 별로 제 영어 향상에 도움이 될 것
같지는 않아요. 하지만, cashier 로
일하기는 이번이 처음이라 재미있어요.
듣기로는 cashier 일을 구하는 것이
쉽지가 않아서 좋은 경험이 될 것 같아요.
(경호, 인터뷰, 2002년 3월 13일)

While working in the convenience store,
I had chances to talk to customers in
English. But I don't think this helps my
English very much since I get to say
only the same expressions everyday.
That's not enough to improve my
English. However, this is the first time I
work as a cashier so it's fun. I heard that
it's a good experience since getting a
cashier job is not so easy. (Kyung-ho,
interview, March 13, 2002)

I think that Kyung-ho seems to see potential capital in every resource he is
exposed to. He considered working at the store as an opportunity to practice his
English. In addition, he viewed that working as a cashier would be good for his
résumé for future part time jobs. I was impressed by his positive attitude toward
the situation in which he found himself; since he had to work at a store to support
his family even if it influenced the productivity of his Ph.D. study. He seems to
see capital in every activity.

I asked him about his plans for the summer. He explained to me that he would
focus on two things. First, he would try to write up his qualifying papers, which are the
requirement of the Ph.D. program. However, he soon talked about the reality that he has
to make some money and that there are many responsibilities he shoulders in his family
as a father, husband and a son of his parents.

여름에 둘째 아기가 태어나면 아이들
구경시켜주기 위해서 여행을 가고
싶어요... 하지만 그러기 위해서는 먼저
돈을 벌어야지요... 그리고 내년에는
제 어머니가 칠순 생신하시기 때문에

In summer when the second baby is
born, I would like to go on a trip to show
off of money when moving in because I am
the kids around... but I need money for
that, so I have to make some money
first... Also, next year I have to go to

한국에도 가야해요... 지금 있는
편의점에서 일하는 걸로 그런 돈을
어떻게 벌 수 있을지 모르겠어요...
(경호, 인터뷰, 2002 년 3 월 13 일)

Korea since it's my mother's 70th
birthday next year ... I am not sure how
much money I can make from working
in the convenience store at the moment.
(Kyung-ho, interview, March 13, 2002)

Kyung-ho's responsibilities from his multiple social roles continued and thus, his
negotiation with his Ph.D. study and other his responsibilities in his family was on-going
when I ended the interviews with him.

Ji-young:

Intellectual and Spiritual Growing Up in Third Space

전 뭔가 local 한 걸 아주 자세히
들여다 보면 항상 universal 한 뭔가를
알아낼 수 있다고 믿어요.
(지영, 인터뷰, 2002 년 4 월 11 일)

I believe that through looking very
carefully into something local,
you can then find out something
universal.
(Ji-young, interview, April 11, 2002)

Ji-young was twenty-four years old when I met her in 2001. At that time, she was
writing a thesis for her Masters degree in Applied Linguistics in an English medium
Canadian university. I was introduced to Ji-young through a friend of mine who was in
the same M.A. program with her. My friend thought Ji-young might be interested in
meeting with me since she was writing her M.A. thesis and she might want to talk about
it with me. In our first meeting, Ji-young told me that she thought it would be good for
her to have regular meetings with me. She believed that because she was not taking any

courses and was not having much social interaction due to spending most of her time only working on her thesis.

Ji-young came to Canada at the end of July 2000 in order to pursue her graduate study, leaving her parents and her younger brother in Korea. Her B.A. degree was in English language education in a Korean university, but she decided to study Linguistics for her M.A. degree. Ji-young had received a scholarship from her university in Korea, which covered her tuition for her M.A. study in Canada. She was also receiving financial support from her parents for her living cost, including rent, food and leisure activities. She was living by herself in a one-room apartment located downtown and commuted to school by bus.

As for writing her thesis, she briefly explained to me that she was interested in understanding how Korean native speakers acquire English locative verbs. Ji-young explained to me that locative verbs are the ones such as ‘pour’, ‘fill’ and ‘load’, and studying these verbs concerns understanding the relationship between a moving object and a location. I asked her why she wanted to major in Linguistics rather than remaining in language education. She said:

지영: 저는 교육학 분야가 안 맞는 것 같아요. 전 교사가 교실에서 학생들을 위해 무엇을 해 줄 수 있을 것인가 생각해 보는 것에 별로 관심이 없어요. 그 분야는 너무 광대하고 애매해요. 전 혼자서 언어 이론을 이해하고 연구하는데 더 관심이 있어요. 전 순수 [과학] 원리들을 연구하는게 더 끌려요. 회경: 가끔은 SLA 분야의 논문에서 나오는 implication 들에 실망하게 되지 않니?

Ji-young: I don't think the field of education is for me. I am not so interested in thinking about what teachers in the classroom can do for students. The field is too broad and fuzzy. I am more interested in exploring and understanding a theory of language analysis by myself. I get more attracted to exploring pure [scientific] principles. Heekyeong: Don't you sometimes get disappointed with some implications of

지영: 실용적인 정보나 교육학적인
의의만을 바라 본다면 SLA 의
implication 들이 별로 매력이
없을거예요. 하지만 전 이론가의 역할은
어떤 원리들을 뽑아 내는 것이고 그
원리들을 가지고 해석하거나 적용시키는
것은 각기 다른 상황에 있는 독자들에게
달려있다고 봐요. 예를 들어, 동사
하나에도 엄청난 정보가 있는데, 그
정보들을 찾아내는 것은 이론가의
일이고 그 정보를 가지고 어떻게 어휘
교육에 연관시킬 것이냐는 다른 사람의
일이라고 생각해요. (지영, 인터뷰,
2001 년 11 월 12 일)

the papers in the field of SLA?
Ji-young: If you are only looking for
practical or pedagogical implications,
the implications in SLA will not be so
appealing. However, a theorist's role is
to draw out certain principles [that are
universal], and leave interpretation or
application of them to the readers
depending on their different contexts.
For example, there is so much
information about one verb and it's
the theorist's job to find out all the
information. And then, it's someone
else's job to relate the information to
vocabulary teaching. (Interview with Ji-
young, November 12, 2001)

As reflected in the excerpt above, Ji-young had a perception of a clear distinction
between the roles of a theoretical linguist and a researcher in language education. She
found her role as a linguistic theorist rather than a language educator. She also strongly
expressed that her academic interest was in the discovery of universal rules in general
linguistics rather than in the implementation of the rules.

Ji-young told me another reason why she did not have further interest in language
education, which was the field of study in which she obtained her B.A. degree in Korea:

친구중에 제 과에 수석으로 입학한
아이가 있어요. 교사 임용고시에도
한번도 안 떨어지고 바로 붙었어요.
그런데 최근에 듣기로는 하는 일에 너무
스트레스 받아서 만성 소화 불량으로
고생하고 있대요. 이게 자기가 정말로
원했던 것이 아니더라는 생각이 들었대요.
학교에서는 국가 교육과정 그대로 다
따라야 하고 교육과정도 엄청 자주
바뀌고 해서 숨이 막힌대요.

I have a friend who got admitted to my
university program [in Korea] as a top
student in the department. She has also
passed the national exam to become an
English teacher in public school without
failing once. Then, I heard recently she
is suffering from a chronic digestion
problem because of the stress she gets
from her work. She realized it was not
what she really wanted to do. She feels
suffocated by the fact that she has to

듣기로는 유학가고 싶어 하는데,
임용고시 패스하려고 힘들게 공부한 것
생각하면 그만두기가 쉽지 않은가봐요.
그 이야기 듣고 저는 가르치는 것에 대해
더 회의적이 되었어요. 교육의 역할이
항상 정부 정책에 따라 왔다갔다 하는 것
같아서요.
(지영, 인터뷰, 2001년 11월 12일)

follow the strict national school
curriculum, as well as the national
education curriculum that has been
changed very frequently. I heard that
now she wants to go study abroad yet
cannot quit her job easily since she
studied so hard to pass the exam. I
became more cynical about teaching
after hearing her story since it looks like
the role of teaching changes frequently
since the government policy changes all
the time. (Ji-young, interview,
November 12, 2001)

As reflected in the excerpt, Ji-young became less interested in language education in school settings influenced by her friend's experience in a Korean school context. The fact that her friend had negative experiences as an English teacher in Korea influenced her to have a similar negative perception about teaching possibilities in Korea. Therefore, she came to think that teaching in a school setting is not as attractive for her as the discovery of universal principles in linguistics. It could also be that she perceived the political power of the Korean government over the school curriculum in a negative way, since it does not allow classroom teachers to have much flexibility in their teaching instruction.

Interacting with Thesis Supervisor

According to Ji-young, she was one of the few students in the program who were interested in general Linguistics while the majority of the students are interested in understanding language in actual use and the implementation of rules in social and educational contexts. The M.A. program was geared primarily towards practitioners in the field, focusing on investigating language use in social contexts, L1 and L2 acquisition

and teaching methodology. Ji-young's supervisor was one of the few professors in the program whose main research was primarily related to general Linguistics rather than teaching and learning in language classrooms. Ji-young was one of the few M.A. students whom he was supervising for writing a thesis in the department.

Ji-young's supervisor was a well-known scholar in the field of second language acquisition. When our interviews had just begun, Ji-young told me that he was known to the students in her M.A. program as a "tough" professor and was perceived among the students as an difficult person to interact with since he did not seem so friendly toward students. As explained earlier, Ji-young had an impression that the majority of the professors and students in the program were interested in the application of language use rather than generally in Linguistics. In fact, she was aware that there were a couple of professors who had a very good reputation among the students as being very friendly and supportive towards their students. Nevertheless, when she was looking for her thesis supervisor, she asked this "tough" professor, in spite of his reputation, to be her thesis supervisor. She explained that it was because he was the only professor in the program who could supervise her research interest.

팔월달에 교수님 처음 만나서 제 연구
관심사를 설명하고 제 지도 교수가
되주실수 있는지 부탁을 했을때는 제가
연구로 뭘 하고 싶은건지 이해가
안간다고 말씀하셨습니다. 그때 정말 거의
울것만 같았죠. 하지만 과에서 내가 지도
교수를 부탁할 수 있는 사람은 이
사람밖에 없다고 생각하고
논문쓰기위해서는 이사람한테 의존해야
된다고 생각했어요. 선택의 여지가
없었죠.
(지영, 인터뷰, 2001년 11월 12일)

When I met him for the first time in
August to explain my research interest
and ask him to be my supervisor, he told
me that he did not understand what I was
trying to do for my research. I felt then
almost like crying. However, I thought
to myself that I have to depend on him
for writing my thesis, since he is the
only one I can ask to supervise me in the
department. I do not have any other
choice. (Ji-young, interview, November
12, 2001)

After the first meeting with him, understandably, Ji-young was quite nervous about how the interaction with her supervisor would proceed during her thesis writing process.

Ji-young had a regular meeting with her supervisor once a week. Ji-young usually wanted our interview to be scheduled immediately after her meeting with him, since she would then feel more relaxed. Therefore, I always asked her how the meeting went and what her perception was about his reactions to her writing process. After having a meeting with her supervisor regarding the thesis proposal she had submitted, she told me unexpectedly that the supervisor was very understanding toward her frustration. During the earlier interviews, she said:

오늘 지도 교수님한테 논문 계획서를
제출했어요. 계획서 쓰기가 쉽지가
않았더라도 그거에 대해서 얘기할 때
계속 한숨을 쉬었어요. 그랬더니
교수님이 “괜찮다”라고 자꾸 얘기하면서
격려해 주시려고 하는 거예요.
교수님한테 받는 그런 격려가 힘이 많이
되요. 다른 교수님들처럼 항상 학생들을
격려하는게 아니라 그런 말들을 아주
드물게 하시니까요.
(지영, 인터뷰, 2001년 11월 12일)

Today I submitted the proposal of my
thesis to my supervisor. It has not been
easy for me to write up the proposal, so I
was sighing a few times while talking to
him about it. He then tried to encourage
me by often saying, “It’s okay”. Such
encouragement from him means a lot to
me, since he says these things very
rarely, not like other professors who
always encourage students. (Ji-young,
interview, November 12, 2001)

Ji-young regarded the encouraging commentary from her supervisor particularly very meaningful since he rarely gave such comments. She said that the complimentary comments from other professors were superficial since it was too often or it is something everyone receives. Considering that the words from a professor to a graduate student may be perceived as a great deal of symbolic

capital, it is interesting that she weighed the comments differently from her different professors. Bourdieu (1991) states that symbolic power can be exercised only if it is recognized by an agent. In this regard, the complimentary comments she received from some professors may have been symbolic capital to some students. However, for her those comments did not carry particular symbolic power because their value was not recognized by her. Ji-young further explained to me why she evaluated different professors' comments in different ways:

왜냐면 내가 봐도 어디가 잘못 됐고 어디가 수정되어야 할지 알수가 있어서 “그 부분들 곧 수정할께요”라고 말했었요. 근데 교수님이 지금까지 진도에 꽤 만족하다고 하시면서 너무 힘들어하지 말라고 하시는데요. 작년에 논문 주제를 찾고 있을때 이 교수님한테 도와달라고 부탁을 했었는데 그때는 그런걸 도와줄 수가 없다고 딱 잘라 말했어요. 그 경험 때문에 지금 생각해 보면 교수님과 하시는 말씀을 더 신뢰하게 되는것 같아요. 전 항상 칭찬과 격려의 말만 해주는 교수님들은 신뢰가 덜 가요... (지영, 인터뷰, 2001년 12월 10일)

Because I can see what's wrong and what is to be corrected, I told him “I will soon revise those parts.” He said to me then not to be so frustrated since he is pretty happy with my progress so far. Last year when I was looking for a topic for my thesis, I went to see him to ask for help. He then told me simply that he could not help me for such a thing. Because of that experience, I think, I now trust him and his comments more. I less trust constant compliments and positive encouragement by some professors ... (Ji-young, interview, December 10, 2001)

I find it interesting that one of the reasons why the value of her supervisor's positive comments was recognized by Ji-young seems to be his negative reaction experienced in the first meeting. This made her regard his positive reaction at a later time to be “trustworthy”. She was interested in knowing what he genuinely thought about her work, rather than hearing complimentary comments for encouragement.

As she started to build more trust in her supervisor, Ji-young also became aware of new aspects of how professors can help their graduate students. The interview excerpt below shows how Ji-young came to change her perception about the initial way her supervisor reacted when she explained to him the first time about her research interests.

교수님한테 아주 구체적인 질문을
해야한다는 것을 배웠어요. 그러면
관련된 참고 문헌을 찾아보실 수가 있고
도움을 많이 주실 수가 있어요. 사실
저도 이해가 가요. 학생들 스스로도
하나도 모를때 교수가 얼마나 도와줄 수
있겠어요. 학생들 스스로가 먼저
찾아봐야 되는것 같아요.
(지영, 인터뷰, 2001년 12월 10일)

I learned that I need to ask him very
specific questions, and then he could
look for me some relevant references,
and that he could help me a lot. Actually,
I can understand that a professor cannot
help students so much when they
themselves don't know anything. They
have to search for themselves first. (Ji-
young, interview, December 10, 2001)

The change in Ji-young's perceptions of her supervisor can be explained through the dialectic process of human cognitive development (Ho, D. Y. F. et al., 2001). After having experienced the two different interactions with her supervisor, it appears that her perception changed dialectically. In the sense that her prior negative initial experience with her professor and her subsequent positive experience initiated her to re-evaluate her perception of what the experiences really meant. Since she thought of a reason why her supervisor made the negative comment when she tried to explain her study, by realizing that "a professor cannot help students so much when they themselves don't know anything. They have to search for themselves first". This self-reflection led her to recognize different aspects of the situation that she was not aware of before. It seems that she re-evaluated the intention of her supervisor's negative comment. The negative reaction to the first meeting with her supervisor was because he really did not understand

what she was trying to say, and it was because she did not express herself clearly, not because he was being authoritarian. In addition, she came to think what the role of a supervisor is in helping students. Ji-young became aware that there is a limit to the capability of what professors can do for their students. However, she also realized that despite this limitation there is definitely something she could benefit from her supervisor, such as asking specific questions.

Gaining Confidence and Ownership on Her Own Work

Based on the positive perception about her supervisor and the interaction with him, Ji-young seemed to enjoy working on her thesis, and start to gain more confidence in her ability as a researcher. I remembered the discussion I had in my graduate course, ‘Qualitative and Interpretive Methodologies’, that there are cases in which a supervisor’s expectations and research interests influence a great deal a graduate student’s research work and writing of their reports. I wanted to ask Ji-young whether she was aware and conscious of her supervisor’s expectations and, if so, whether it was influencing the way she would write her thesis.

