Learning Foreign Languages at School: Experiences and Representations of Teenage Plurilingual Learners of Korean Heritage in Northeast China

by
Meilan Piao Ehler
M.A., Simon Fraser University, 2008

Thesis Submitted in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements for the Degree of Doctor of Philosophy

in the Languages, Cultures and Literacies Program
Faculty of Education

© Meilan Piao Ehler 2018

SIMON FRASER UNIVERSITY
Spring 2018

All rights reserved. However, in accordance with the Copyright Act of Canada, this work may be reproduced, without authorization, under the conditions for “Fair Dealing.” Therefore, limited reproduction of this work for the purposes of private study, research, criticism, review and news reporting is likely to be in accordance with the law, particularly if cited appropriately.
Approval

Name: Meilan Piao Ehlert
Degree: Doctor of Philosophy
Title: Learning Foreign Languages at School: Experiences and Representations of Teenage Plurilingual Learners of Ethnic Korean Heritage in Northeast China

Examining Committee: Chair: Maureen Hoskyn
Associate Professor

Danièle Moore
Senior Supervisor
Professor

Huamei Han
Supervisor
Associate Professor

Steve Marshall
Supervisor
Associate Professor

Geneviève Brisson
Internal Examiner
Assistant Professor
Faculty of Education

Yan Guo
External Examiner
Associate Professor
Faculty of Education
University of Calgary

Date Defended/Approved: January 29, 2018
Ethics Statement

The author, whose name appears on the title page of this work, has obtained, for the research described in this work, either:

a. human research ethics approval from the Simon Fraser University Office of Research Ethics

or

b. advance approval of the animal care protocol from the University Animal Care Committee of Simon Fraser University

or has conducted the research

c. as a co-investigator, collaborator, or research assistant in a research project approved in advance.

A copy of the approval letter has been filed with the Theses Office of the University Library at the time of submission of this thesis or project.

The original application for approval and letter of approval are filed with the relevant offices. Inquiries may be directed to those authorities.

Simon Fraser University Library
Burnaby, British Columbia, Canada

Update Spring 2016
Abstract

‘Plurilinguism’ is a common phenomenon and an essential part in the lives of many people, while increased globalization makes the learning of languages more important than ever. However, the integration of learners’ multi-/plurilingual resources into formal education systems is still frequently questioned. Addressing this gap, this study aimed to explore strategies for better supporting increased learner diversity in today’s dynamic classrooms characterized by an influx of highly ‘mobile’ learners. From an educational sociolinguistic perspective especially based on plurilingualism and plurilingual competence as the main conceptual lens, it examined the complex relations between learners’ languages, identities and sense of agency, looking into how a new generation of secondary school students in a minority group interlink language learning, academic success and career advancement while navigating various geographical and symbolic transitions. Employing a qualitative ethnographic visual research methodology, this four-year longitudinal study documented the experiences and perspectives of twenty-two plurilingual youths learning Japanese or English as foreign language (and L3) in a public ethnic Korean minority nationality school in Northeast China. Data collection methods included participant observation, field notes, screenshots of virtual communication records, photographs of written artifacts, and interview excerpts. With an emphasis on the essential role of the ‘multi’ (-lingual, cultural, and literacy resources) on the participants’ learning experiences, this study argues that learning foreign language(s) at school is a process of experiencing multiple identities. The study showed the very sophisticated competence and complex plurilingual practices that participants engage in their daily practices in and out of the classroom. Key findings of this research suggest that student participants were actively learning, navigating, and transforming. Learning a foreign language strongly affected their life trajectories in three main areas: (i) contributed to enhance their understanding of languages as assets in learning and navigating life transitions; (ii) helped their development of a more nuanced (plurilingual) competence, along with an increased level of ‘mobility’ between multiple (linguistic, cultural, physical and virtual) spaces; and (iii) motivated their active engagement in multiple identity practices. This study highlights the need for action to actively develop educational strategies that capitalize on the ‘multi’ so as to empower all students.
Keywords: learner diversity; plurilingualism; plurilingual competence; multiliteracies; foreign language learner/learning; L3 acquisition; JFL; EFL
To my deceased parents,

Dr. Piao, Tae-il & Mrs. Jin, Ok-keum

who always encouraged me to strive for the best.
Acknowledgements

This dissertation project was partially funded by Simon Fraser University through an International Research Award, a President’s Research Stipend and Graduate Fellowships, as well as through a Mitacs Globalink Research Award. I am truly grateful for the funds that allowed me - a novice researcher - to put time and energy in establishing a solid foundation for the current study. These awards also supported me in undertaking several international fieldwork trips and conference presentations that enabled me to develop an international network that will be an essential key for my future research.

Some findings from this study have been published as individual articles, including in the International Journal of Education for Diversity (IJE4D, Vol.3, 2014; with Danièle Moore), TEAL Manitoba Journal (Vol.29, Sept. 2013), and the International Journal of Communications and Linguistic Studies (Vol.14, Issue 2, June 2016; with Leanne Broschman). I am grateful to all reviewers for their constructive comments that contributed greatly to the strengthening of my papers, and offered me important insights to carry on with my doctoral study.