희경: 교수님이 어떤것들을 보고 싶어 하시는지 알고 있니?
지영: 교수님이 굉장히 주의깊고 정확하다는거 알아요. 어떤 종류의 토픽에 관심이 있을거라는 건 알지요.
희경: 교수님이 뭘 좋아하실거 다란걸 안다는 것이 논문쓰는 과정에서 네가 하는 결정에 영향을 주는 것 같니? 지영: 글썽요. 어떤때는 그 사람이 뭘 좋아할지 알고 있다 하더라도내가 알고 있는것에 내가 자신감이있으면 전 별로 상관

Heekyeong: Do you know what your supervisor would like to see?”
Ji-young: I know that he is very careful and precise. I kind of know what sort of topics he would be interested in.
Heekyeong: What you know about what he likes, does that influence you in terms of your decision making in your writing?
Ji-young: Well, sometimes, even if I am aware of what he would like, I don’t

안해요... 아마, 그래서
요즘에 교수님하고 하는 토론에 더
편안하게 느끼기 시작한 것 같아요.
(지영과의 인터뷰, 2001년
12월 10일)

care about it so much when I am
confident about what I know... Maybe,
that's why I have started to feel more
comfortable these days with discussions
I have with him. (Interview with Ji-
young, December 10, 2001)

As revealed in the interview excerpt, Ji-young seemed to have gained confidence
in her knowledge of the subject matter in her research. This confidence led her
also to create her strong ownership about her thesis and became genuinely
interested in finding out what she knows, and what she does not know about her
“own” research.

요새는 내 논문 주제에 관해서는 내가
교수님보다 더 잘 안다는 생각이 들어서
교수님이 하시는 질문이 두렵지가
않아요. 이게 내 연구라는 생각이 들면서
오히려 교수님이 어떤 종류의 질문을
하실까 궁금해져요.
(지영, 인터뷰, 2002년 1월 23일)

These days I am not afraid of being
asked questions by my supervisor since I
feel that I know about this topic more
than he does. Rather, I become curious
what kind of question he would ask as I
feel that this is my research. (Ji-young,
interview, January 23, 2002)

Ji-young started to take ownership of her work and accordingly, became more
motivated to produce good work. Interestingly, she then became a very tough
critic of her own work. She was not happy when her supervisor's feedback on her
paper was too brief.

기말 페이퍼나 프로포절에 주신 지도
교수님의 피드백을 생각해 보면 주로
자세한 설명없이 짧막한 긍정적커멘트만
주셨어요. 그래서 내가 정말로 페이퍼를
잘 써서 그런건지 아니면 바쁘셔서 내
페이퍼는 대충 빨리 읽어서 그런 말을

If I recall the feedback on my term
papers or the proposal from my
supervisor, he usually gave only brief
positive comments without detailed
explanations. So, I am not sure whether I

really did a good job in my papers or
he 쓴 것인지 잘 모르겠어요.
(지영, 인터뷰, 2002년 4월 11일)

어떤 때는 내가 봐도 기초적이고
단순하게만 썼다라고 생각되는 부분에
아무 말도 안해주시는거를 보면,
교수님이 나의 아카데미한 능력에 별로
기대가 없으신가 보다는 생각이
들어요. 그냥 해줘야 될 말들은 모두 다
했다고만 말씀해 주세요. 하지만 제가
보기엔 논리적으로는 잘 났더라도 뭔가
확실한 특징이 없이 너무 스무스한것
같아요. 뭔가 힘이 없어요.
(지영, 인터뷰, 2002년 4월 30일)

just said it because he read my paper
very briefly due to being busy... (Ji-
young, interview, April 11, 2002)

Sometimes I see that my supervisor does
not make any comments on the parts that
I find rather elementary (not
sophisticated enough). I then come to
think that he does not have much
expectation of me in terms of my
academic ability. He just tells me that I
have said everything that needs to be
said [in my thesis]. However, I think it
may be too smooth without any
distinguishing features, although I think
it's logically well done, but there is not
enough *oomph*. (Ji-young, interview,
April 30, 2002)

The interview excerpts show that she was fully immersed in her research topic and writing up the best report as she could as an enthusiastic researcher in her field. It is clear that she was an active agent in the activities of writing her thesis. She positioned herself as a graduate student, a researcher and a critic in different processes of writing. I am not certain about what she meant by there is not much “oomph” in her thesis. Perhaps, I think she wanted to find out something “universal” or “essential” from her thesis research as reflected in her comments I introduced at the beginning of this section.

Dealing with Frustrations in Diverse L2 Contexts

From a few interviews I had with her, Ji-young came across to me as a very bright and enthusiastic student. However, writing a thesis is an arduous and tortuous task for most people. Ji-young also went through frustrations and difficulties in the process of writing her thesis. She was no exception to experiencing this pain. Most of all, she

suffered greatly from feeling of isolation since she had very little social interaction on a daily basis and spent most time alone at home or in the library writing her thesis.

Particularly, as noted earlier, Ji-young perceived that she was one of the few students interested in general Linguistics in her program while the majority of the students are more interested in the practical aspects of language use, including teaching and learning. Thus, she felt that she did not have many colleagues with whom she could talk about her research interest and her frustration in writing. She found the process very lonely and isolated to go through the process of writing.

희경: 요새는 주로 집에서 공부하니?
지영: 다시 학교에서 공부할까 생각
중이에요. 집에 있으면 자꾸 자고, 먹고
쉽게 TV 를 보게 되요. 집에 혼자 있으면
너무 조용해서 TV 를 켜 놓는데 그러면
자꾸 보기 시작하고... 그래서 학교가서
공부해야돼요... 어떤 날은 하루종일
컴퓨터 앞에 앉아 있었는데 한
페이지밖에 못쓰는 경우가 있어요.
그런날은 진짜 쳐져요.
(지영과의 인터뷰, 2002 년, 3 월 8 일)

Heekyeong: Do you usually study at home these days?

Ji-young: Well, I think I should try to study at school again since if I am at home, I tend to sleep, eat, and watch TV easily. I turn on the TV since it's too quiet to be at home alone, and then I start to watch it... so I should go to school and work there... Some days I was sitting in front of the computer all day long, but I managed to write only one page. I then really get down.
(Interview with Ji-young, March 8, 2002)

Ji-young talked about her frustration with regard to the data analysis part of her thesis, in which she needed to include a statistical analysis. She had to adopt statistical analysis in order to describe her findings since her methodology was based on a quantitative method. However, she did not have much experience in statistics and needed help from someone else. The interview excerpt shows the

frustrations she experienced in the process of implementing statistical analysis in her thesis.

통계 때문에 요새 진짜 머리 아파요.
도와달라고 이 교수님하고 연락하려고
하는데 소식이 전혀 없어요. 이 통계
때문에 딴 사람한테 도와달라고 부탁을
해야 되니까 너무 짜증나요. 이것저것
여러가지 해보려고 계획을 다
세워놨는데, 요새는 아무것도 하고
싶지가 않아요. 그냥 이거 논문 빨리
끝내고 [한국] 집에 갔으면 좋겠어요.
(지영, 인터뷰, 2002년 3월 8일)

Because of the statistics, I am really
getting a headache these days. I am
trying to contact this professor to ask
help, but I don't hear any news from her.
It's really frustrating that I have to beg
somebody to help me because of this
statistics. I have planned to try many
different things. These days, however, I
don't feel like doing anything. I just
want to finish this quickly and go home
[to Korea] as soon as possible. (Ji-
young, interview, March 8, 2002)

As observed earlier, Ji-young had a strong sense of ownership, particularly in her work. She was a person who is bright and independent, and liked to plan and do things on her own. This identity seemed to have conflicted with her other position as a graduate student who needed to finish her thesis and had to be dependent. She needed help from someone who is an expert in a statistical analysis because due to her little training in statistical measurement, she could not complete the analysis chapter of her thesis on her own. Moreover, she had to let herself see some delay in the progress of writing from the plan she initially made. At that moment, she said that she did not like the feeling of dependency of herself.

Besides the writing process itself, Ji-young sometimes felt frustrated in various sociocultural occasions where she engaged in English. One day Ji-young was upset about

the way she socialized with people in her department. She reflected the time she felt frustrated about herself not being able to engage in small talk with her professors:

지영: 어떤날은 미팅이 끝나고 나면 제 자신이 굉장히 바보같이 여겨져요. 지도교수님한테 똑똑한 소리를 하나도 못해서.
희경: 와, 지영이도 그런때가 있는지 몰랐었네.
지영: 예, 있어요. 지난번에는 교수님 방에 앉아서 미팅을 막 시작하려고 하는데 어떤 여자가 교수님 사무실 앞에 서있는 거예요. 그래서 교수님이 무슨 질문이 있냐고 물으니깐 “No, I just wanted to make sure that you are okay” 하더라고요. 그 전주에 교수님이 아팠던데서 그런말을 하나보다 했어요. 그러더니 들어서 테니스 얘기며 이런저런 얘기를 하면서 몇분간을 얘기 하더라고요. 전 속으로 “왜 나는 저여자 처럼 못 할까? 왜 나는 small talk 를 하지 못할까” 그런 생각을 했어요... 보면 어떤 애들은 영어 native speaker 가 아닌데도 교수님들과 다른 캐나다인들하고 small talk 을 잘 해서 교수님 집에 저녁 초대도 받고 그래요... 왜 나는 그런것들을 못 하게 되는지 모르겠어요... 전 꼭 할말이 있을때만 말하게 되고, 자연스럽게 small talk 은 못하겠어요.
(지영과의 인터뷰, 2002 년 3 월 8 일)

Ji-young: Sometimes when the meeting is over, I feel very stupid about myself because I couldn't say anything clever to my supervisor.

Heekyeong: Wow, I didn't know you also have those moments.

Ji-young: Yes, I do. The other day I was sitting in his office and we were about to start our meeting. There was one girl who was standing in front of his office. So, he asked her, 'Do you have any question for me?' then she said, 'No, I just wanted to make sure that you are okay.' I think she said that because he was sick the previous week. And then they exchanged small talk another few minutes, talking about tennis or something like that. I was thinking to myself, 'Why can't I be like her? Why am I not good at small talk?' ... I see some of my colleagues even though they are not native speakers of English are still good at having small talk with professors and other Canadian colleagues, and get invited for dinner at a professor's home.... How come I don't get to do those things, I don't know ... I think I talk only when I have something to say, I can't do natural small talk.
(Interview with Ji-young, March 8, 2002)

Ji-young was displeased in that she could not actively engage in small talk, which she perceived as a useful way to interact with her professors. She did not understand why she lacked this ability, as her English skills were excellent, while her peers who were not native speakers of English seemed to be able to involve

actively in small talk. I interpret her “inability” to engage in small talk in a Bakhtinian sense as the result of struggling between her multiple identities that were conflicting with each other. I think this is similar to Seong-jin’s case when he was unable to finish his writing assignments. Seong-jin had internal conflict between two different identities of his selfhood. One who wants to write a good essay appropriating authoritative discourse he was aware of in order to obtain cultural capital. However, his identity as a creative writer was against producing such an essay as it would not be very creative and original. In Ji-young’s case, I see that she was aware of the usefulness of engaging in small talk for gaining social capital (e.g. better relationships with professors) and wanted to engage in small talk with people in her department. However, her identity as a person who “talks only when she has something to say” may have perceived doing small talk as negative and led her to become resistant although she had excellent English proficiency and had no problem discussing her thesis with her supervisor. She seemed to be upset by the fact that she was not good at obtaining social capital even though she had the mediational tool in her ‘tool-kit’.

Ji-young had been in Canada only for about fifteen months at the time the interview was conducted. However, when I heard her speaking to her friends in English, I found her English very good, almost close to that of a native English speaker. In fact, I initially assumed that since she has such good English skills, she would have never felt frustrated or inferior from not being a native speaker of English. However, when I asked her if she ever felt that she was frustrated or disrespected in English speaking contexts, she said to me:

전에 한번은 친구하고 가게에 들어가서 비누랑 향수 구경하고 있었는데, 이것저것 확인해 보느라 좀 오래 거기에 있었어요. 그랬더니 거기 점원이 “Are you still looking around, smelling everything?” 라고 말하면서 저희를 아주 불편하게 만드는 거예요. 그날 밤에 그 여자한테 아무말도 대꾸를 하지 못한것에 너무 속이 상했어요... 그리고 영어를 별로 잘하지 못했을때는 cashier 가 내 앞에 있던 백인 여자에게 웃으며 ‘하이’ 하면서 제게는 웃지도 않을때 기분이 쉽게 상했었어요. 아니면 버스 탈때, 버스 기사가 저를 쳐다 보지도 않을때... 그럴때 기분이 굉장히 나빴어요. 심지어는 내가 동양인이라고 무시하는구나 하는 생각도 들었어요. (지영, 인터뷰, 2001년 12월 10일)

One day I was looking around a store for soaps and perfumes with my friend. We were there for a while to check out things there. The shop assistant at the store made us feel uncomfortable by saying ‘Are you still looking around, smelling everything?’ I got so upset that night because I could not say anything back to her... Also, before, when my English wasn’t so good, I got offended easily when a cashier smiled at a white lady in front of me saying hi, then not smiling at me afterwards. Or when getting on a bus, the bus driver did not look at me at all... I got very offended at those moments. I even felt they were disregarding me because I am Asian. (Ji-young, interview, December 10, 2001)

In this excerpt, it seems that Ji-young felt upset because she was positioned as an Asian or a non-native speaker of English, or perhaps both. She was offended by the interactions she had with the shop assistants, the cashier at a store, and the bus driver. She perceived that they were not friendly toward her because she is Asian. She then told me another story that she experienced as a tenant:

지금 아파트에 지난 구월 이후로 살고 있어요. 한달에 600 불씩 내고 있는데, 지난주에 렌트 비용을 670 불까지 올리기로 결정했다는 통지를 받았어요. 한순간 너무 황당하더라구요. 그리고나서는 처음에 이사 들어올때도 그 관리인이 내가 유학생이라 SIN number 가 없다고 네 달치 렌트 비용을

I have been staying in this apartment since September. I pay six hundred dollars per month. Then, I got a note from the rental office last week saying that they have decided to raise the rent up to six hundred and seventy dollars. I was flabbergasted for a moment. I then remembered that the superintendent made me pay the four-month-amount

한꺼번에 내게 했던 일이 기억이 났어요.
 이 사람이 또 수작을 부리는구나 생각이
 들었죠. 그래서 이번에는 계약서를 단어
 하나 하나 주의깊게 다 읽어 보고
 캐나다인 친구들에게도 이 상황에
 대해서 전화걸어 물어보고 했어요.
 그리고 나서 관리실에 전화를 했더니 그
 관리인이 그 통지를 실수로 잘못
 보냈다고 하더라고요. 그때는 그냥
 알겠더라고요만 하고 전화를 끊었는데
 나중에 그 사람이 실수한 것에 대해
 미안하단 말이 전혀 없었고 그사람한테
 아무말도 하지 못했다는 것에 다시 화가
 나더라고요.
 (지영, 인터뷰, 2001 년 12 월 10 일)

of money when moving in because I am
 an international student and do not have
 a SIN number. I felt he was tricking me
 again. So, this time I read the lease very
 carefully word by word. I even called
 around my Canadian friends and asked
 about the situation. After that I called the
 rental office, and then he was saying that
 it was his mistake to send the note. At
 that time I said simply 'I see' and hung
 up the phone. Later on I started to feel
 upset again about the fact that he did not
 apologize to me at all for his mistake and
 I did not say anything back to him. (Ji-
 young, interview, December 10, 2001)

In this excerpt, Ji-young was positioned as a tenant and an international student in the interaction with the superintendent of her apartment. Earlier when she had to pay the rent for four months in advance instead of the amount for two-months as in the usual practice for Canadian residents, she realized that the superintendent in her apartment made her do so because she was an international student. Then, when she faced another situation, which reminded her of the previous incident, the unfair treatment toward international students, Ji-young reacted strongly to protect herself from having another unfair treatment by the superintendent. This time, she decided to find all resources she could use, such as gaining knowledge from reading the legal document (lease) and consulting her Canadian friends. She was then able to handle the situation with more confidence.