I am very grateful to ALL my participants who agreed to participate in this study and shared their experiences, as well as offering great support in various ways along the years. I also truly appreciate ALL my colleagues and friends who have been so generous in offering their kind support. They have been understanding, patient, and encouraging; without them, I cannot imagine how it would have been possible for me to overcome the various obstacles and challenges I encountered in this long journey. I especially feel grateful for my colleagues who helped me to proofread my earlier drafts, Leanne Boschman, Sarah Fleming, and Renee McCallum.

I would like to express my sincere and deepest appreciation to my Senior Supervisor and mentor Dr. Danièle Moore for her patience, continuous professional guidance and kind encouragement. I also truly appreciate the time and ongoing professional support from my Supervisory Committee members, Dr. Huamei Han and Dr. Steve Marshall. My special thanks also go to the examiners, both Dr. Yan Guo and Dr. Geneviève Brisson, whose questions and comments in my thesis defense were very helpful for the final revision of this dissertation.
Finally but not least, I am truly grateful to my family: Drew, my best friend for whom I feel so much fondness and gratitude for his endless love and support; Amy, my daughter who was only in grade three at an elementary school when I started my graduate work, but is now beginning her journey at the senior level of secondary school. They encouraged me tremendously when I felt lost, which happened a few times during this doctoral work. In particular, I would like to write a special note to Amy who has grown up with this dissertation and has now turned into a lovely teenager. Her hugs and kisses were great encouragement and a secret recipe that motivated me in many ways, such as when I felt blue or ran into ‘writer’s block’. Witnessing her development from a child to an adolescent has been a great amazement to me during these years. As a girl who loves English literature and shows notable talent in science and biology, she is now beginning to use more and more complicated and advanced expressions that sometimes make me feel embarrassed by my need to rely on dictionaries. It was not an easy task to pursue this research while fulfilling various duties at home and work. Nevertheless, I learned way more than what I may have lost. Despite the extra time required to arrange or complete given assignments, I feel so fortunate and grateful for the support from my family. They have been a major source of my power and inspiration. Indeed, Amy is a good model who showed great perseverance and commitment. She has been playing various provincial, national and international junior golf championships; to prepare for these events, she has been continuing her daily practices rain or shine. Since Amy started golfing at age 7, walking on the ‘green’ for several hours to support her practice or in a tournament became a boundless joy for me especially during the summer semesters. I tried to support her as much as I could; a large amount of the initial course readings, the proposal writing notes, and the proofreading of this thesis was done on the golf courses. I feel so fortunate that Amy could accompany me through this journey.
# Table of Contents

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Section</th>
<th>Page</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Approval</td>
<td>ii</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ethics Statement</td>
<td>iii</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Abstract</td>
<td>iv</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dedication</td>
<td>vi</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Acknowledgements</td>
<td>vii</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Table of Contents</td>
<td>ix</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>List of Tables</td>
<td>xiv</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>List of Figures</td>
<td>xv</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>List of Acronyms</td>
<td>xvi</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Glossary</td>
<td>xvii</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

## Chapter 1. Introduction .............................................................................. 1
1.1. Voice of Teenage Learners ................................................................. 3
1.2. The Motivation of this Study ............................................................... 4
1.3. Purpose, Research Questions and Key Terms .......................................... 7
  1.3.1. Research Questions ........................................................................... 8
  1.3.2. Clarification of Key Terms ................................................................. 9
1.4. Significance of this Study ...................................................................... 11
1.5. Structure of this dissertation .............................................................. 13
1.6. Background – ‘A Diaspora in Motion’ .................................................... 16
  1.6.1. Ethnic Koreans in China .................................................................... 17
  1.6.2. Life as a Minority Nationality in China ............................................. 23
        China’s other Binary System: 民族区隔...................................................... 23
        A New Shift: Bilingualism to Trilingualism ........................................... 26
  1.6.3. The Rise of the ChaoXianZu Education Community: K-MNS
        Schools ................................................................................................... 27
        Schooling .................................................................................................. 28
        Current Issues .......................................................................................... 31
        Foreign Language Education ..................................................................... 34
        The Spread of Japanese as Foreign Language ........................................ 34
        The spread of English as Foreign Language .......................................... 35

## Chapter 2. Plurilingualism, Plurilingual Competence and Multiple Identities .......................................................... 37
2.1. A Dynamic Wholistic Approach ................................................................ 37
  2.1.1. Plurilingualism, Plurilingual Competence and Multiple Identities .... 38
        Plurilingual speaker/learner ................................................................. 39
        Plurilingual Competence as an Asset .................................................... 40
        Learning as Experience of Identities ..................................................... 42
2.2. Multicompetence ...................................................................................... 43
  2.2.1. Learning a FL as a L3 ........................................................................ 45
        A Chinese Perspective ............................................................................ 46
  2.2.2. The ‘Mobility’ of (FL/L3) learners .................................................... 48
2.3. Third Language Acquisition (TLA) ........................................................... 49
  2.3.1. Current Models .................................................................................. 51
Chapter 5. Experiences of Plurilingualism, ‘Mobility’ and Learning: Betwixt Multiple Spaces

5.1. Introduction .................................................................................................................. 159
5.1.1. Diversity & Complexity: 22 Student Participants .................................................. 159
       Biography of the Focal Participants ........................................................................ 163
5.2. Dynamic Multi-/Plurilingual Repertoires ................................................................. 167
       A ‘Multilingual’ (Plurilingual)? .............................................................................. 168
       5.2.1. Trilingualism: Images of Different Languages .................................................. 174
          Korean as L1 (HL): “우리 귀, 어머니 귀” ................................................................. 175
          Chinese as L2 (NL): “国語” “工作语” ................................................................. 177
          MinZu HanKao (MHK) ....................................................................................... 178
          Foreign Language as L3: “스마트폰” [A smart phone]? ..................................... 181
       5.2.2. Learning a ‘right’ Foreign Language: Japanese or English? ...................... 183
          “日本語と私” [Japanese and Me] (Ying) ............................................................ 184
          Practicality 1: “英语与我” (Qing, Min, Hong) .................................................. 186
          Practicality 2: “그대와 일어하는 게” (Rim, Young) ......................................... 190
5.3. Experiences of ‘Mobility’: Navigating ‘multiple’ Spaces ........................................ 193
       5.3.1. Increased Domestic Mobility ........................................................................... 196
          School Transition for a Better Education?! Gao, Yuan, Tian ............................ 196
          “Finally, I settled down here” ........................................................................... 199
       5.3.2. Increased International Mobility .................................................................... 203
          ‘Mobility’, Identity and FL Learning (2): Ran, Qing and Zheng ....................... 206
       5.3.3. Virtual Mobility .............................................................................................. 207
          ‘Mobility’, Identity and FL Learning (3): Ying, Young ..................................... 207
5.4. Conclusion .................................................................................................................. 209

Chapter 6. The Plurilingual Youths in Motion ............................................................... 210
6.1. Introduction ................................................................................................................. 210
       6.1.1. A ‘Life-long capital’ ...................................................................................... 210
          The Class of 2013 .............................................................................................. 211
6.2. Practices of the ‘Multi’ as an Asset ............................................................................. 214
6.2.1. ‘Multi’ as a Strategic Facilitator – ‘Improvisation’ .............................................. 215
   Writing in Different Languages............................................................................. 216
   Speaking in a Foreign Language – for Fun: 「どこにいるの」 .................................. 218
6.2.2. ‘Mobility’ as a Learning Facilitator – ‘Invention’ .............................................. 219
6.3. Navigating the ‘Multi’ to Learn, Imagine New Spaces ........................................ 219
   6.3.1. Engaging in Multiple Identities .................................................................... 220
      Appreciates the ‘Multi’ ..................................................................................... 220
      “I feel Privileged” ............................................................................................ 221
   6.3.2. “Korean-ness” ............................................................................................. 225
      ‘Mother Tongue’, ZuGuo 祖国 ........................................................................... 231
      Learning Korean .................................................................................................. 231
6.3.3. Foreign-ness: Hybridity? .................................................................................. 233
6.4. Translanguaging as Creative Ways to Learn, Share & Transform ......................... 235
   6.4.1. Exhibiting plurilingual competence on WeChat – ‘Intervention’ ..................... 236
      To Share, Learn, Transform [分享 共勉 创新] ...................................................... 236
      Sharing 1. As Public & Private Spaces ............................................................... 237
         Virtual Multilingual Diaries (Ying, Hong, Ahn, Young) ................................. 237
      Sharing 2. Life at a University (Qing, Gao, Min) ............................................... 242
         “给我抛个英语专业课?” [Drop me an English class?] ................................... 242
         “일금리쉬 취쓰바” [English, u die] ................................................................. 244
   6.4.2. Exploring, Imagining and Transforming ....................................................... 246
      Sharing 3. Imagining, Authorizing ‘Self’s (Yuan, Rim) ....................................... 247
      “A>> Let it go”.................................................................................................... 248
6.5. Summary ............................................................................................................. 250
6.6. Conclusion .......................................................................................................... 253

Chapter 7. Conclusion: Learning as Experience of ‘Multiple’ Identities .......... 254
7.1. Responses to Key Research Questions .................................................................. 255
   7.1.1. ‘Multicompetence’: Plurilingualism as an Asset for Learning and
      Navigating Transitions ...................................................................................... 256
   7.1.2. Increased ‘Mobility’ betwixt Multiple Spaces ............................................. 257
   7.1.3. Foreign Language Learning: The ‘Multi’ for Empowerment ....................... 259
7.2. Key Implications, Suggestions and Future Studies .............................................. 261
   7.2.1. Implications for Research .......................................................................... 262
   7.2.2. Implications for Pedagogy .......................................................................... 266
   7.2.3. Future Studies ............................................................................................. 270
7.3. In Closing ............................................................................................................. 272