Toward the End of the M.A. Program

At the end of March, Ji-young seemed to be positive about the general status of her thesis. She was less frustrated by her difficulty with statistics and could move on to

the final stage of completing her thesis. She explained to me how she was able to handle the frustration:

지도 교수님이 제가 도와달라고 부탁할 수 있는 교수님들을 몇분 소개 시켜 주셨어요... 지금까지 저도 통계학에 관한 책도 네권이나 읽구요... 전에는 다른 논문을 읽을때 통계적 분석에 관한 부분은 별로 주의 깊게 보지 않았었어요. 보통 그 부분을 스킵 하거나 다음 부분, 결과를 분석 토론하는 부분으로 바로 옮겨가곤 했었는데... 이제는 그 부분이 얼마나 중요한지 알것 같아요.
(지영, 인터뷰, 2002년 3월 20일)

My supervisor introduced me to some professors from whom I could ask for some help ... and I have also read through four books on statistics so far... Before I used to read an article without giving much attention to the section on statistical analysis. I usually skipped the section and moved to the next section in which the discussion of findings is... however, I now understand how important that section is... (Ji-young, interview, March 20, 2002)

According to Vygotskian activity theory, dialectical change of human cognition through the appropriation of tools is often accompanied by conflicts and resistance of agent's mind before conditions are established (Russell, 1997). As described earlier, after Ji-young tried to understand statistics by asking for help from experts and by reading books, she became frustrated. It may be because it delayed her original plan and led to her feeling a loss of independency, which conflicted with her identity as an confident and independent researcher. However, her comment indicates that she overcame the frustration and reached a new understanding of the importance of statistical analysis that she was not aware of before.

In addition, I observed that a new identity of Ji-young has emerged from the dialectical process, particularly influenced by what her mother said and her supervisor said to her. Ji-young told me she tried not to be resistant towards, by remembering her mother's note on her email: "My mom said to me that getting

help from somebody does not mean that you are not independent” (Interview, March 8, 2002). Also, what her supervisor said to her seemed to have helped her feel less frustrated about the situation. She said: “my supervisor also told me that when he has to handle complicated statistics, since he does not know much about statistics, he leaves it to somebody who is an expert” (Ji-young, interview, March 20, 2002). I could understand that when the authoritative voice (her supervisor) showed vulnerability it must have been a big relief to her, and this let herself be more comfortable about the situation. In this way, a new identity of Ji-young seems to have emerged who appreciates statistical analysis and to receive help when it is necessary.

During the final stage of writing, engaging in the final revision of the thesis, Ji-young gained confidence back and believed in herself as a competent researcher.

전에는 논문 주제가 확실하지 않아서
일반적인 생각만 바탕으로 해서 아직도
연구를 고안하는 과정에 있었어요.
그래서 굉장히 힘들었었죠... 근데
이제는 좀 더 clear 해지고 뭘 해야
될지도 알겠어요. 그리고 졸업식도
다가오고 곧 집에 가는 것에 대해 생각할
수 있으니까 기분이 좋아요. 게다가
필요없는 것들은 신경 안쓰려고
노력해요... 아이디어 좀 얻으려고 이전에
과에서 나온 석사 논문 몇개를
읽어봤어요. 근데, 내가 믿고 의지할 수
있는 사람은 나밖에 없다는 생각이
들더라고요.
(지영, 인터뷰, 2002년 3월 20일)

Before, the topic was not clear
and I was still in the process of
designing the study based only
on a general idea. So, I was very
frustrated... but now, things are
much clearer and I know what to
do. Also, my graduation is
coming up and I feel good since I
can think about going home
soon. In addition, I also try not to
care about unnecessary things ...
I have looked at a couple of M.A.
theses completed previously in
the department in order to get
some ideas. However, I feel that I
am the only one I can trust and
depend on. (Ji-young, interview,
March 20, 2002)

I could see that Ji-young was becoming more interested in the subject matter of her research topic. Accordingly, she finds her strong interest in the research area and the possibility of becoming a professional researcher in her field.

전 뭔가 local 한 걸 아주 자세히 들여다 보면 항상 universal 한 뭔가를 알아낼 수 있다고 믿어요. 아마 그래서 제가 universal grammar 에 관심이 있나봐요... 전 항상 뭔가 근본적인걸 찾아보기를 좋아했어요. (지영, 인터뷰, 2002 년 4 월 11 일)

I believe that through looking into something very local, you can find out something very universal. Maybe this is why I am interested in 'Universal Grammar' ... I think I always liked to search for something fundamental. (Ji-young, interview, April 11, 2002)

To position herself as a prospective linguist became stronger by a sociocultural event in her school environment. Ji-young talked to me about a conference that took place in April. She participated in it as a volunteer since her supervisor was one of the organizers of the conference. This was the first conference she had ever attended in the field of her research interest. The interview excerpt shows how she found out about the conference and her participation:

Literature 에서만 이름을 들어 봤던 유명한 학자들을 보게 되니까 너무 신이 났어요. 특히 그 중의 한명 내가 지금 공부하고 있는 것과 똑같은 토픽에 관심이 있는 사람을 알게 되어서 너무 기뻐요. 그 컨퍼런스 분위기가 정말 맘에 들더라고요. 사일 동안 모두가 매일같이 만나서 강의 듣고 토론하고... 너무 멋져요! 좀 무섭기도 하더라고요. 그 유명한 사람들이 서로 first name 을 불러 가면서 질문하고

It was so exciting to see the famous scholars whose names I have heard of only in the literature. Particularly, I was so glad to know that one of them has been interested in the same topic as I am working on now. I really loved the atmosphere of the conference. For the four days, everybody got together everyday and listened to lectures and had discussions... it's so cool! I could find it intimidating as well. Those famous people got into vigorous discussions

격렬하게 토론을 하는 모습이... 정말
멋있었어요.
(지영, 인터뷰, 2002년 4월 30일)

arguing with each other, asking
questions by calling each other by their
first names... it was so cool! (Ji-young,
interview, April 30, 2002)

In the last interview with her, I asked Ji-young to reflect on her
experiences during her stay in Canada. She told me immediately that she felt she
had learned a lot of things. Interestingly, she talked about her thoughts from two
different perspectives: an academic view and a spiritual view.

희경: 네 생각에는 너가 석사 과정을
거치면서 네 스스로가 많이 변했다고
생각하니?
지영: 예, 실제로, 많아요. 제 생각엔
제가 이 짧은 기간동안 그 어느 때보다도
많이 변한것 같아요. 처음 과에 들어왔을
때는 과 안내문이나 policy를 읽는
것도 어려웠었어요. 근데 지금은 박사
과정에 관한 정보를 읽는것도 어렵지가
않아요... intellectual한 면으로는
무엇보다도 제가 관심있는 한 분야에
전문가가 되었다는 생각이 들어요.
두번째로는 나중에 재미있게 보이는
토픽이 있으면 어떻게 접근해야 할지
배웠구요. 그리고 어떻게 참고 문헌을
찾고 어떻게 정리를 하는지에 대해서
알게 됐어요.
(지영과 인터뷰, 2002년 4월 30일)

Heekyeong: Do you find yourself, who
you are, has changed a lot after going
through the M.A. program?
Ji-young: Yes, in fact, a lot. I think I
have changed the most ever within this
short period of time. When I was
admitted to the program, it was difficult
for me to read the program guidelines
and policies. But, now it seems easier for
me to read the information about Ph.D.
programs... in terms of an intellectual
aspect, first of all, I feel that I have
become an expert on the subject area
that I am interested in. Secondly, I have
learned how to approach an interesting
topic in the future. Also, I think I know
how to look for references and how to
organize them...
(Interview with Ji-young, April 30,
2002)

Over the interview period, I observed that Ji-young went through an uneasy
process of isolation, frustration and resistance. I was very pleased to see that In
spite of these obstacles her confidence grew exponentially. Furthermore, she
noted that her view on life has also changed a lot.

제 삶에 있어서는, 인생 철학에 대해 말하자면 그것도 많이 바뀌었어요. 예전에는 항상 몇살에 뭐하고 언제까지 그걸 끝내고 그다음에는 무엇을 하고에 대해서 계획을 세우고 있었어요. 언젠가는 미리 세워둔 계획에서 6 개월을 줄여 보려고 엄청 노력했었어요. 가능한 빨리 끝내려고... 지난 팔월달에 굉장히 우울해 하고 있었을때는 어디로 가야 할지, 내가 왜 여기에 있는지 전혀 모르겠더라고요. 석사 학위를 마친 후로 내가 무엇을 할건지 전혀 모르겠다는 사실이 너무 무서웠어요. 나중을 위한 아무 계획이 없다는 사실에 너무 무서워서 죽을것만 같더라고요. (지영, 인터뷰, 2002 년 4 월 30 일)

In terms of my life, speaking of my life philosophy, it has also changed a lot. I used to always plan about what to do at what age, and finish it by when, and then what to do next, and so on. One point, I was so desperate to try to shorten a six-month period out of my pre-planned schedule and try to finish as fast as possible... When I was very depressed in August, I was feeling that I had no idea about where to go, why I am here, and I was really scared of the fact that I did not know what I am going to do after finishing the M.A. I was scared to death by the fact that I did not have any plan afterwards... (Ji-young, interview, April 30, 2002)

Initially, when Ji-young referred to herself as a person who always needed to plan for the future and to abide by it, I see she was influenced by her Korean habitus, the sociocultural milieu of the educational system in Korea. As described in Chapter 1, Korean governments have regarded education as the driving force for the nation's economic development. Public schooling in Korea has been operated by strong national curriculum based on "equalization", which has forced every school to follow the same curriculum and the same teaching plan, neglecting the differences in the level of achievement of students. Having the same curriculum, every student has to follow for the same length of time, when students do not "progress" at the same speed, it can be perceived that they become "behind" in their life plan and learning vocabulary.

Ji-young then continued to tell me how her perception came to change:

그런데, 석사를 끝난뒤에 뭘 할지 아무 생각이 없는데... 제가 아직도 살아 있더라구요... 그때, 내 인생을 아직도 살아야 한다는 생각이 들었어요... 그 경험 이후로, 내 인생을 이렇게 살아서는 안되겠다는 생각을 했어요... 아무리 석사 학위를 마친후 집에 있게 되더라도 그건 여전히 내 삶인데, 왜 내가 소속한 사회의 카테고리 안에서 내 삶을 평가하고 있는지... 왜 내 삶을 다른 사람 눈에 특별히 뭘 하고 있지 않으면 가치가 없다고 여기고 있는지... 그게 옳지가 않더라구요, 그것도 여전히 내 삶이에요. 이런 생각을 해보면서 제 인생관도 바뀌었어요... 이제는 뭘 빨리 끝내서 다음 단계로 빨리 가는 것 보다 과정을 즐기는 것이 더 중요하다고 생각해요. 그리고나선 운동도 더 하고, 친구들이랑 만나서 영화도 보러 가고, 책도 더 많이 읽으려고 노력했어요... 그 이후론 제 미래에 대해 알지 못하는 것에 대한 공포감은 극복한 것 같아요. (지영, 인터뷰, 2002년 4월 30일)

Then, I realized that even though I had no idea of what to do after the M.A., I was still alive ... and then I felt that my life should still go on... After that experience, I have realized that I should not live my life like this... even if I get to stay at home after finishing M.A., that will still be my life. Why am I evaluating my life based on which social category I belong to... why would I judge my life as useless if I am seen in others' eyes that I am not doing anything particular... That's not right, it's still my life. As I have thought about these things, I have changed my views on my life... I now believe that it is more important to enjoy the process of doing something rather than finishing it quickly and moving to the next step. Then, I tried to do more exercise, hang out more with friends, go to see movies, and read more books... since then, I think I have overcome the fear about the unknown of my future. (Ji-young, interview, April 30, 2002)

Ji-young's perception change seems to have been influenced by her realization that she was de-evaluating her life based on notions, customs, and rules embedded in her Korean habitus; then, soon she realized that "... if I am seen in others' eyes that I am not doing anything particular, then I would judge my life as useless." At that moment, I believe that the identity with a strong sense of ownership about what she does became dominant over her other identities. This identity of Ji-young appeared to conflict with the identity which evaluated her life according to others' beliefs, not her own. She then reflected on her own evaluative orientation towards her life: to "enjoy the process of doing something rather than finishing it

quickly.” After the frustrating dialectical processes of her dialogues with her multiple selves, a new perception had emerged.

Summary

In this chapter, I interpreted the experiences of the six participants based on their personal narratives. In chapter 5, my goal is to look at the emerging themes from their lived experiences and explore meaningful relations among their mediated actions and reactions. My theoretical discussion searching for the meanings of the six participants' experiences is based on the conceptual framework presented in Chapter 2. My understanding of learner agency in second language (L2) socio-cultural-historical contexts is based on Vygotskian activity theory. I view learner agency as mediated actions and reactions. It is one of the higher cognitive processes of human mind, which was the primary subject in Vygotsky's theory. Prior to speculating on learner agency, I discuss first the social nature of my participants' identities with respect to Bakhtinian dialogism. I intend eventually to theoretically tackle some fundamental questions, such as what is it that makes me believe it is so valuable to listen to such stories that could happen to anybody? How can I explain why it is meaningful the way I interpret the "ordinary" experiences in my participants' narratives?

CHAPTER 5

DISCUSSIONS ON EMERGING THEMES

FROM THE STUDENTS' LIVED EXPERIENCES

I feel much better after studying with 'Harry Potter' according to my own plan, rather than sitting in the classroom for two hours. Nevertheless, I get stressed from not doing well with school assignments. (Seong-jin, interview, March 7, 2002)

One of my professors told me that if I don't care about the mark, I can submit the project as I want to. But then, my mark won't be so good, he said. Once I did work on a project as I wanted and submitted it. Then, I got a B. So, in the next project, I changed my style a little bit as the professor might like. But then my mark was increased to B+. So, I learned a lesson. But if I care so much about what a professor may like, my creativity becomes weaker. (Sun-young, interview, March 8, 2002)

I usually study while taking enough breaks. I have to have some fun from time to time, otherwise I cannot be so productive. I would like to be more relaxed and have fun as I write my thesis. However, I cannot do that since I would feel guilty toward my parents... (Ji-young, interview, November 26, 2001)

As I described in Chapter 4, the participants were dealing with different challenges and conflicts in their various second language (L2) sociocultural contexts. The comments presented above reveal conflicting voices in their discursive practices. From listening to them and attempting to analyze their perceptions by drawing on relevant theorists from different disciplines, Bakhtin in literary criticism, Vygotsky in developmental psychology, and Bourdieu in sociology, I realize that those conflicting voices reveal a lot about the socio-cultural-historical nature and development of human mind. In this chapter, I provide a critical interpretive discussion of key themes that have

emerged from the six Korean students' perceptions of their lived experiences. I focus particularly on the multivoiced nature of these L2 learners as social agents with reference to social relations of power. I also discuss the potential of new possibilities for change in their experiences.

Possibilities for Positioning of the Participants

Bakhtin (1981) emphasizes that every human being is a 'dialogical self', that is, every being is a 'social self-in-relations'. Every individual engages in dialogues with others or oneself in various social contexts. While listening to the participants' personal narratives, I indeed noticed multiple layers of voices in their stories, many different voices of the participants as well as the voices of others within themselves in their various L2 sociocultural contexts. I could relate these voices as their 'speaking consciousness' (Bakhtin, 1981) to the ways the six individuals perceived who they were in their various sociocultural worlds. I heard the voices of students and professionals with particular affiliations, such as being wives and husbands in their families, daughters and sons of their parents, tenants and roommates in their living accommodations, international students and new immigrants, and so on. These Korean students were not unitary beings as they so often are referred to as "Korean L2 students" in most quantitative inquiries. There was a plurality in their consciousness in different sociocultural contexts that seems to have influenced their sense of being in particular contexts.

In chapter 4, I used the terms 'identity', 'identities', 'position', or 'position-taking' in order to refer to the participants' multiple senses of themselves that I

encountered as I observed and listened to how they reflected on their experiences. However, now I feel that I need to review these terms more carefully and think about what the most appropriate concept could be to explain the way I understand the participants' 'multivoicedness'. Ivanic (1998) stresses that the concept for people's sense of who they are should imply multiplicity, hybridity, complexity, and fluidity of social construction of identity in a variety of dimensions. She points out that the term 'identity' sounds too abstract for talking about individuals' self-representation and may even mislead by suggesting that one's identity is static. She says that the term 'identity' does not imply that the identity can be and is "socially constructed". Using the concept of plural 'identities' can imply the simultaneous existence of various aspects of an individual's identity (Ivanic, 1998). However, Ivanic notes that the term 'identities' could also imply a fragmented state of being which could refer to an individual who is not mentally stable.

Ivanic further explains that she prefers, instead of 'identity' or 'identities', to use the terms 'positionings' or her own term 'possibilities for self-hood' in order to present the multi-faceted nature of social identity in her inquiry. These terms imply that individuals position themselves, or are positioned, in several ways simultaneously in different social worlds. These positions are not socially determined but are socially constructed. I could use Ivanic's term 'possibilities for self-hood' in my inquiry since understanding the multi-faceted nature of identity construction is crucial to my inquiry. However, I have some reservations about adopting this term. Ivanic's study is mainly focused on the construction of writer identity in academic settings. I did not limit my participants' experiences only to their writing processes, and my analysis of the data of

their narrated experiences is not only based on their academic written texts. The primary source of my understanding about their multiple perceptions about themselves is from their oral narratives obtained through interviews with them. Ivanic (1998) notes that she did not discuss her participants' "personal qualities" in more detail since it was hard for her to link these to specific "linguistic features of a text" (p.331). Through analyzing the oral narratives of the participants, however, I could connect the ways some participants perceived their "personal qualities" to particular ways they used their language skills and engaged in particular discourse practices. For example, Ji-young said:

I am better at talking to people whom I don't know at all. This has something to do my personality. I cannot let myself make mistakes in front of people I know. Although I know that they would say that my English is very good, when I know that I am still not as good as a native speaker of English, I tend to speak very little. When interacting with my professors, at first I normally speak a lot but as I feel conscious about myself not being a "native speaker" while they are the "native speakers", I then start to speak less and less, and feel afraid of making mistakes or make a wrong choice of English words. (Ji-young, interview, November 12, 2001)

In this interview excerpt, Ji-young's perception about her personal quality of "not letting herself make a mistake in front of her acquaintances", or being a "perfectionist", seems to have constrained her performance in English when she interacted with her perception of "native speakers".

Ivanic (1998) explains that the term 'self' usually focuses on the aspects of identity that are associated with personal affect or an individual's feelings. Conventionally in social science research these aspects of 'self' are often categorized under 'personality' or 'personal attributes' of an individual, such as friendly, quiet, optimistic, intelligent and independent. However, I see the need for a more inclusive term

to refer to the ways some of the participants narrated who they were, which can be referred to neither 'personal attributes' nor 'legitimate social roles', such as being a creative writer, a good listener, a debater, a well-read person, an investor in a job market, and an active social person. Although I could not refer these designations to any particular social affiliation as members of discourse communities, those voices seem to have been intersecting in the ways the participants perceived their social worlds.

The concept of 'positioning' discussed in psychology is more relevant information to my search for a term to replace 'identity' or 'self'. Bruner (1986) states that the dialogical self of a social agent has temporal and spatial characteristics allowing instantaneous and dynamic movement, shifting freely across time and space. In this regard, the spatial nature of the self can be better expressed through concepts such as 'position' and 'positioning', rather than the conventional term, 'role', since those concepts imply the dynamic and flexible nature of a narrative self (Hermans, 2001). Harré, van Langenhove and Davies (Davies & Harré, 1990; Harré & van Langenhove, 1991) choose to use the term 'positioning' in their discussion about the 'multiplicities of self' in order to enhance understanding of personhood. Davies and Harré (1990) argue that the concept of 'self' has played a leading role in the psychology of personhood, but has been too vague for addressing such a question as, 'Who am I?' Instead, they stress: "[it is] I am one and the very same person who is variously positioned in a conversation" (p.46). They also view the concept of 'positioning' as a dynamic alternative to the more static concept of 'role'. By adopting the term 'positioning', they emphasize dynamic, multiple, fluid and situation-specific representations of self, particularly in narration. Other terms, such as "attitudes" or "traits", imply connotations of being intrinsic by

nature, trans-situational, valid across various situations. These terms also imply that ‘self’ can neither conflict nor integrate with each other (Harré & van Langenhove, 1991).

Ivanic (1998) refers to ‘discourse’ as the principal mediating mechanism in her discussion on the social construction of writer identity. The concept of positioning also focuses on the discursive production of selves. Davies & Harré (1990) define ‘discourse’ as an institutionalized use of language and language-like sign systems, which occurs at various levels of disciplinary, political, social and cultural groups. Discourse is a “multi-faceted public process through which meanings are progressively and dynamically achieved” (p.46). They note that:

Positioning... is the discursive process whereby selves are located in conversations as observably and subjectively coherent participants in jointly produced storylines. There can be interactive positioning in what one person says positions another. And there can be reflexive positioning in which one positions oneself. (p.48)

Individuals produce or construct their social and psychological realities through their discursive practices influenced by social relations between interlocutors. In this regard, understanding something is to understand it in terms of one or more discourses (Davies & Harré, 1990).

In referring to the multiple senses of the six Korean students from what they say about themselves, I think “possibilities for positioning” is the most appropriate term, complementing the concepts of ‘positioning’ by Harré’s and ‘possibilities for self-hood’ by Ivanic. I appropriate the word ‘positioning’ to explain socially influenced production of multiple selves of the participants in their various L2 discursive practices. I use the term, ‘discursive practice’, to refer to “all the ways in which people actively produce

social and psychological realities” (Davies & Harré, 1990, p.45). Table 5 shows the list of possible positionings I encountered from my participants’ personal narratives.

Table 5. Possibilities for participants’ positionings

Participants	Possibilities for positioning in their narratives
Seong-jin	ESL student, hardworking student with Korean schooling habitus, creative writer, son, tenant, victim of violence, person aspiring for social recognition, physically strong man, perfectionist
Sun-young	Prospective industrial designer, English language learner, socially skillful person, daughter, tenant, good listener, debater, hardworking student with Korean schooling habitus, Korean with ‘cheong’ habitus
Sang-woo	Engineering student with the title of ‘being smart’, KAIST student, passive language learner, son, new immigrant, member of Korean student organization, well-read person, Korean with ‘cheong’ habitus
Sang-eun	Ph.D. student in Translation & Interpretation in bilingual university, professional translator, French language learner, wife, investor in job market, new immigrant, minority in school, Korean with ‘cheong’ habitus
Kyung-ho	Ph.D. student in Linguistics, father and husband, active social person, member of Korean church community, new immigrant, English language learner, Korean with ‘cheong’ habitus
Ji-young	M.A. student in Applied Linguistics, minority in school, prospective researcher, daughter, critic on her own work, hardworking student with Korean schooling habitus, fluent speaker, perfectionist, socially passive person

The list of possible positionings of the participants reveals that these learners are far more complex and individually different than just a discursive attributed label ‘ESL students’ or ‘non-native speakers’ in their L2 learning and living contexts. For example, besides being an ESL student, I encountered Seong-jin to be a son who cares about his parents’

expectations for him, and a tenant who has frequent interactions and conflicts with his landlord and roommates. In addition, Seong-jin seems to be an individual who values writing skills highly and potentially a gifted creative writer. He seems to aspire for social recognition and authoritative power. However, he is also a victim of violence from his childhood and thus, wants to have strong physical body.

I noticed that when the participants engaged in particular actions or reactions, particular positioning seemed to be more dominant than other positions depending on when, where, and with whom they were interacting. For example, when Seong-jin was engaged in the freewriting activity in his first ESL class, his positioning as an ESL student and a creative writer seemed to be more dominant than other identities. On the other hand, when he was taking a boxing lesson, his experience as a victim of violence from childhood seemed to be strongly positioned. When Sun-young decided to just listen to her landlady's without raising her opinions, her positionings as a tenant and a good listener were dominant. Meanwhile, when interacting with her professors, Sun-young's positionings as a prospective industrial designer and an active debater became dominant.

I chose to appropriate the word 'possibilities' for two reasons. First, these positioning were observed only through my subjective eye in a particular time and space. In this regard the word 'possibilities' implies a subjective interpretation of what the "true" possibilities of positioning could be. Secondly, I intend to emphasize that the various positioning of the participants I refer to here are only some of the many possible positionings that they can take on in their discursive practices. Therefore, the word, 'possibilities', implies there is the potential of more positionings of the participants that are not included in this inquiry. Also, by using the word, 'possibilities', I imply that there

can be an emergence of new positionings of the participants in other discursive practices, that is, the possibilities for change. I noticed that the possibilities for positioning of the participants are connected not only to their present but also strongly connected to their past and future. For example, Seong-jin's 'victim of violence' and 'physically strong man', or Sang-woo's 'KAIST student' and 'well-read person' are connected to their experiences in the past and to their vision of the future. In this regard, the fluid nature of the adopted term is fulfilled, allowing aspects of the self to be connected to 'possibilities of positioning' in various locations in space and time.

By using the term 'possibilities for positioning', I intend to emphasize the dynamic and multiple ways the six Korean students positioned themselves by drawing on the possibilities available to them in relation to "the other" within their different discursive contexts. The next quote by Ji-young illustrates the ways she reports that she positioned herself differently with various interlocutors.

It's different depending who I am talking to. With my supervisor, I tend to say only what I have to say, selecting words very carefully... so the conversation becomes very dry... however, with the professors who teach the courses I do not take, I tend to talk to them more easily, even making many jokes. Some professors like to talk a lot by themselves without much interaction. In that case, I usually just sit and listen to them, taking notes. Then they would ask me if I have a question, and then I say 'No' and leave the room. (Ji-young, Interview, November 12, 2001)

Depending on which professors Ji-young talked to, she positioned herself differently taking on various 'possibilities of positioning' such as an M.A. student and a careful conversant, a fluent social talker, and a passive listener.

Hall (1995) states that "our participation [in social interactions] is constrained by who we are, how we perceive our interaction with 'others', and how we think they

perceive us (p.215).” I have listed the possible positionings of the participants which I have discerned from their narratives. In the next section I reflect in more detail on why they take on particular positions, and how various positionings influence their participation in different L2 discursive practices.

Learner Agency and Symbolic Power

In Chapter 1, I mentioned that my goal is to examine the relationships between learner agency and symbolic power embedded in the participants’ various L2 sociocultural worlds. In order to achieve this goal, I consider some related questions. First, what examples of political, social, economic forces that become symbolic power emerge in the participants’ narratives? How can the participants’ particular positioning be mediated by political, social, economic forces? Eventually, how do political, social, economic forces lead to symbolic power and mediate particular actions/ reactions of the participants in their L2 sociocultural worlds?

Various Forms of Capital

Bourdieu’s concept of capital offers an analytical perspective to investigate the ways the participants employed various positionings in their L2 discursive practices. Table 6 presents the forms and the examples of capital that seemed to be embedded in the participants’ narratives and to have influenced their particular position-taking.

Table 6. Forms and examples of capital in the experiences of the participants

Forms of Capital	Examples of Capital
Economic capital	money, scholarship, research assistantship
Cultural capital	knowledge, different skills, certificates in relation to educational or technical qualifications
Social capital	social membership, social connections, 'we-ness', 'cheong' relationship, research assistantship
Symbolic capital	accumulated prestige or honour, recognition/credit-political power
Personal capital	fame, popularity, charisma
Spiritual capital	virtue, meaning of life, religious beliefs, helping others
Physical capital	strong body, health

Table 6 indicates that each form of capital manifests in different examples of capital. Some forms of capital appear to have a higher exchange value than others for different individuals in different social contexts (Bourdieu, 1991). Having Korean 'cheong' relationship in their L2 environments seemed to be more valuable for some participants than other forms of capital. I noticed that Kyung-ho, Sang-woo and Sun-young participated very actively in Korean communities and maintained frequent interaction with other Koreans in the communities such as Korean churches and Korean student organizations. The other participants, Ji-young, Sang-eun and Seong-jin, were not members of any Korean community and did not participate in any activity organized by

the communities. In terms of obtaining knowledge of English language skills (cultural capital) Seong-jin seemed to value writing skills more than speaking skills. Some examples of capital carry different values and meanings to different individuals. For example, Sun-young and Sang-woo seemed to consider investing in social relationships with Canadians, their perceived “native speakers” of English, as a way to gain cultural capital (improving English language skills). On the other hand, they seemed to regard keeping social relationships with their Korean peers, such as having support from building ‘cheong’ and ‘we-ness’ relationship as Koreans, as a way to gain social capital.

I observed that Bourdieu’s (1991) four forms of capital such as cultural, social, economic, and symbolic capital appeared in the participants’ narratives. However, I also noticed that some other forms of capital such as physical capital and spiritual capital are highly valuable for some of the participants. For instance, obtaining physical strength (building strong body or being healthy) appeared to be important for Seong-jin and Sun-young. For Sang-woo and Ji-young, what I refer to as obtaining “spiritual capital” seemed to be very meaningful. For example, as reflected in the next interview excerpts, Sang-woo talked to me a lot about his searching for meaning of life as well as what and how to pursue the meaning in life.

I don’t think study is the most important thing. At the moment, I study hard because I need to do it. But later on if I find something really important to me, I believe that I can then disregard studying.
(Sang-woo, interview, March 19, 2002)

These days I think about why we live a lot. I don’t consider spending time in thinking about it as waste of time. Even if I did nothing during the time, I don’t find it wasteful. (April 2, 2002)

The principle of ‘inter-convertibility’ (Bourdieu, 1991) of all kinds of capital is relevant to understanding a participant’s particular “action-taking”. The dashed lines in Table 5 indicate that each capital can be converted into another form of capital. I was impressed by Kyung-ho’s perception of working in a store due to his financial difficulty as an opportunity to practice English skills. Because of the inter-convertibility of any form of capital, particularly between cultural capital and economic capital, Kyung-ho seemed to believe in potential capital in any kind of community of practice (Lave & Wenger, 1991) in which he engaged. By the dashed line, I also indicate that different individuals have different evaluative orientations towards the same examples of capital. A research assistantship meant for Sang-eun a way to obtain social capital, while Kyung-ho found it to be meaningful as a way to gain economic capital.

Through analyzing various forms of capital appearing in the participants’ experiences, I noticed that there is a complex interplay between the participants’ particular positionings and their intentions of obtaining particular forms of capital. The participants’ learner agency to evaluate and negotiate multiple meanings in their sociocultural worlds manifests in the ways they position themselves differently and take particular actions or reactions in their L2 discursive practices. In the next section, I discuss further these various ways the participants exercise their agency in their L2 learning processes.

Exercise of Agency as Investor

According to Peirce (1995), the exercise of learner agency means that the learner experiences complicated negotiation processes of evaluating and selecting different forms

of investment. Social agents are aware that they are positioned in different social spaces according to the quantities of different forms of capital they possess (Bourdieu, 1991). Therefore, their common goal may be to obtain as much capital as possible through their investment so that they could be positioned in “higher” places of their social spaces. In this regard, I view the participants as “*investors*” who are very strategic, cautious, and critical about their investment in their L2 discursive practices.

For example, Sang-woo reveals in the next quote that he was clearly aware of the value of cultural capital embedded in prestigious universities and its convertibility into economic capital in his social space.

I am happy with things in general here, but I would still like to go to a better school. I want to go to Waterloo University for the engineering program. I heard that you have to get an average over 95 to receive a scholarship, while here [the current university] you get the scholarship when you are over 80. I am thinking of the University of Toronto as well since it is also a good school... It seems like here [the same] you have to graduate from a good university to get recognition by others. It also influences how much money you can make ... (Sang-woo, interview, November 22, 2001)

Sang-woo perceived that graduating from a prestigious university would help him obtain high value of cultural and economic capital in his Canadian sociocultural context. This perception seems to have influenced him to consider transferring to a more prestigious university. Another comment Sun-young made also reveals how strategic and cautious she was in investing in the relationship with her landlady in the sense that she could foresee the potential capital she would gain in the future as a result of her investment.

I always try to think how to get to know this person. For example, my landlady has a strong voice and likes to control. Because of this, she doesn't get along well with my roommate. Since I am aware that it's

“good” for me to get along with the landlady, I try to listen to her carefully. (Sun-young, interview, January 25, 2002)

The notion of a ‘tool-kit’ (Wertsch, 1991) is relevant to understanding the complexity of mediational resources and investment strategies in the participants’ worlds. Some participants were critical and strategic in the way they obtain particular forms of capital. Sun-young initially invested in learning English by herself through studying with books. However, she soon realized that she is good at and enjoys participating in social activities and sports. She then invested in socializing with English speaking peers first in order to obtain social capital. Thus, she perceived that it would be more efficient for her to acquire good English language skills as cultural capital. I also observed this in my case study of a Korean new immigrant family (Lee, 2002), Young-a, a fifteen-year-old Korean participant, whose English was not so fluent. Yet, she had a strategy to invest in obtaining social capital through the mediational tools available in her ‘tool-kit’ such as dancing, hip-hop clothes, and trading music CDs. The form of capital she eventually aimed to gain was personal capital, fame and popularity in her Canadian school.