References ................................................................................................................. 274
Appendix A. Interview Protocol .................................................................................. 302
   A-1. Examples of Interview Questions (Student Participants) .................................. 302
   A-2. Examples of Interview Questions (Teacher Participants) .................................. 305
Appendix B. Transcription Guides ............................................................................. 306
   B-1. Interview Transcription Guides ...................................................................... 306
   B-2. A Video Transcription Example .................................................................... 309
Appendix C. Participant Information Package ............................................................. 310
   Study Info ............................................................................................................. 312
   Consent Forms ...................................................................................................... 315
Participant Questionnaires ................................................................. 322
Focus Group and Individual Interviews ............................................. 329
List of Tables

Table 1.1. Proportion of the ChaoXianZu among national population and ethnic Minorities in China 在全国总人口、少数民族总人口中朝鲜族人口的比重 ................................................................. 20

Table 1.2. Proportion of the population of the ethnic Koreans in the three provinces of Northeast China 东北三省总人口中朝鲜族人口比重 ........21

Table 3.1. Student Participant Profiles ........................................................................................................ 87

Table 4.1. PKSS 2011/2012 class schedule (Term 1, 2011.09 ~) ............................................................... 119

Table 4.2. Students’ Language Use in & out of Classrooms ................................................................. 132

Table 5.1. Student Participant Profile: Complexity & Mobility ................................................................. 160

Table 5.2. Dynamic Profile of 22 Teenagers’ ‘Mobility’ ........................................................................ 195

Table 6.1. The PKSS: Class 2013 – Majors at University ...................................................................... 212
# List of Figures

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Figure</th>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Page</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1.1</td>
<td>A map of Northeast China: The “Golden Triangle”</td>
<td>22</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1.2</td>
<td>A School Selection Model of Ethnic Korean Students</td>
<td>29</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1.3</td>
<td>At the K-MNS: Multilingual Learning Materials</td>
<td>31</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.1</td>
<td>Learning an L3: Foreign Language Specific Factors</td>
<td>54</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.2</td>
<td>Learning FL as L3: Relations between English and Previous Languages</td>
<td>57</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.1</td>
<td>Setting up the WeChat</td>
<td>94</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.2</td>
<td>Why WeChat</td>
<td>97</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.1</td>
<td>The PKSS: Main entrance hall</td>
<td>112</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.2</td>
<td>The PKSS: 2nd floor, “Heart of virtuous etiquette” (in Korean)</td>
<td>114</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.3</td>
<td>The PKSS: 2nd floor, “Tolerance” (in Chinese and English)</td>
<td>114</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.4</td>
<td>The PKSS: Music &amp; performance activity</td>
<td>115</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.5</td>
<td>The PKSS: Opening ceremony for an Athletic Day</td>
<td>116</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.6</td>
<td>Bilingual textbooks and learning materials – Senior 2</td>
<td>121</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.7</td>
<td>(A) Trilingualism in a Sr. level 2 JFL class; (B) Teaching materials used in the JFL class</td>
<td>124</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.8</td>
<td>Multilingual Notes (Ahn)</td>
<td>131</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.9</td>
<td><em>FenZhan GaoKao</em> [A Battle for the GaoKao]</td>
<td>140</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.10</td>
<td>“Chu-zheng” [Departure for the Battle]</td>
<td>144</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.11</td>
<td><em>GaoKao 2013: On the Spot-lights</em></td>
<td>149</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.13</td>
<td>“Good Luck in <em>GaoKao</em>” (Ying, Jun 6, 2014)</td>
<td>155</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5.1</td>
<td>A ‘Mobile’ Child: “My school transfer experience”</td>
<td>200</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6.1</td>
<td>Virtual Multilingual Diaries</td>
<td>239</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6.2</td>
<td>Sharing, Chatting &amp; Calling</td>
<td>241</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6.3</td>
<td>“Drop me an English class?”</td>
<td>243</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6.4</td>
<td>(A) “Fell in love first sight” (Min); (B) “English, [u] Die!” (Min)</td>
<td>246</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6.5</td>
<td>Exploring &amp; Imagining</td>
<td>249</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
List of Acronyms

DPRK Democratic People’s Republic of Korea; or, North Korea
FL Foreign Language
K-MNS Minority Nationality School in ethnic Korean community
L1/L2/L3 First/Second/Third Language
MNS Minority Nationality School
PRC People’s republic of China
SFU Simon Fraser University
SLA Second Language Acquisition
TLA Third Language Acquisition
Glossary

Bilingualism  Phenomenon of understanding more than one language. See also Multilingualism and Plurilingualism.

ChaoXianZu  Ethnic Korean Chinese people or community. See Chapter 1 and 3 for more details.

First Language  L1. A language primarily used by an individual in his or her daily life. One's mother tongue may be different from his/her L1. Also see Mother Tongue.