Interestingly, some of the outcomes of a similar type of investment strategy, which appeared in other participants’ narratives, turned out to be different. This difference in the outcome of a similar type of investment strategy can be understood in relation to the social construction of particular positionings of the participants. The outcome of the investment seemed to be different depending on who was “the other” in discursive practices and how the participants perceived they were positioned. For instance, Seong-jin and Sun-young both tried a similar strategy to obtain social capital. By doing a favour such as cleaning the house for their landlord and landlady, Sun-young

intended to build a positive relationship with them. She seems to have succeeded in building a close relationship with her landlady while Seong-jin did not. The participants were “constantly organizing and reorganizing a sense of who they were and how they relate to the social world” (Peirce, 1995, p.18). While Sun-young’s work was clearly appreciated by the landlady as she got a discount on her rent, Seong-jin felt that he was being positioned as the “cleaning lady” since he was asked to clean another room without receiving clear appreciation from his landlord. Seong-jin’s perception about his being positioned as the “cleaning lady” seemed to influence him to invest less in relationships with his homestay families in the future.

Influences of Korean Habitus on Agency and Positionings

Bourdieu (1991) notes that habitus influences the generation of social agents’ practices, perceptions and attitudes without their conscious implementation of particular rules and norms. For the participants in this inquiry, their “habitus” are the dispositions they have acquired gradually through their upbringing and educational experiences in Korea. I find there are two different Korean habitus that seem to have influenced some participants’ learner agency and the ways they positioned themselves: one is Korean ‘cheong’ habitus and the other is Korean schooling habitus.

The Korean psychology of ‘cheong’ and the ‘we-ness relationship’ that I explained in Chapter 2 may explain some of the sociocultural influences of Korean habitus on investment and the reaction to the investment of some participants. Establishing good social relationships with other Koreans in their social worlds seems to be important investments particularly for Sun-young, Sang-woo, and Kyung-ho. I

observed that they exercised their agency by investing their time in connecting to their respective Korean communities. In other words, they appropriated their Korean habitus since they believed in the value of having Korean support in their Canadian life contexts. On the other hand, I noticed some cases in which Korean habitus unconsciously influenced some participants' mindsets and their development of new relationships with Canadians in their L2 contexts. Sang-woo had negative evaluative orientations toward Canadian culture and relationships while comparing them to those of Korean acquaintances. His negative perceptions seemed to influence the degree of investment in obtaining social capital from his Canadian peers. Seong-jin perceived his homestay family's eating takeout food without offering any to him as no 'we-ness' in the relationship and as a lack of a 'cheong' relationship between them. This event seems to have influenced Seong-jin not to invest further in the relationship with his homestay family since he felt he would not get a return on his investment.

Since all six participants were students, cultural capital seemed to be one of the most important forms of capital, and influenced their investment and possibilities for positioning. For example, prestigious names of institutions, high proficiency of English language, high grades in courses were often mentioned in the participants' narratives. Interestingly, I find their intentions, investment strategies, evaluative orientations toward the outcome of investment, and the ways they positioned themselves in the processes of gaining the cultural capital were very much influenced by their Korean sociocultural habitus. As I described in Chapter 1, there seems to be a socioculturally influenced monolithic view of "how students should study" or "how students should learn English" that prevailed in the context of Korean schooling. I describe this phenomenon as

“studying from morning till midnight by sitting in front of desk” and “memorizing vocabulary, idioms or grammar rules.” For instance, both Seong-jin and Sun-young tried to implement the strategies of learning English as described in Hong’s autobiography; and Ji-young and Seong-jin had a sense of guilt when they did not study by “sitting in front of desk” as hard as they perceived they should be. The Korean schooling habitus may consciously or subconsciously influence the participants’ decision-making and evaluation about investment in their learning and living in L2. When Sang-woo became a passive oral English learner even though he was aware that he needed more practice, I think it may have been his Korean habitus that influenced him not to show his English proficiency in front of his Korean peers. As I explained in Chapter 1, in Korea, having “good” English skills is considered very important for getting good jobs and social recognition. In fact, having good English skills and particularly being able to speak with “native- speaker-like pronunciation”, can even be associated with being intellectually “smart”. This may be one of the reasons why Sang-woo did not want to reveal his oral English skills even though his knowledge of English vocabulary, grammar and reading comprehension could have been better than his Korean peers.

Korean habitus of the participants seemed to influence consciously or subconsciously their various Canadian discursive practices operating as criteria of perception, assessment, or principles. Accordingly, the participants experienced some confrontations in their positioning and investment when they were learning new structures and systems in their Canadian contexts. In the next section, I discuss how I interpret the process and the meaning of the confrontation the Korean students encountered through crossing their cultural borders in various discursive contexts.

Sociocultural Relations of Power in Third Space

Struggles in L2 Students' Learning Processes

Studying abroad far away from home, leaving family, relatives and friends behind, is not an easy challenge for many individuals to handle. Besides all the physical constraints imposed by the requirements for tuition, food, climate, geographic differences, some invisible challenges triggered by various social interactions can be particularly challenging. Earlier in chapter 1, I explained my personal rationale for conducting this inquiry by drawing on the interview quote Ji-young made while she was writing her M.A. thesis. I present the interview quote again to remind readers what she said:

I didn't expect doing an M.A. is so difficult like this... this is not about whose brain is better or who is more diligent, and what time you wake up and how early you go to a library to study... it's about "battling" with myself. I often feel that I collapse, and then I have to overcome that feeling. Since I cannot know what other students actually do in detail, to me, they look like they are doing very well without going through so much frustration. This makes me feel that I am more stupid than others. I want to feel it's okay to be frustrated. (Ji-young, interview, November 26, 2001)

When Ji-young said, "it is about battling with myself", I understand she meant that she was struggling with writing her thesis. I fully sympathize with her frustration since I have experienced similar challenges when I wrote my M.A. thesis some years ago and even now while writing this dissertation in my second language. Like Ji-young, I also found that the process of writing for an academic purpose can be an intensive battle within myself. I felt often that it is hard because I am cognitively "stupid".

The six Korean participants' personal narratives reveal that they experienced different types of challenges and frustrations in different degrees in various L2 discursive

practices. In this section, I provide a critical discussion about the socio-cultural-historical nature of the six Korean students' struggles in their day-to-day discursive practices. I argue that L2 students who feel frustrated in their discursive practices should not easily blame their problems on their cognitive abilities but realize that their struggles can be influenced by social, cultural, political, or historical forces from their social worlds.

Border Crossing, Conflicting and Struggling

As illustrated in the narratives of Seong-jin, Sang-eun, and Ji-young, when they tried to appropriate their respective authoritative discourses, "a variety of alien voices enter[ed] into their consciousness" (Bakhtin, 1981, p.348). During the processes of the appropriation of authoritative discourses, they were not simply delivering information; they were constantly organizing and reorganizing their senses of being and how they relate to their social worlds. They were experiencing what Bakhtin (1981) calls the process of 'ideologically becoming'. 'Ideological becoming' is the process of "distinguishing between one's own and another's discourse, between one's own and another's thought" (p.345). As Bakhtin (1981) acknowledges, going through power struggles among different voices in a human being is an uneasy process:

Our ideological development is just such an intense struggle within us for hegemony among various available verbal and ideological points of view, approaches, directions and values. (p.345)

Ideology implies in the common linguistic sense a particular framework of knowledge that is tied to social power and is usually manifested in language (Pennycook, 2001).

I interpret Bakhtin's term "ideologically becoming" as the process when individuals become aware of different ontological and epistemological assumptions that they were previously unaware of, and feel pressure to appropriate one or the other in different sociocultural contexts. Seong-jin and Sang-eun were struggling in the process of appropriating authoritative discourses introduced by his academic writing teacher and her professors. On the other hand, when Ji-young was fearful about her unknown future, what actually made her frustrated seemed to be her realization which became internally persuasive discourses. She started to realize that she had been evaluating her life based on "other's" view in her Korean sociocultural context. She was struggling as she came to listen to her own view of life: "it is more important to enjoy the process of doing something rather than finishing it quickly" (Interview, April 30, 2002). The appropriation of a new discourse is not simply "picking-up" new information. For some individuals in some sociocultural contexts, this can be about appropriating new ontological and epistemological assumptions that are different from what they were used to and have previously shared in their home, school and communities. This can require them to create new positionings about themselves. They may also feel that they are losing the words and discourses with which they felt comfortable and believed to be "good" and have situated inside of them for a while as their internally persuasive discourses. The new "power" forces them to "cross the borders" between authoritative and internally persuasive discourses.

The power struggles that many non-mainstream or L2 students may experience have been discussed by a number of researchers in various critical studies. Critical pedagogy theorists (Apple, 1982; Freire, 1970; Giroux & McLaren, 1989,1994;

Pennycook, 2001) and critical language theorists (Corson, 1995; Fairclough, 1982, 1992) argue that conventional schooling and literacy education are deeply involved in the reproduction of the power relations of particular social members. Fairclough (1989) asserts that language education should focus on the critical awareness of ideological processes in discourses, so that students become more aware of their own practices, and become more critical of the discourses to which “they are subjected” (Fairclough, 1989). One of the implications drawn from the critical discussions about mainstream literacy practices is that teacher instruction of writing conventions in language classrooms should be more “explicit” so that students become aware of power structures embedded in discursive practices. Adapting Bernstein’s (2000) model that stresses an “explicit” pedagogy, genre-based pedagogies intend to bring teachers’ and students’ consciousness to language structures (Freedman, 1993). This model stresses that instruction should include explicit mastery and awareness of the linguistic structures and forms that are necessary for increased access to the politics, economics and cultures of the dominant groups. However, there is a debate about the role of explicit instruction in the L1 and L2 literacy literature.

There have been numerous appeals for educators to consider L2 students’ different cultural, rhetorical, and linguistic backgrounds in L2 writing instruction (Carson & Nelson, 1996; Delpit, 1988; Kobayashi & Rinnert, 1996; Li, 1996; Silva, Leki & Carson, 1997; Zamel, 1995). In particular, some researchers in the area of contrastive rhetoric have identified patterns in students’ writing that reflect certain language and cultural backgrounds, and suggested that writing instructors initiate students into the cultural and rhetorical practices of the target languages and cultures (Grabe & Kaplan,

1996; Kobayashi & Rinnert, 1996; Li, 1996). Silva, Leki and Carson (1997) argue that “second language writers present the clearest picture of linguistic and cultural differences, yet they tend to be ignored by mainstream composition studies” (p.424). Delpit (1988) suggests that teachers should teach students the codes needed to participate fully in “the mainstream of American life” (p.296). Atkinson and Ramanathan (1995) show in their ethnographic research that background knowledge about American culture is necessary for ESL writers to succeed in an American university composition program. They claim that when culturally valued notions are based largely on American set of social practices, non-native English speaking students are disadvantaged.

However, the considerations of “explicit” pedagogy for L2 students seem to assume that the students from the same cultural background share similar knowledge, beliefs, morals and values. Such an over-simplification of L2 non-mainstream students’ difficulties can lead to the construction of ‘othering’ and stereotyping the students and their cultures. Kubota (2001) argues that the ‘othering’ of ESL students by stereotyping their cultures and languages presumes the existence of the unproblematic ‘Self’ of European/ Western images as well as the power relations between superiority and inferiority. I agree with Kubota’s argument in that I wonder if the implementation of “explicit” pedagogy is necessary. First, I think that the “explicit” instruction of cultural norms and discursive rules of the mainstream in classrooms would merely be the reinforcement and reproduction of positioning mainstream cultures as dominant and non-mainstream cultures as subordinated. Furthermore, regarding sociocultural norms and expectations embedded in mainstream discourses, I question the definite need of “explicit” pedagogy for L2 students. Over the last twenty years, Maguire (1987, 1994,

1999) and Maguire & Graves (2001) have demonstrated young bi/multilingual children's agency and self-reflexivity in their complex discursive practices. She stresses the importance of listening to and respecting these children's voices, perspectives and insight in their learning processes (Maguire, 2005).

Many teachers and academics may assume that students (particularly young students) are struggling because they do not know or do not understand different genre structures. Therefore, teachers feel it is their duty to explicitly teach that genre. The participants' narratives show that they had developed higher cognitive functions, such as metacognitive awareness and self-reflexivity, that enabled them to get to know "implicit" genre structures for their success in their academic programs. Seong-jin, Sun-young, Sang-eun explained that while they were struggling, they were in fact aware of what was required in their course work to get a good grade. The problem was that what was required conflicted with something inside of them. A Bakhtinian (1981) explanation would be that the L2 students' struggling began when they started to distinguish the differences between their own thought, internally persuasive discourses, and the thoughts of "others", authoritative discourses. Their struggling was more to do with the influence of genre structures in their positionings in their discourse practices than with not knowing the genre structures.

I do not intend to suggest that enhancing L2 students' awareness of cultural norms and rules through more "explicit" instruction is not valuable. However, I want to caution the advocates of "explicit" pedagogy about the danger of the possibility of 'othering' and of underestimating the agency of L2 students. I also want to note that critical language theorists' argument (e.g. Fairclough, 1992) seems to be based on the binary structure

between the powerful and the powerless. Common concepts about power or authority are often related to social control, domination, hegemony, exclusion, oppression, and so on, concerning unequal power relations (Russell, 1997). Such a typological approach to language education seems too static and deterministic (Luke, 1996) and based on a monolithic view of power in social relations. I do not find it constructive to enhance people's awareness of power structures of society from a one-dimensional view that focuses only on negative hegemonic and dichotomous relationships between the powerful and the powerless. In the next section, I argue for the need of having various perspectives of power and authority among different cultures, different discourses and different individuals in different contexts.

Multi-dimensional and Relational View of Power

From a poststructuralist view, there is no one-to-one correspondence between symbol and reality in human language and interpretive acts. Foucault (1980) argues that power can be exercised by anyone in any social contexts in a coercive way or in a productive way. Therefore, an analysis of power should concentrate not only on the level of conscious intention but also on the ways the power is exercised or not exercised. The question then shifts from "Who has the power?" to the processes by which the power is exercised and controlled. The complex relations between the participants' learner agencies and the various forms of capital in their narratives imply that power does not always operate through a straightforward 'top-down' mechanism. As discussed earlier in terms of the relationships between learner agency and various forms of symbolic power, power appears in every aspect of their daily lives with various ways of positioning of the

participants. Power can be viewed as a form of oppression and imposition of constraints by social systems and institutions. However, it is also important to understand how human agents actually do exercise, negotiate and adapt to various power relationships.

Rampton (1995) explains his view of the dynamic nature of the power of social relations by drawing on his concept of 'crossing'. He uses the term, 'crossing', to refer to the 'code-alternation' among the groups of people of non-mainstream cultures in the way they employ their second language in different sociocultural contexts. The participants in Rampton's study were mainly adolescent friendship groups in one neighbourhood in the South Midlands of England and his study focuses on their 'code-crossing' among Punjabi, Creole and Indian English. Rampton observes that the young adults' 'language crossing' occurs in many different ways that are influenced by socio-cultural-historical factors and by dynamics of local social interaction. He explains:

As an activity, crossing could either be an end in itself or the first step in a longer journey; it could emphasize disdain or respect; it occurred when people were on their own, when they were among co-ethnics, and also when they were with members of ethnic out-groups. (p.281)

Even though Rampton's research context and study participants are very different from mine, his description of the dynamic social relations of power among the bilingual adolescents is relevant to understanding the dynamic and multidimensional power relations in the six participants' L2 discursive practices. The six Korean students are not as fluent bi/ multilinguals as the students who participated in Rampton's study. Rather, the participants in my inquiry are relatively new to and unfamiliar with their L2 discursive contexts in terms of the target languages and cultures. Thus, they are "entering" from their familiar discourses into unfamiliar discourses. They may then

engage in “crossing” among these multiple discourses by ‘switching’ the possibilities for their positioning. The reason why they ‘cross’ between the discourses and ‘switch’ their positioning according to different local interactions in their L2 discursive practices may be because they realize what Rampton (1995) points out:

Ideologies are plural and even the most established has to contend with the diffuse patterns of thought and meaning that animate local interaction.
(p.307)

For instance, the next interview excerpt with Sang-woo reflects that he was experiencing what Bahktin (1981) refers to the process of ‘ideologically becoming’ after he had entered and crossed new discursive practices in his Canadian sociocultural contexts.

Sang-woo: ... Sometimes I question myself why I am studying... It doesn’t seem that studying a lot influences life in a great way... there are so many things I want to do well besides studying...
Heekyeong: Is this the first time you wonder about the point of studying?
Sang-woo: I don’t think I had these kinds of thoughts before...
(Interview with Sang-woo, January 22, 2002)

Sang-woo did not have a chance to think about the meaning of studying in life until he “entered” into his new life in Canada. He realized then that he did not have to follow the intense daily schedule of schooling in Korea. He recalled:

I have only two classes a week, so there is a lot of spare time these days. In KAIST, I was taking seven courses and had class from 8 a.m. until 6 p.m. everyday. After all the classes were over, I would either study more in the library or go out with friends... However, these days I just stay at home and don’t do much. (Sang-woo, interview, February 15, 2002)

I infer that Sang-woo was able to reflect on the meaning of his life as he was “crossing” from a familiar discourse practice, such as studying intensively

everyday, to an unfamiliar discourse practice, such as having time to think about the meaning of life. It was a new experience for Sang-woo to engage in the school schedule that has only two classes a week and to have much spare time, which he was never used to in Korea. As he crossed the border of different discourses, he started to distinguish between his own and another's discourses. In other words, he was experiencing the process of 'ideologically becoming'. During the process, he seems to have switched his position and struggled to discover which discourse was more meaningful to him. Previously, he was in a position, "dedicating his time exclusively to studying", which had for a long time been an authoritative discourse for him. He then realized there was another position: "there is much more to life than just studying hard", which may have been an internally persuasive discourse to him.

Bourdieu's work provides a way to examine how power operates relatively in particular contexts. Bourdieu (1998) sees the social world as a multi-dimensional space of positions, differentiated into autonomous fields. Within each of these fields, social agents are positioned according to the quantities of the different types of capital they possess. Bourdieu (1998) notes:

... what is commonly called distinction, that is, a certain quality of bearing and manners, most often considered innate (one speaks of distinction naturelle, "natural refinement"), is nothing other than difference, a gap, a distinctive feature, in short, a relational property existing only in and through its relation with other properties. (p.6)

Therefore, in his view, "the real is relational" (p.3). Because of their being exposed to two different cultural worlds, some of the participants seem to have noticed the relational

view of power. The next quote by Sang-woo reflects this view with reference to different forms of capital in his different social spaces.

Certainly I will do a Ph.D. as well. The professors here have to work very hard without earning much... they don't have much authority either. But, in Korea, it's not so bad to be a professor. You can have a good salary, having vacations as well as research funding. (Sang-woo, interview, February 15, 2002)

Sang-woo was interested in obtaining his Ph.D. degree in the future. However, he was aware of the different social positions of a professor in different social spaces. He perceived that university professors in his Canadian world might not obtain as much economic capital and cultural capital as they could in his Korean world. Another example of his awareness of a relational view of power is reflected in the next interview excerpt:

I can suspend my registration up to two years without losing the scholarship [from KAIST]. So, I can stay here until then, and if I like it here, I can try to stay longer or try to transfer to another university, which is better... In terms of the level of learning, I like my Korean university. Compared to KAIST, it's too easy here. I haven't studied hard since I came here. (Sang-woo, interview, November 22, 2001)

Sang-woo was aware that even though the cultural capital he had in terms of his knowledge of subject matter in his field was fairly high, the value is only relative considering that the cultural capital he would earn in Canada would not be as high in the Korean context.

As the participants "enter" and "cross" into new discursive discourses in their local L2 contexts, they appear to notice different values of different forms of capital in different discourses. Thus, they become aware of the possibility of relative values and

interpretations of those different discourses. These students' realization of multiple and relational values of certain forms of capital could be an important reason why they become frustrated in their L2 discursive practices. For instance, Sang-eun struggled with the choice of her thesis topic because she recognized the relative values of the investment in different topics.

Sang-eun: ... The other day I spoke to the director of the program about my thesis topic. She suggested I should work on English, French or Spanish contexts so that they can support me.

Heekyeong: Why don't you then work on English or Spanish contexts?

Sang-eun: Then, my uniqueness will disappear and thus, it will be difficult for me to get some funding. (Interview with Sang-eun, February 27, 2003)

Sang-eun could not choose to have a Korean context in her thesis either because she believed that she would then not be able to receive support from her department. The participants' social space seemed to be the site in which a dynamic construction of their positioning occurred, because they were aware of the multidimensional nature and relative values of symbolic power in their multiple social spaces. The processes of their 'ideologically becoming' could concur with complex contestations of and negotiations with multiple discourses to which they were exposed, and take the form of either 'authoritative discourses' or 'internally persuasive discourses.'

The processes of the participants' 'ideologically becoming' can be more constructively interpreted through the concept of 'third space'. I believe that their struggling is a part of their living in the 'third space'. The concept of 'third space' has been receiving growing attention by researchers in various disciplines in social science (e.g. Bhabha, 1994; Soja, 1996). Bhabha (1994) explains his concept of 'third space' from literary and cultural theory in order to describe the construction of culture and

identity within conditions of colonial antagonism and inequity. In his view, 'hybridity' is the process by which the colonial governing authority undertakes to "translate" the identity of the colonized (or the Other) within a singular universal framework.

'Hybridity' fails to produce something familiar but new to the colonized. However, the 'third space' in postcolonial discourse is "the cutting edge of translation and negotiation, the in-between space" (p.39). According to Bhabha, in this 'third space', other positions may emerge, and new forms of cultural meaning blur the limitations of existing boundaries, calling into question existing epistemological assumptions of cultures and identities. This hybrid space is an ambivalent site where cultural meanings and representations have no 'primordial unity or fixity.' Bhabha asserts that despite the exposure of the third space to contradictions and ambiguities, we may "elude the politics of polarity and emerge as others of our selves" (p.1).

Soja (1996) provides a human geographic perspective on third space. His concept of 'Thirdspace' captures "what is actually a constantly shifting and changing milieu of ideas, events, appearances, and meanings" (p.2). His concept offers the possibility of expanding the scope of people's geographical imaginations about the spatiality of life. It is a space of 'radical openness' to those marginalized by racism, patriarchy, capitalism, colonialism and other oppressions. This 'Thirdspace' is open to interpretation and contestation by different individuals or groups who are trying to question and redefine the meanings and boundaries of particular cultural meanings. Soja (1996) notes that social agents in this 'Thirdspace' draw "selectively and strategically from the two opposing categories to open new alternatives" (p.5). In third space it can be possible for what seem

to be oppositional categories [to] actually work together to generate new knowledges, new discourses, and new forms of literacy (Moje et al., 2004).

Power relations in third space shape multiple positionings and interpretations as the participants try to become members of particular communities of practice in their multiple sociocultural worlds (Gutiérrez, Rymes & Larson, 1995). Gutiérrez et al. (1995) perceive power in third space as “not an added feature of relationship; [but as] an essential element of the construction of self and how we understand the world” (p.451). The concept of third space challenges common conceptualization of ESL learners from a deficit point of view. Rather, the concept of ‘third space’ highlights individual learners’ abilities to “cross” both cultures and discourses and to translate, negotiate and mediate similarities and differences. Possessing these abilities, the learners are situated in the very space in which great potential for change is embedded.

Possibilities for Change

At this point, I remind myself of the fundamental assumption in a Vygotskian sociohistorical approach to human inquiry:

To study something historically means to study it in the process of change; that is the dialectical method’s basic demand. (Vygotsky, 1978, p.65)

From this Vygotskian view, social, cultural and historical conditions of human development influence the opportunities and possibilities of individuals’ experiences and continuously change them over time. An action or reaction mediated by particular L2 discourses (i.e. mediational tools) becomes the mediation of future perceptions,

behaviours, and activities. Each activity is an element of a dialectic process toward the next activity (Cole, 1996).

However, the six Korean students' personal narratives reveal that dialectical changes through appropriation of particular discourses are often accompanied with conflicts and resistance in their minds before the appropriation is established. Russell (1997) notes that systems of human cognition are dynamic and constantly "re-created through micro-level interactions over a few seconds or many centuries" (p.512). Through analyzing in more detail the dynamic processes of the participants' interpretations and negotiations among multiple discourses and positionings in their third space, I intend to gain some insight into a crucial question: how do L2 learners' perceptions and behaviours come to change? Some of the participants' perceptions or behaviours took a short time to surface while others emerged after a long time. Why do some actions or perceptions take a few seconds to change or be appropriated and why do others take much longer time? How does an agent's new positionings emerge?

Emergence of New Positioning through Negotiation

Mishler (1999) emphasizes that human individuals are the "rule users" who actively adapt, resist, and select cultural rules. The participants were surely the "rule users" in their L2 discursive practices and their experiences reflect the dialectic process of their mediated actions/ reactions. When Ji-young received a letter from her superintendent informing her of an abrupt raise in the rent without reasonable cause, she perceived that her superintendent was taking advantage of her position as an international student. This perception was influenced by the earlier event when she had to pay four

months of rent when she moved in because as an international student she did not have her social insurance number. She regretted that she could not refuse or resist the unfair treatment. When she felt that the superintendent again exercised similar power over her, she decided to take a different action. In response to the exercise of the illegitimate cultural rule, Ji-young utilized her cultural and social capital as an intellectual and social person in her Canadian social contexts, and appropriated knowledge of law through reading the lease thoroughly and consulting her Canadian friends. She then took a further action and sent a formal letter to the rental office to complain about the unreasonable raising of the rent.

Another participant's, Sun-young's, experience also shows that a social agent may appropriate a new L2 discourse by going through a dialectical process of mediated actions/ positions and reactions/ repositions. Sun-young greeted her landlady in a way familiar to Koreans, "Where are you going?" (Interview, February 8, 2002) to initiate conversations with her. Sun-young may have taken that action by positioning herself as an active English learner or a friendly Korean. However, Sun-young immediately noticed that her landlady did not feel comfortable and became aware that it was not appropriate for her to ask such a question as a tenant in that kind of Canadian communicative situation. Upon realizing this implicit "rule" in that particular L2 discursive context, the next time Sun-young took a new action to initiate conversations with her landlady. She said: "... I remembered that she had been to see her dentist, and asked her how it was, and so on. She then told me how it went and I listened to her" (Interview, February 8, 2002). Sun-young seems to have decided not to take on her Korean habitus; yet she still

positioned herself as an active English learner and was able to continue a longer conversation with her landlady. Harré and van Langenhove (1991) explain:

The fact that both story-line and illocutionary force of the speech acts are jointly created by the conversants and so made determinate means that rejection of the original positioning by other conversants and the adopting of other positions redefines every aspect of the conversation. (p.404)

When the participants could become the “rule users” in their L2 discursive practices, the change in their reactions and re-positioning seems to have occurred in a short time. However, some changes I observed in some other participants’ narratives did not seem to be happening, or took a long time and with intense struggling. It seems that these students could not easily find or reformulate their reactions or re-positioning.

I compare Ji-young’s dialectical experience about her interactions with her supervisor to that of Sang-eun. Sang-eun described her interactions with the new supervisor of her Ph.D. program with little excitement. She seemed to feel distant and did not share much with her new supervisor. Until the last interview I had with Sang-eun, I did not see any change in her negative perception about her interactions with her supervisor. This may be because unlike Ji-young’s, Sang-eun did not have another interaction that could mediate a dialectic development of her future perception to become positive. Since there was no regular interaction with her supervisor, there may have been little chance for Sang-eun to experience another interaction that could influence the emergence of a new perception about her relationship with the supervisor.

The New London Group (1996) raises a question regarding how learners can enact knowledge into their actions:

Learners may be able to articulate their knowledge in words; they could be consciously aware of relationships, and even able to engage in “critique”; yet, the learners might still be incapable of reflexively enacting their knowledge in practice. (p.84)

I agree with the New London Group’s observation that awareness of new knowledge does not necessarily bring about change in action. As Bakhtin (1981) and some activity theorists (e.g. Cole & Engestrom, 1993) state, the dialectical change through the appropriation of discourses/ tools across boundaries often accompanies intensive conflicts and resistance within social agents. Some conflicts and resistance could intensely influence the agents’ actions beyond their meta-cognitive awareness. Why then are some conflicts so intense that the agents cannot easily negotiate their actions and positioning? In other words, why is it so difficult for them to find the third space to act and be from those conflicts? I propose one possible interpretation of this tough negotiation process in the next section.

Bourdieu (1998) describes social space as:

... the space of the relations of force between the different kinds of capital or, more precisely, between the agents who possess a sufficient amount of one of the different kinds of capital to be in a position to dominate the corresponding field, whose struggles intensify whenever the relative value of the different kinds of capital is questioned. (p.34)

Social individuals’ different values may be related to different sources of capital, which are influenced by political, social, and economic forces embedded in the agents’ social spaces (Hermans, 2001). Given that each positioning is associated with a different form of capital, one positioning in a particular context can contradict another. It may be because each positioning intends to obtain a

particular form of capital in that particular discursive practice. Most social agents' goals in their L2 discursive practices are to possess the highest overall capital since they are aware that they would become positioned in their multiple social worlds according to the overall volume of the different kinds of capital they possess. Therefore, they try to take up a particular position through negotiation that they perceive as the most appropriate. Then, they could obtain the most amount of capital in a social space or spaces they find most meaningful.

The problem is, however, as Bourdieu (1998) notes:

One of the stakes of the struggles which oppose the set of agents or institutions which have in common the possession of a sufficient quantity of specific capital to occupy dominant positions within their respective fields is the conservation or transformation of the "exchange rate" between different kinds of capital and, along the same lines, control of the bureaucratic instances which are in a position to modify the exchange rate through administrative measures. (p.34)

Although most capital seems to retain 'inter-convertability' into another capital, which Bourdieu (1986) refers to as "the basis of the strategies aimed at ensuring the reproduction of capital" (p.253), some forms of capital do not seem interconvertible in some particular discursive practices. The social agents as "investors" cannot find a common "exchange rate" which can lead to negotiation and modification of their actions and positioning through their inner speech (Vygotsky, 1986) or the dialogical process of human thinking (Bakhtin, 1981). Some contradictory forms of capital seem interconvertible may be because the "investors" perceive that if they take one position, then they would lose the other position and the possibility for obtaining other forms of capital. For example, Seong-jin was struggling with writing an argumentative essay

which was contrary to his preferred creative writing style; Sang-eun was very frustrated by the departmental policy on Ph.D. topics that did not accept her preferred topic; Ji-young experienced inner conflict between her Korean habitus and her own vision of life. They were all aware of the rules and expectations of their respective authoritative discourses. Nevertheless, they could not enact their knowledge into practice. Nor could they make a decision according to their internally persuasive discourses. They were stuck and could not move forward for a while. They all seemed to “fear” they would lose or give up one position over the other that is meaningful to them since there seemed to be no common currency.

I came to this interpretation when I heard Kyung-ho’s comment when he had to act and make decisions mostly based on his positioning as a father as faced with financial difficulty. I heard his voice in his positioning as a prospective scholar that was also dominant in the possibilities for his positionings.

The source of my energy is the confidence I have in myself and that there is something I like to do and that I am able to do it, regardless of being well-off or not in the future. Because I have such hope and a sense of confidence unconsciously, I believe that I have come so far in spite of having a family to take care of... (Kyung-ho, interview, March 13, 2002)

In Kyung-ho’s situation, he seems to have found common currency thinking that economic capital would eventually be converted to cultural capital. Thus, he would need money first to survive and to pay for tuition. In addition, he might have perceived that his positioning to pursue an academic career was not lost or given-up but only “postponed” in the future. However, if they perceive that there would be no convertibility or no return from their investment, they may choose to abandon their investment in particular

discourse practices. After struggling between her department policy and her vision for the job market in the future, Sang-eun told me about her new view on the negotiation of her investment: “I should go somewhere where what I can do can be appreciated” (Interview, April 24, 2002). When I spoke to her again after the interview period was over, she said that she had switched to another program to continue her studies.

Summary

The analyses of the six participants’ narratives reveal that while engaging in their L2 literacy practices, they were consciously crossing different social spaces, taking different positionings, and negotiating among multiple beliefs, values and meanings. The agency of the participants to negotiate with the complex social relations of power manifests in the ways they invest in achieving different forms of capital. Changes in social agents’ actions are likely to happen when a new positioning emerges into the negotiation process in the agents’ minds. Through constant inner dialogue or a new stimulus from the environment, the agents find new perceptions that can influence the contradictory positioning and lead to compromise with one another. The agents may find it very difficult to negotiate some conflicting positions when they cannot see interconvertibility between different forms of capital that mediate different positions. In this case, they may feel that they would lose or give up one position over the other. The key for the agents is to find the third space from those conflicts probably from hearing their own voices first rather than appropriating the voices of others. They may need to restructure their current valuation among various forms of capital and possible

positioning so that they could find another form of capital with inter-convertibility for negotiation.