Home Language  Differ from First Language. In this paper, by home language, I mean the language(s) spoken and used most often or on a regular basis at home by an individual, in which may be same or different from the individual’s mother tongue or first language. Besides this term, as for other related terms such as ‘mother tongue’ or ‘first language’, there are various definitions from many reputable researchers in the field of social science including the socio- and applied linguists. Considering the purpose of this study and the space of this dissertation, however, I will not further clarify the similarities and difference between these terms.

Minority Nationality  Every citizen in the People’s Republic of China (PRC) today is designated as belonging to a particular nationality (ethnic group). It is since 1950s after the Chinese government identified a precise number of minority nationalities in China: 55 officially recognized minority nationalities (Zhou, 2003, 2004). In this paper, I use the term ‘minority nationality’ to refer those people identified as shaoshu minzhu [ethnic minority or minority nationality], by the PRC government. The Chinese term minzu, designating a nation or nationality, was first used in the late nineteenth century. Although the specific attributes of minzu have been a subject of controversy, there has been general agreement that the territory is making up PRC (Zhou & Hill, 2009).

Mother Tongue  A language primarily used since birth during an individual’s childhood. Also see first language.

Multilingualism  In this paper, this term means speaking more than two languages, while bilingualism is specifically for the phenomenon dealing with two languages.

Plurilingualism  Individual level multilingualism. See Chapter 1 and Chapter 2 for more details.

Plurilingual speaker  An individual with a repertoire of multiple linguistic and cultural knowledge. See Chapter 2 for more details.
This term refers to the ability [of a plurilingual speaker] to use languages for communication and to take part in intercultural interaction, where the person, viewed as a social actor has proficiency, of varying degrees, in several languages and experience of several cultures. See Chapter 2 for more details.
Chapter 1.

Introduction

In the past two decades, an increasing number of researchers and educators focusing on the acquisition of second, third or foreign languages in formal education have been exploring ways to develop a pluralistic approach in language learning (See Castellotti & Moore, 2010; Cenoz, 2009; Cummins, 2006; De Angelis & Dewaele, 2011; Gao, 2009; Hattori, 2016; Jessner, 2008a; Kubota, 2016; Nan, 2015; Noro, 2009). Pluralistic education models tend to center on the learner and highlights the importance of individuals’ prior knowledge and experience in learning. These funds of knowledge are constructed mainly through the individual’s experiences and interactions with family, community, as well as the world. In this view, individuals learn better when they actively engage in learning by maximizing the use of multiple linguistic, cultural and literacy resources. This “wholistic”\(^1\) view of learning was initially developed and promoted in Europe by the Council of Europe (2001, 2009, 2010), especially a group of francophone researchers in educational sociolinguistics such as Daniel Coste (see Moore & Gajo, 2009). Recently various models using the pluralistic approach have been proposed and studied across many disciplines, and Marshall & Moore (2016) recommend “plurilingual pedagogy” as a key tool for supporting an increased level of learner diversity in today’s dynamic classrooms.

Advocates argue that the strategic implementation of the pluralistic approach can facilitate and motivate students’ deep learning, critical thinking, and better academic achievement; it also helps in the active development of social skills, intercultural communication, and generally fosters more positive attitudes towards learning (See

\(^1\) In this dissertation, I use the term ‘Wholistic’ which refers to “a whole or whole body; taking into consideration the whole body or person”; this term highlights the connectedness of a person’s mind, body, and spirit. It has very similar meanings as ‘holistic’, and these two words are primarily used interchangeably (CCHM, 2011). Also see Castellotti & Moore (2010).
examples from Cummins, 2014; Lee & Marshall, 2012; Little, Leung and Van Avermaet, 2014; Moore, 2010). Nevertheless, even though multi-/plurilingualism is a common phenomenon and an essential part in the lives of many people today, its integration into the formal education systems is still frequently questioned by educators, stakeholders and policy makers, especially the ones supporting stereotyped monolingual orientations toward the competence of a multi-/plurilingual speaker (Moore & Gajo, 2009). In particular, there has been an ongoing tendency in mainstream academic discourses to assume that monolingualism is a norm for all individuals and societies (Jessner, 2008). The same can be said about minority nationality education in China, and the minority nationality school (MNS) education system in the ethnic Korean community (K-MNS) in northeast China is no exception to this tendency.

With a population of almost 2 million, the ChaoXianZu [ethnic Korean Chinese or ethnic Korean; “朝鲜族” in Chinese, Chosŏnjok “조선족” in Korean] community is the largest overseas Korean group (MFAT, 2013) and a main minority nationality group in China. The Koreans – along with the Kazaks, the Mongolians, the Tibetans and the Uygurs - have had functional writing systems that were broadly used even before the founding of the People’s Republic of China (PRC or China hereafter) in 1949, and have had regular bilingual education since then (Yang, 2005). Since the 1990s in particular, the ethnic Korean community has been constantly ‘in-motion’ in the midst of transition and transformation, marked by an increased level of ‘mobility’ along with active internationalization, which brought social, economic, and political changes to the community. As will be introduced in Section 1.6, such changes have a strong connection to the ‘rise’ of the ChaoXianZu community especially through the K-MNS education system. The increased mobility has also been motivating and challenging educators to actively explore different strategies to support new generations of (foreign) language learners.