CHAPTER 6

IMPLICATIONS OF THE INQUIRY

Maybe if I were in Korea, I wouldn't have gone through such a process of reflecting on my self and my life. Not only because I came to Canada, but anywhere else I would have experienced the same thing because of the fact that I was far away from my family and friends.

(Ji-young, interview, April 30, 2002)

I originally thought that only Korean people can be considered as my "real" friends, but I think I should change my mind because of my office mate. The other day we both were very down. So, we bought a couple of bottles of beer from a store and drank together with our office door closed.

(Kyung-ho, interview, January 30, 2002)

I am not an ordinary person. I am rather particular. I am good for a research subject... I don't think there is anybody at my age that has so much experience as I have. I feel very proud of myself because of that. I believe [life] experiences are very important... (Sun-young, interview, January 25, 2002)

The three interview excerpts reflect the voices of Ji-young, Kyung-ho and Sun-young. These voices indicate that through living and studying abroad they have learned valuable lessons that they might not have learned otherwise. Having had the privilege to listen to their personal narratives about their experiences, I was able to understand the contexts of particular events and challenges they experienced. I was able to appreciate how their perceptions about those experiences were socially, culturally and historically constructed. I strongly agree with Sun-young's comment: "life experiences are very important." The lessons I learned from doing this inquiry certainly have applications for researchers and practitioners in L2 education. Since I began my graduate studies in Canada, I have been a researcher who is interested in socio-cultural-historical theory of

L2 learning and teaching. Until recently, I was a teacher educator of a foreign language school for Canadian adults and was involved in making a school policy and developing a curriculum in the language school. I was a classroom teacher of high school English in Korea. I have been a L2 graduate student of Canadian university programs. In this chapter, I discuss implications of this inquiry by drawing on the trajectory of my different social positionings that I see are relevant to the meanings of the participants' narratives.

Writing the implications of this inquiry presents me with an intellectual challenge. Conventionally, the implications in the studies of literacy and language education are presented in several sections for those who are in different social positions, such as researchers, policy makers, teachers, and students. Drawing on the conventional rules embedded in academic discursive practices of the field, I attempt to divide the key concepts in my inquiry into several groups according to those different positions. I see some implications, such as about data collection or lesson preparation, are relevant to a particular discourse group, either to a researcher or a classroom teacher. However, some of the implications from this inquiry are those who practice second language should be aware of regardless of whether they are engaged in language practice as a student, a teacher, or a policy maker. When I was working as a teacher educator, one day I gave a workshop to the foreign language teachers regarding 'different learning styles among different individuals'. At the end of the workshop, my final remark to the teachers was: "Language is ambiguous and unpredictable. Learners who cannot cope with *ambiguity* and *unpredictability* are at a disadvantage in language learning." One of the senior teachers came up to me and said, "It was a great presentation and I particularly like your last message. You should say that to my students as well as the course evaluators of the

institute. If I cannot explain something clearly, they [students and evaluators] think that it's my fault and I am not teaching well." I understand the teacher's frustration. I do not think it would be fair if teachers feel that their students or evaluators perceived their teaching skills to be poor based on their particular lessons when it may have been due to the fact that their students or evaluators were not aware of ambiguous and unpredictable attributes of language. For this reason, I present the implications of my inquiry in two different sections, that is 'shared awareness' by researchers, policy makers, educators and students in L2 contexts and their 'respective responsibilities.'

Shared Awareness

Commonality and Interindividual Variability

The data of this inquiry imply that although the participants share certain commonalities such as being Korean, being educated in the Korean national educational system, there is enormous diversity among the six individuals. I attempted to categorize the six participants and their experiences according to certain traditional criteria, such as age, gender, years of experiences in profession, family background, educational background, academic challenges they go through, or types of strategies in dealing with those challenges. None of the criteria were appropriate for grouping these participants. What does come across as a commonality among the six individuals is a strong sense of agency in their voices. However, their sense of agency was expressed in different ways.

I observed that the six individuals do not necessarily share similar knowledge, beliefs, values and learning styles. They are quite different in the forms of capital they see as valuable in their learning and living processes. They were experiencing different

types of challenges in different sociocultural environments and the ways they dealt with their challenges and struggles were also varied. According to Lee & Wesche's (2000) quantitative study about thirty-seven Korean post-secondary students' adaptation to Canadian life and study, most Korean ESL students expressed as their English learning goals their improvement in listening and speaking, followed by pronunciation, while degree students mentioned writing most often. However, in the case of my participants, Seong-jin, the ESL student, focused mostly on improving his writing skills whereas Sang-woo, the undergraduate student, and Kyung-ho, the graduate student, expressed that they hoped to improve their listening and speaking skills. In addition, some participants perceived themselves as a minority in their L2 contexts for different reasons. Sang-eun felt she was a minority since there were not many Asian students in her program, whereas Ji-young felt that she was a minority in the department of her M.A. program because of her research interest. Ji-young perceived herself as a minority because she could not find people whom she could talk to about her research besides her thesis supervisor. Many graduate students may experience this academic isolation or loneliness. However, for L2 students this is especially critical to their success and their sense of agency.

Given the individual variability among those from the same cultural and linguistic background, I suggest that those who conduct a study as a researcher, develop a curriculum or teacher training sessions as a teacher educator, prepare for classroom lessons as a teacher, and make study plans as a L2 student they should be aware of one important question in relation to L2 learning and teaching. They need to question the validity of the terms such as generalization and standardization of L2 learning and teaching, and reliability of theory and pedagogy based on a monolithic view of human

development. Norton and Toohey (2001) challenge the conventional perceptions about 'good language learners' in SLA. They argue that the tendency in the field of SLA theory to draw sharp distinctions between the individual and the social does not embrace the complex experiences of L2 learners across time and space. The focus of SLA researchers has been mostly on discovering the cognitive processes of language acquisition and the effect of L2 learners' characteristics of these processes. While the information about the cognitive processes of L2 acquisition from the mainstream of SLA research does provide commonalities and offer some tips about how to teach and how to learn a target language, many SLA research findings do not include socio-cultural-historical factors embedded in the diverse contexts of different individuals. Therefore, the information provided is not comprehensive enough to deal with the complexity of "real" worlds. Providing teachers and students with a list such as "good learner's strategies" without embracing individual differences and context particularities can only offer reductionistic solutions that may be ineffective in particular situations. In addition, de-contextualized information can frustrate L2 teachers or students when their particular life situations do not fit into the generalizations and standardizations described in mainstream SLA research.

Mishler (1999) proposes that the central focus in the area of human development research should be replaced from "universality with variability"(p.11). He argues that "the remarkable diversity among individuals along all dimensions and throughout their lifespans" (p.10) has been neglected in the field of human development research that draws on experimental and quantitative research methods. I wonder why the researchers in that field have been interested in knowing systematic patterns? Why have they neglected the individual diversity? How would the world be different if they had focused

on learning variability rather than commonality? How many classroom teachers and students could be relieved if they hear about the “normality” of individual diversity in the process of learning when their realities or knowledge do not fit into generalized and standardized information? I recall an episode I had when I was working as a teacher educator, which made me rethink the role of “authoritative voice” that acknowledges interindividual variability in L2 learning and teaching. My job title was a ‘pedagogy consultant’ and one of my main responsibilities was to come up with solutions for pedagogical conflicts in classrooms.

Narrative vignette: The conflict between Japanese teachers and students

One day I had to handle a conflict between Japanese language teachers and their students. The teachers were quite frustrated about the fact that the students were so different from one another. Particularly, they found the current students were very different from their students of the previous years in terms of their learning preferences, strategies and speed. Thus the teachers found it very difficult to teach their current students according to the course plan provided by the school. The plan indicated standardized expectations about students’ performance within a specified time. They were worried by the fact that what they had covered of their main textbook with the students was way behind compared to those with previous students. Therefore, the teachers did not want to teach their students any more.

As a pedagogy consultant who was supposed to handle those conflicts in classrooms, I decided to tell the teachers my honest opinions about the situation. I told them that according to many recent studies in language education, it is normal to have students who are so “different”; it is okay to adjust to their individual differences. I suggested that we hold a meeting and try to negotiate with the students between the school curriculum, which was the base of the evaluation of student performance, and the individual differences and preferences of the students. At the meeting, we were able to find mutual agreement through confirming our mutual goal, which was to see the students perform as described in the curriculum at the end of the semester. The teachers and I expressed to the students that we respect their different learning styles and learner agency in terms of how to reach our common goal. The students proposed that they would try out their own ways just for another month. The teachers then showed their enthusiasm again to help their students with patience.

Fortunately for all of us at the meeting, the students succeeded in meeting the goal at the end of the language training.

What I realized from this event was that the teachers were experienced, and they knew that such negotiation with their students was the best way to resolve their conflict. What they needed was probably to hear from an “authoritative voice” that it is appropriate to challenge the standardized course plan and embrace their students’ different focus of agency through negotiating with the standardized school curriculum. More importantly, what they wanted to hear was probably that the responsibility for the outcome of the negotiation would be shared with their evaluator and their students.

Conceiving of “Struggles” as Exercises of Learner Agency

From the day (November 26, 2001) when Ji-young said to me during our interview that “I want to feel it’s okay to be frustrated”, I have been hoping that *as a researcher* I will be able to find a way to explain from a socio-cultural-historical view Ji-young’s struggles as well as the other Korean participants’ that are reflected in their narratives. In order to say that these L2 students’ struggles in their social worlds could be influenced by social, cultural, historical and political forces, rather than their innate cognitive capability or personality, I share an understanding that can apply to all the six individuals’ experiences. I do not intend to make any generalization here. Geertz (1973) stresses that research on human experiences should be focused on noticing systematic relationships among diverse phenomena rather than looking for patterns among similar ones. What I aim to do is to look into the systemic relationships among the diverse

phenomena in the participants' narratives as I discussed in Chapter 5 and see what emerges as an important implication for understanding the students' struggles.

My analyses indicate that L2 learners' struggles may have more to do with their being social agents who take multiple positionings in their different social spaces for particular reasons. As discussed in Chapter 5, the reasons for the six Korean students to take particular positionings as well as particular actions in particular contexts seem to be related to particular forms of capital they aim to obtain from that particular position and action-taking. Seong-jin and Sun-young decided to give favours to their landlords by positioning themselves as "good tenants" in order to gain social capital. As active investors in the processes of learning, the six students made decisions about where to invest their time and effort in order to obtain particular forms of capital that were meaningful to them at a particular time and space. Sang-woo decided to spend his spare time in speculating about the meaning of life through reading instead of studying to improve his English skills in his new Canadian contexts. Spiritual capital was more meaningful to him to gain at that time than the cultural capital of oral English skills. Kyung-ho decided to invest in working at a store as a shop assistant because he urgently needed to support his family financially as well as because he saw the inter-convertibility between economic capital and cultural capital that he hoped to gain through his Ph.D. degree in the future.

L2 students play multiple roles in their multiple social spaces. Thus, they may experience conflicts among the different positionings that are aimed at different forms of capital. Inner contradictions may arise because in that case they are in the very third space in which multiple truths, values and meanings coexist. In Bakhtin's sense, they

may go through the processes of 'ideologically becoming' hearing others' voices and values that are different from those they were familiar with. It seems that inner conflicts occur when the L2 students cannot see inter-convertibility among different forms of capital in different investment, and therefore, they become very frustrated. This may be because they perceive that they have to choose only one investment over the other. They view that they would not be able to obtain certain forms of capital that are valuable in another social space. I propose that these students' struggles for selecting the best investment in those contradictory situations should be conceived as the reflection of the exercise of learner agency in their L2 learning and living. L2 students' struggles can be seen as the sign of their awareness of multiple values and meanings in their third space rather than attributed to lack of cognitive capability or motivation to learn. Rather, their awareness of multiplicity of their realities should be welcomed as this indicates that they are in the very third space in which great possibilities for learning are embedded.

Conceiving L2 students' struggles as the processes of exercising their learner agency in the third space implies that there is an urgent need to empower students. Some teachers or school policy makers may have questions about how to trust learner agency and how to empower students to have active roles in their learning processes. Wenger (1998) states:

In a world that is changing and becoming more complexly interconnected at an accelerating pace, concerns about learning are certainly justified. But perhaps more than learning itself, it is our conception of learning that needs urgent attention when we choose to meddle with it on the scale on which we do today. Indeed, the more we concern ourselves with any kind of design, the more profound are the effects of our discourses on the topic we want to address. (p.9)

The conventional discourses of understanding learning and learners have been influenced especially by modernist views of literacy pedagogy. In modernist instruction, teachers are the authoritative figures that teach essential information in reading materials, and students are only passive audiences. The primary instruction practice often focuses on drills and repetition associated with linear reasoning, and aims to pass down the literary tradition (Meacham & Buendia, 1999). Such ideas of modernist literacy instruction have influenced many teacher dominant classrooms in which students are viewed as passive receivers of information. On the other hand, from a post-structuralist and post-modernist view, such universality, uniformity and stability of human knowledge is questionable. Meanings of human knowledge are socially constructed by subjective individuals, and never fixed and identical to all human beings. As Wenger (1998) notes, if learner agency is discussed within the modernist discourses, the issue of empowering L2 students cannot be addressed effectively. What is needed first then is to have discussions about understanding L2 learning and L2 learners within new discourses and concepts, such as ‘investment’ and ‘investor’ and the processes of ‘learning as identity construction.’ As L2 learners are viewed as “investors” in their social markets, their actions/ reactions can be interpreted in relation to particular forms of capital they want to invest. When they are struggling, it may be because they are facing different values in different investments that are contradictory, and they are exercising their agency in order to make a decision that is the most meaningful to them. Within this type of discourse of L2 learning and teaching, one of the important roles of researchers, policy makers, and educators may be to help L2 students be aware of the great possibilities for learning in their third space and

make the best decision in their investment. In the next section I discuss some respective responsibilities for empowering L2 students to exercise learner agency as they struggle.

Respective Responsibilities

Implications for Researchers in Sociocultural Theory

Wenger (1998) asserts that:

Learning is an integral part of our everyday lives. It is part of our participation in our communities and organizations. The problem is not that we do not know this, but rather that we do not have very systematic ways of talking about this familiar experience... An adequate vocabulary is important because the concepts we use to make sense of the world direct both our perception and our actions. (p.8)

I agree with Wenger's point that adequate vocabularies are important in the discussions to understand the processes of learning in our everyday lives. One of the urgent responsibilities for researchers working within a socio-cultural-historical theory of L2 learning and teaching is to find "systematic ways of talking about" learner agency that L2 students exercise in their daily learning experiences. However, I replace the term 'systematic' with 'systemic'. The term 'systematic' is related to 'systematics' which is concerned with the classification of living organism into a hierarchical series of groups. The term 'systematic' is often associated with images of a linear, generalizable model of how something is done. 'Systemic', on the other hand, relates to a system that affects an entity in general. I view learner agency of L2 students as an entity that has a set of interconnected and interrelated parts forming a complex system. A systemic approach to educational phenomena focuses on understanding of complex interrelationships and interconnections of a system and its inherent power relations (Carr, 1996).

In order to discuss learner agency of L2 students from a systemic perspective, I propose some of the issues emerging from this inquiry as possible themes that are related to understanding learner agency. Future studies can focus on the examination of the interconnections and inter-relationships among the emerged themes that I discussed in Chapter 5. The issues that emerged from my analysis raise a number of questions:

- What are the possibilities for positioning of L2 learners as social agents?
- How do L2 learners exercise their agency as “investors” and in what types of investments?
- What are the various forms of capital embedded in L2 learners’ discursive practices?
- How does the inter-convertibility of different forms of capital manifest itself?
- What is the role of habitus in historical and dialectical development of L2 learners’ minds?
- How do L2 learners engage in ‘crossing’ and struggling between authoritative and internally persuasive discourses as a process of ‘ideologically becoming’?
- How do the multidimensional and relational aspects of power appear in their L2 social spaces?
- How do possibilities for change occur in third space in their L2 discursive practices?

Reigeluth & Garfinkle (1994) note that a systemic approach to a pedagogical challenge requires keeping many aspects of the challenge set in one’s head at one time. Systemic

thinking demands persistence, because to think systemically means to constantly question previous assumptions, and to be flexible enough to change thinking that has been agreed upon previously (Reigeluth, Garfinkle 1994). A systemic approach to understanding pedagogical phenomena implies that researchers may discover more about how L2 learner agency works by examining the complex inter-relationships that may exist among the different themes I presented.