This dissertation research project is set to fill a gap in current research with the goal of better supporting an increased level of learner diversity in today’s dynamic classrooms.

2 Also see Section 1.3.2 (p.11) and Section 1.6.1 (p.22).
3 Consists of almost 30% of the approximately 7 million total Overseas Korean population in the world, the ethnic Korean in China is the largest Korean Diaspora. See Section 1.6.
In particular it is through examining the complex issues that ethnic Korean plurilingual teenagers face when learning foreign language at school, especially the learners of Japanese or English as their foreign language (FL) or third language (L3) at the K-MNS schools in northeast China. With a lens that regards them as “plurilingual learners in multilingual classrooms” (Cummins, 2013), this study focuses on looking at their languages, identities and sense of agency (Cummins, 2000, 2006, 2009). In the upcoming sections, I shall first provide the general introduction to this dissertation research project, which includes the rationale, research questions, the clarification of key terms, and the main structure of this study. Then, I will present the general background of this study to help readers have a better understanding of the ethnic Korean community which my participants are from.

1.1. Voice of Teenage Learners

Paying attention to the voices of teenagers/youth is important, especially considering their connection to the past, present and future of their communities (Byrd Clark, 2010, 2012; Giampapa, 2004). Often through their family ties, such connection has a strong relevance to their language development and language learning, as well as on their representation of plurilingualism and how they view their own identities (Ehlert & Moore, 2014). Parents and family have a strong influence on young learners’ lives in many ways. This dissertation focuses on the new generation learners from the ethnic Korean community, especially the ‘generation 1990s’ who were born in the 1990s (90hou [九〇后] or ‘Post-90s’ generation; the ‘G90s’ hereafter). These young Korean Chinese learners mostly belong to the 4th generation of Koreans in China. Their lives and educational experiences differ in many ways from their grandparents’, who were the first or 2nd generations of contemporary im-/migrants from the Korean peninsula who arrived China in the early 20th century - during or after the Second World War – due to complex historical, political and economic factors (see details in Hwang, 2009; Jin & Xiao, 2011; Kim, 2003). Their situation is also different from their parents’ generation, who are generally referred

---

4 Contributing factors relevant to such a complex situation are addressed in Section 1.6. They include the historical impact of the Korean War (1950 – 1953), and the political and economic influence of the establishment of formal diplomatic relationships between China and South Korea in 1992.
to as the 2nd or 3rd generation of ethnic Koreans. They not only went through their schooling before China opened its doors to the world but also experienced the transition period after the Cultural Revolution (1966 – 1976). The experiences and expectations of parents and grandparents are therefore extremely different but weigh strongly on these youths’ educational and career aspirations, and their attitudes toward languages and language learning (Ehlert & Moore, 2014). As such, the ChaoXianZu parent generations’ experiences and unique positions impact greatly on their children’s language learning and identity development, as will be discussed further in Section 1.6.

My own schooling experience influenced deeply my interest in this particular topic of study. I remember my school years as joyful and meaningful, especially high school, when I attended an ethnic Korean minority school (K-MNS) in northeast China, and received instruction in Korean, Chinese and Japanese through trilingual education. To me, my high school years marked a most important stage in my life. During this period, I encountered wonderful teachers and peers, who were passionate about learning different languages and cultures. I was so fascinated to learn more about the Han community and discover a new culture in learning Japanese. I also, started to develop a more critical understanding about languages and cultures in the Chinese society at large, and in my community. I realized that the more I learned languages, the better I could voice my understanding of languages, cultures, identities, my own and others’.

1.2. The Motivation of this Study

Why study foreign language learners? High proficiency in a foreign language (FL) has become a key condition for accessing upper levels social mobility in the globalized world today; the same is true in China. For many Chinese students in the formal education system, FL is not only an academic subject, but also an essential resource connected to their educational and career aspirations for a better future. A good example is the increasing popularity of English, which has become a top FL subject to learn and teach in the secondary and higher education in China today. Another good example is ongoing popularity of Japanese, which is the second largest FL subject to learn and teach in China. However, FL educators constantly struggle with developing more current and effective strategies for maximizing FL learners’ communicative competence in their target
languages. Therefore, exploring various strategies to better support the (English or Japanese as) FL learners' development in the target language(s) has become an important pedagogical aim for schools and postsecondary institutions in China today (See examples in Adamson & Feng, 2015; Feng, 2007; Zhou & Hill, 2009) especially since the early 1990s.

From my days in China, I have been an active foreign and multiple language speaker, learner and practitioner who has strong passion and dedication in exploring the best ways to learn, maintain and improve (foreign or additional) language learning. My views about people and the world have been changing since I settled down in Canada 17 years ago. Nonetheless, my passion and love for different languages remain as strong as ever. At the same time, I have realized that not many people in the west or even those from East Asia, including China, are familiar with my community – the ChaoXianZu, even though it is a community of almost 2 million people, which makes it one of the top five minority nationality groups in China and the largest overseas Korean group in the world (see Section 1.6). I realized that, as a person who has a special tie with this community, it was my responsibility to share my experiences and that of the members of the ChaoXianZu community with the world.

My interest in exploring the current topic is twofold: professional and personal. Unlike many of my work colleagues, who often have several decades of teaching experience in languages, I have more experience as a learner and user of different languages (i.e., Korean, Chinese, Japanese and English) than as a foreign language instructor. This has encouraged me to focus on users of multiple languages. On the one hand, as a researcher of plurilingualism, multilingual and intercultural education, I have been constantly exploring better ways to support learners in contemporary classrooms, especially when learners have multiple and complex linguistic repertoires. How do they navigate their languages and learning experiences? How can I help them transfer knowledge and use their learning experiences as triggers in the foreign language classroom? As a foreign language educator, I have been actively searching for different strategies to increase my students' motivation for learning and to improve their communicative competence in their target languages, such as Japanese and English. On the other hand, at a personal level, my curiosity as an active plurilingual speaker and an
experienced foreign learner/user drove me to focus on multilingual learners from my own community. As a third generation of the ethnic Korean [ChaoXianZu] group, I was born and raised in an ethnic Korean community in northeast China, not too far from the borders of the former Soviet Union (currently Russia) and north Korea. I completed my primary and secondary education through a state government sponsored formal Korean minority nationality school (K-MNS) education system in the community. Upon graduation from a university in Heilongjiang, I worked in Beijing for several years until I left China for Tokyo, Japan, to study in the early 1990s. Since I immigrated to Canada in 2000, my main job has been to work as an educational consultant and an administrator serving new immigrants and international students in private postsecondary institutions in Vancouver.

Plurilingualism and multilingual learning have been an important part of my life since my early youth. To trace my language learning experience in a chronological order, Korean was the first and only language that I learned and spoke at home and in my neighborhood until entering primary school. From the Kindergarten classes in the K-MNS school, I learned HanYu Putonghua [Mandarin-Chinese] (Hanyu or Chinese hereafter; see Section 1.3.2) as my second language (L2) but did not have many opportunities to use it in my small Korean community. The secondary school I attended was in a relatively larger town not too far from my community. There, I began to learn Japanese as my third language (L3) and my first foreign language. I did not have any choice to learn another foreign language because Japanese was the only foreign language offered at the school at that time, which was common in most ethnic Korean schools in Heilongjiang in the 1980s. My formal exploration of the world of English was not until I started studying in Japan at Tokyo University of Foreign Studies. English was also the language that brought me to Canada, and made me explore a new world - academia, where I am now fostering my educational and career aspirations.

In summary, the special ties that I have with the ChaoXianZu community, and my schooling experiences as a multilingual learner, influenced the focus of my current study. I wanted to explore the learning experiences of a new generation of ethnic Korean teenagers. I was wondering what encouraged them to invest so much energy in the K-MNS education system, and why they thought a minority school could be their main route to fulfill their desires for upward social mobility. I was curious about the youth in my home
community in the 21st century. It is my sincere wish that this dissertation conveys my unique perspectives based on my first-hand experiences and contact with the participants of this study.

1.3. Purpose, Research Questions and Key Terms

This dissertation aims to examine the complex issues that ethnic Korean plurilingual teenagers face when learning foreign languages in China. With a lens that regards them as plurilingual learners in multilingual classrooms, this study focuses on their languages, identities and sense of agency. This study is built upon the key findings from two pilot studies:

(i) an ethnographic case study of the language practices of six plurilingual ethnic Korean teenagers in Beijing (Ehlert, 2011; Ehlert & Moore, 2014), the focal participants of my MA research project, who had migrated from a small local region in northeast China;

(ii) the study of a group of English/Japanese as foreign/additional language youth of East Asian heritage currently studying in secondary or post-secondary institutions in Western Canada (Ehlert, 2013) and China (Ehlert & Li, 2015).

These studies aimed to test a set of research questions and related methodology to examine the complex relationships between languages and identities among ethnic or linguistic minority youths.

While multi-/plurilingual practices are common and can be considered learning assets in some situations nowadays, key findings from the pilot studies and a review of current literature indicate that there is still a lack of educational research which focuses on strategies for better supporting learners’ diversity, especially based on teenage learners’ perspectives. Taking this as a main gap to fill, within the context of social transformation (Mackerras, 2003), this research set to investigate the experiences of a group of under-researched youth who self-identify as ChaoXianZu, teenage plurilingual learners of ethnic
Korean Chinese heritage from a Korean minority nationality school in northeast China. More specifically, this study aims to explore how these students construct their aspirations and strategies for academic success through trilingual programs in minority education, and develop multiple identities at and through various stages of transitions. Two main objectives underlie this work: (i) to understand, from the student participants’ point of view, learners’ practices and representations of the *Multi* as part of their plurilingual learners’ repertoire and resources against the background of a complex situation of language politics in Northern China; (ii) to identify how a strategic pedagogical implementation of the *Multi* can better support and empower plurilingual speakers and learners in today’s multilingual classrooms. Even though it is not the main objective of this study, I will also examine how my own experience and knowledge in plurilingualism influenced my role as a researcher and an educator.