This inquiry confirms valuable contributions of the work by Vygotsky, Bakhtin and Bourdieu to the establishment of a systemic approach to understanding the complex learning and living experiences of L2 learners. From a Vygotskian understanding of socio-cultural-historical development of higher cognitive functions and self-regulatory mechanism, I learned to view the participants as active agents who appropriate and improvise various mediational means in their L2 learning processes. Inspired by Vygotsky's accounts of historical and dialectical development of human mind I examined my participants not only by their present experiences, but also by their past and their visions for the future and to see the connections and coherence of those separate experiences. This was a critical insight into understanding the "possibilities for change" in the participants' perceptions and actions. However, Vygotsky did not focus on the social relations of power that mediate social agents' actions and reactions in their developmental processes. Bakhtin's insights into the complexity of human mind in language use explained much about the participants' multiple positionings in their social worlds. In particular, his distinction between 'authoritative discourse' and 'internally persuasive discourse' was useful for accounting for the "voices" of the participants while they were struggling among multiple values and meanings. Bakhtin's concept of the

processes of ‘ideologically becoming’ provides a rationale to view the participants’ L2 learning as the processes of their identity construction. Furthermore, the concept of ‘ideologically becoming’ leads to an appreciation for being in the third space. Although he did not deal with the issues of identity, Bourdieu also offers important insights into human agency in complex social worlds. In particular, his concepts of ‘forms of capital’, ‘habitus’, ‘investment’ and ‘interconvertibility of capital’ became important discourses for analyzing the complex processes of negotiation of social agents. Pennycook (2001) argues that appropriating the terms such as ‘capital’ can emphasize an economic view of the world and economic determinism. However, I observed other forms of capital such as spiritual, physical and personal capital, which appeared in the six participants’ decision-making processes of investment. I suggest that researchers should not neglect these forms of capital in their analysis of L2 students’ particular positionings and action-taking. The data suggests that when L2 students became aware of different voices and discourses in their complex social worlds, they actively search for the most meaningful discourse for them based on their own evaluative orientations toward particular forms of capital.

From a methodological standpoint, personal narratives of the six participants were crucial for providing the contexts of learner agency and the processes of ‘ideologically becoming’. According to Taylor (1989), individuals can know who they are through their understandings of what is worth doing and what is not, what is meaningful and important for them, and what is trivial and is considered secondary for them. This means that through looking at the trajectory of identity, the researcher can understand “what matters and what does not, what contributes to identity and what remains marginal” (Wenger, 1998, p.155). Through the participants’ narratives, I was able to capture the richness,

complexity and dimensionality of the participants' dialectical experiences in their sociocultural worlds. While identifying the sources of the participants' conflicts between 'authoritative discourses' and 'internally persuasive discourses' in their narratives, I could make sense of the ways they negotiate their multiple positionings in those contexts. For example, in the case of Seong-jin who had been badly beaten in his elementary school, his narratives indicate that the traumatic event that happened in his childhood influenced him deeply in his development as a learner and in the ways he perceives and evaluates his various social interactions and his actions.

Implications for Policy Makers and Educators in L2 Education

From a social constructivist view and from my own experiences of crossing different cultural borders, I believe that "truths" are constructed and maintained by members of a particular community at a particular time who share the same ideas and values. Perception of "truths" in human knowledge are subjective, multiple and fluid. L2 students may experience and realize the subjective aspects of human knowledge in their learning contexts. Therefore, the negotiation processes of the plural "truths" are an essential part of their L2 learning processes. School policy makers should be aware that imposing a standardized curriculum on the contexts of L2 learning and teaching is not effective in facilitating learner agency. Implementing only a single evaluation method of L2 students' language ability can only aggregate L2 students' struggles and discourage the development of their agency. School curriculum should embrace multiple values and meanings in L2 students' social spaces so that the students can be encouraged to negotiate for the investments that are meaningful to them.

In order to help students exercise their agency in their negotiation processes in a constructive way, schools can design a course or a program (called something like ‘critical awareness in L2 discursive practices’). The goal of the course would be to enhance L2 students’ awareness of social relations of power embedded in their learning contexts and of the necessity of negotiations. The premise of discussions in the course should be based on the fluid nature of a multidimensional and relational view of power embedded in various discourses. For instance, one of the discussions could include Street’s (1995) argument to replace the term ‘standard’ language with ‘dominant’ language. Other issues to be discussed in the course may include a social view of language, social and cultural construction of meaning, multivoiced nature of human mind, role of identity in learning and practice, and so on. In this course, students would be encouraged to think about their discursive practices such questions as who is the audience of a text, and what is the purpose of a text, what are the particular voices and styles of the text, etc.

The course should enhance L2 students’ awareness of the third space as the place with great possibilities for learning. I find Pratt’s (1998) concept of the ‘contact zone’ very similar to the concept of ‘third space’. In the ‘contact zone’, Pratt asserts:

All interests are represented, where multiple cultural histories intersect, where there are ground rules for communication across lines of difference and hierarchy, and where there is a systematic approach to cultural mediation. (p.183)

The course which focuses on critical awareness of L2 students in their discursive practices should embrace the very ‘third space’ or the ‘contact zone’ in which multiple interests, values, and possibilities are represented and discussed openly. Pratt’s (1998)

description about a university course (called ‘Cultures, Ideas, Values’) in which she tried to create the ‘contact zone’ offers some insight into the classroom in which multiple perceptions and ideologies coexist and create a new possibility for learning out of conflicts and struggles.

The very nature of the course put ideas and identities on the line. All the students in the class had the experience, for example, of hearing their culture discussed and objectified in ways that horrified them; all the students saw their roots traced back to legacies of both glory and shame; all the students experienced face-to-face the ignorance and incomprehension, and occasionally the hostility, of others. In the absence of community values and the hope of synthesis, it was easy to forget the positives; the fact, for instance, that kinds of marginalization once taken for granted were gone. Virtually every student was having the experience of seeing the world described with him or her in it. Along with rage, incomprehension, and pain there were exhilarating moments of wonder and revelation, mutual understanding, and new wisdom-- the joys of the contact zone. The sufferings and revelations were, at different moments to be sure, experienced by every student. No one was excluded, and no one was safe. (p.184)

When situations of conflicts are perceived as the best sites for learning, students could welcome the experience of contradiction and try to exercise their agency to resolve those conflicts in their learning contexts.

Classroom teachers who have students from various socio-cultural-linguistic backgrounds may need to play multiple roles. They have a role to introduce new information that students need to be aware of according to a course plan. During the introduction teachers can bring the students’ consciousness and awareness of ‘authoritative discourses’ embedded in the information. Keeping in mind that different individuals see different forms of capital in different activities, teachers need to appropriate a variety of modes of meaning such as visual, audio, gestural, spatial and

multimodal meanings, as much as possible (The New London Group, 1996). Another teacher role I see as very important is to give support to their L2 students when they are in their processes of 'ideologically becoming'. Gee (1991) states that handling conflicts is an integral part of the language teacher's job. As I explained in Chapter 3, while I was conducting my pilot study of this inquiry, the biggest question I had at that time was: "Why don't students do as they were told by the teacher when the teacher gave such explicit instructions?" This question eventually led me to explore what is going on with the students outside the classroom and influence the students' actions and behaviours in classrooms. The data indicate that when their L2 students experience confusion and frustration in their learning processes, teachers should not perceive as their duty to give them a single "correct" answer or prescription of what they should do.

As discussed earlier, some of their students' struggling can be more to do with the influence of their perceptions about who they are in particular discourse practices rather than with not knowing or understanding instruction from teachers. While students go through negotiation processes with their struggles, teachers can try to create an atmosphere that facilitates individual students and encourages them to exercise their agency to find a third space in their respective situations. For example, teachers can encourage the students to identify and analyze their challenges or struggles in their diverse discursive practices in relation to the possibilities for their positionings and various forms of capital. As Bourdieu (1998) notes and my analysis of the data suggests, one of the key negotiating strategies for the students is to estimate 'inter-convertibility' among various forms of capital that they value. The aim of such negotiation would be to

evaluate which forms of capital would help them to be in a “high” position in the social spaces that are meaningful to them.

Implications for Students Studying Abroad

An important messages from the six Korean students’ narratives for students who study abroad as newcomers is that studying and living abroad can offer them a valuable opportunities to learn something they may not be able to learn in their home country or any places with which they are familiar. During that learning process they must become active agents who are responsible for seizing an opportunity. They should try to reflect on what kind of habitus they developed from their previous sociocultural contexts and how their particular habitus influences their perceptions in their new learning situations. They should also try to be aware of relational power and values embedded in their different social worlds. In doing so, their existing ontological and epistemological principles can be challenged and they may have to engage in “tough” negotiations among multiple positions they take on. However, the experience of such negotiations might eventually bring them new possibilities for who they are and what they can do to obtain the values they find meaningful in their different social worlds.

Ironically, while writing this chapter, I came across another newspaper article about the trend of studying abroad among Korean students. In the same newspaper, Digital Chosun Ilbo, I found one that is similar to the news articles (on June 9, 2000; May 3, 2001) I introduced in chapter 1, reporting that a large number of Korean students are still leaving the country to study abroad.

"Record Number of Korean Kids Learn Overseas"

Despite the economic slump, the number of Korean elementary, middle and high school students studying abroad hit a record high last year... The Seoul Metropolitan Office of Education said Tuesday students abroad increased 6.7 percent to 12,317 between last March and February 2005, including students who migrated with their parents for other reasons. A total of 5,928 students went abroad only to study, up a massive 33.9 percent from a year earlier. The number of Korean expatriate high school students increased by 39.4 percent to 1,624 from the previous year while the number of elementary and middle school students surged by 38.6 percent and 25.8 percent, respectively... An overseas study agency said in a situation where public schools failed in their functions, more parents were inquiring about sending their children abroad, not least to avoid excessive private tutoring expenses. (Digital Chosun Ilbo, March 29, 2005)

More Korean "education refugees" seem to be going to another country to compensate for their disappointment in the national education system in Korea. I hope these students are aware of the complexity of socio-cultural-historical influences on an education system in their social worlds. When they experience frustrations in their L2 discursive practices, these students do not easily blame their struggles on their cognitive abilities. Instead, they should try to think about social, cultural, political, historical forces that may influence their struggles. They should try to analyze different values of different capital they see in different types of discursive practices, and try to negotiate for the best investment in their L2 learning processes. Experiencing conflicts and engaging in negotiation processes are common practices for any students who are living and learning in L2 contexts. They need to be aware that struggling is an attribute of being in the third space that has the great learning opportunities. Through being in the very

third space, they would be able to see, reflect, search and evaluate multiple beliefs, values and meanings that they could not have otherwise.

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**CERTIFICATE OF ETHICAL ACCEPTABILITY FOR
FUNDED AND NON FUNDED RESEARCH INVOLVING HUMANS**

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APPENDIX B. The Consent Form for the Participants and the Letter

LETTER TO PARTICIPANTS IN RESEARCH

Dear _____,

My name is Heekyeong Lee, a doctoral student in the Department of Second Language Education at McGill University. I would like to invite you to participate in my doctoral research project entitled, "Multi-dimensional Views on Power in Second Language Students' Literacy Practices." The purpose of this research is to provide a deeper understanding about the nature of power relations that second language (L2) students experience in their literacy practices. This research examines the various power relationships that L2 students face in their literacy practices in various social-cultural contexts such as school, home and communities. Through this study, I hope to understand how the relationships impact on the students' literacy practices and how they perceive and negotiate the power relationships.

I would like to interview you on a regular basis (once a week or every other week) over two to three semesters with regard to your experiences and perceptions about power relationships in your L2 literacy practices. All interviews will be audio-taped and transcribed in English. With your permission, I would also like to conduct at times field note observations of various social-cultural contexts. For example, when you find certain social gatherings (e.g. party, meeting or chatting) meaningful in your L2 literacy practices, with the permission of you and the people engaged in the gathering, I would sometimes like to observe your participation in that particular social occasions.

I emphasize that my focus will not be on evaluating you, or anybody else involved in your personal experiences. You are free to withdraw from the participation at any time without penalty, before or during an interview. The information that you choose to disclose in our interviews will remain strictly confidential. I will also obtain your approval about any information that you provided in the interviews and that I obtained from my observations that will be used in my dissertation.

If you have any questions regarding this research project, please feel free to contact me any time at: (613) 233-0649 or email me at: heekyeong.lee@mail.mcgill.ca

Thank you for your collaboration in this research.

CONSENT FORM FOR PARTICIPANTS

Research Title: Multi-dimensional Views on Power in Second Language Students' Literacy Practices

Name of Participant:

I _____, agree to participate in this study, as explained by
_____.

Description:

I have read the attached description of the research "Multi-dimensional Views on Power in Second Language Students' Literacy Practices." I have understood the request for me to participate in this study. Specifically:

- I understand the purpose of the research and the conditions of my participation.
- I understand that I can withdraw from this study at any time without penalty or prejudice.
- I understand that neither I, nor the people I interact with, are being evaluated.
- I understand that confidentiality will be maintained.
- I understand that participation in this research project involves audio taping of conversations between the researcher and me. I also understand that I can refuse participation at any time.
- I understand that I will have the opportunity to review the transcribed conversations and edit them as I see fit.
- I have carefully studied the conditions of my participation and freely consent and voluntarily agree to participate in this study.
- I understand that I will be able to review any text written that might be considered for publication in the future.
- I understand that I will receive a copy of this form to keep.

Signature of the Participant:

Date:

Signature of the Researcher:

Date:

APPENDIX C. Sample of Interview Questions

To investigate the types of literacy practices students are engaged in
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• <i>When do you get to use oral or written English in your daily lives?</i>
To investigate the types of power relations the students experience
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• <i>How is your school progressing?</i>• <i>How are your family members?</i>• <i>What are the important things you did this week?</i>• <i>Did you spend time with your friends?</i>
To investigate particular events involving social interactions
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• <i>Can you tell me more about that experience?</i>• <i>What happened and when and where?</i>• <i>What did you feel?</i>• <i>Why did you feel that way?</i>• <i>What do you mean by X?</i>
To investigate how they deal with an experience
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• <i>What did you do after the experience?</i>• <i>What do you think you learned from the experience?</i>• <i>What would you say if somebody was in the same situation and asks your advice?</i>

APPENDIX D. Informed Consent Form To Participate for the Pilot Study

Informed Consent Form To Participate in Research (for the pilot study: February 2000)

Hello, my name is Heekyeong Lee. I am a PhD student in the department of Second Language Education at McGill University. I was an English teacher in a high school in South Korea before I came to Canada. Then, I took an ESL program of Carleton University to learn English more, and have become a graduate student at a Canadian university. Since I started my studies in Canada, I have realized that writing an essay in English is very difficult and gives me frequent frustration, but it is crucial for getting good marks in university courses. Therefore, I became very interested in finding a better way of learning and teaching writing in English as a second language for academic purposes.

Last year when I was doing my master degree, I read several papers on why writing an essay is so difficult for students in university. One of them (Bizzell, 1982) said that students' social situations and previous educational experiences may hinder their ability to succeed in their new academic disciplines and contexts. In other words, students' problems with academic writing may not lie in a lack of ability but rather in the social and cultural factors that influence the students' writing processes. Another (Spack, 1988) argued that such problems may be greater for second language student writers, because of their lack of linguistic and cultural knowledge of the second language. On the other hand, another scholar (Peirce, 1997) pointed out that the influences of second language learners' previous backgrounds on their learning progress could be quite varied and individually different.

Since I read the papers, I have become interested in looking into how second language students' different cultural, rhetorical and linguistic backgrounds influence their progress of learning academic writing. It is because knowing such influences of students' backgrounds on their current learning must be very important to understand the processes of learning how to write in second language. This will, I believe, ultimately help us to find out a better way of learning and teaching writing in English as a second language for academic purposes.

As the first step of the research, I would like to observe your class as long as my observation does not disturb you at all, in order to understand the classroom situation in general. I would like to know what kind of activities and assignments are being done, and what students are actually doing. This is a pilot study to understand the research context (not to judge your ability) and explore more specific ideas and questions for the main study. Any information from the observation will be recorded without using real names and places. Also, I will inform you to gain your approval when any of the data from this pilot study is used for the main study. If any of your students does not feel comfortable with my sitting in the classroom at any time during my observation, I promise that I will leave the classroom. If you have any questions or opinions regarding my observation, please feel free to contact me any time at (613)731-6832 or email me at hlee34@po-box.mcgill.ca.

If you do not disagree with my observation, please print your name and sign below.

First name _____ Last name _____

Signature _____ Date _____

Thank you for your cooperation in this study.