1.3.1. **Research Questions**

Having the purpose and key objectives in mind, the main research question that this study aims to explore is:

How do L3 (JFL/EFL) learners of ethnic Korean heritage in a multilingual education program in a minority nationality high school in Northeast China navigate the complexity and mobility of their multiple languages and identities?

This question entails three specific sub-questions:

1. What are the teenage ethnic Korean students’ experiences and representations of plurilingualism?
2. How do their experiences and representations of plurilingualism affect the focal teenage ethnic Korean students’ (language) learning?
3. How does foreign language (and multilingual) learning affect their life trajectories, including their identity development?

With the first question above, I am interested in looking at *how teenagers become plurilingual* while engaging in multiple language and literacy practices at school, especially through the trilingual education for minorities programs under the ethnic Korean minority nationality school system. In particular, I wish to explore the learning context of a group of
plurilingual teenagers, and how their schooling experiences (e.g., plurilingual pedagogy) affect their (foreign language) learning.

Aside from the continual exploration of these focal teenagers’ dynamic experiences and representations of plurilingualism, the second research sub-question aims to elicit a better understanding of what being a plurilingual speaker means to these youths, from various angles: an in-depth documentation of their experiences and understandings of plurilingualism, the range of language use and literacy practices available to them, as well as how and why they value (or not) Korean and trilingual education as an asset within the larger context of being Korean Chinese in China. A particular emphasis is on how the teenagers conceptualize and talk about their language and literacy practices, social networks, language learning, and their schooling experience.

The third research sub-question aims to examine how the teenagers weave in and out of ascribed, ideal and normative identifications, loyalties and affiliations, as well as aspirations. In other words, I attempt to understand how they relate their plurilingualism to their increasing levels of (virtual and physical) mobility, interwoven multiple identities and learning trajectories.

1.3.2. Clarification of Key Terms

*Plurilingual(ism) and Multilingual(ism), ‘Multi’ & ‘Pluri’*

In this dissertation, I am using plurilingual(ism) as a conceptual lens and framework. I also use the term multilingual(ism), as it better reflects the common usage in English, Korean and Chinese by non-specialists in the fields of education and social sciences. Despite my emphasis on plurilingualism as a lens for understanding the fluid and new configurations of language practices and language learning, in my interviews with participants, I use the term multilingual(ism) to refer to both social and individual aspects of language and cultural practices.

Terms employing the ‘multi’ and the ‘pluri’ prefixes can evoke the complexity and dynamics of the learner diversity in contemporary classrooms, as Marshall and Moore
highlighted in their recent work (2016) on *Plurilingualism amid the panoply of lingualisms: addressing critiques and misconceptions in education*:5

Plurilingualism can be understood as the study of individuals’ repertoires and agency in several languages, in different contexts, in which the individual is the locus and actor of contact; accordingly, a person’s languages and cultures interrelate and change over time, depending on individual biographies, social trajectories, and life paths. The term ‘plurilingual competence’ adds emphasis on learners’ agency, and constraints and opportunities in educational contexts. (p.2)

Perhaps the most notable key point of distinction found in the literature between the pluri and the multi centres on notions of the social and the individual. Accordingly, the terminological switch has differentiated multilingualism (the study of societal contact) from plurilingualism (the study of individuals’ repertoires and agency in several languages) (Beacco & Byram, 2007; Gajo, 2014; Moore & Gajo, 2009). A similar focus on the individual is found in Marshall and Moore’s (2013) definition of plurilingualism as the study of individuals’ repertoires and agency in several languages, in which the individual is the locus and actor of contact. However, the focus on the individual that comes with plurilingualism does not necessarily exclude everything social (Piccardo, 2013), a misconception that we will address in more detail later. (p.4)

Plurilingualism and multilingualism are not always different, but that there are certain features and analytical postures that differentiate the two, especially around conceptualisations of bi-multilingualism based on discreteness and full competence. (p.12)

I share Marshall and Moore’s conceptualisation of complexity involving the ‘multi’ and the ‘pluri’. In this study, I am using the term ‘multi’ with one main denotation: to indicate an individual’s multiple repertoires of languages, cultures and literacy resources, including multilingual, multiliteracies, multimodal (new media) tools. This understanding conveys the (plurilingual) learner’s unique and multiple competence in managing various resources in their dynamic repertoires (e.g., for better learning or communication).

5 Marshall and Moore discuss where and how plurilingualism fits among other lingualisms, explore similarities and differences, and give an example of a “plurilingual pedagogy in action” from a university in Vancouver, Canada. They challenge “three common critiques of/ misconceptions about plurilingualism: (i) that it is based on an invalid static binary between the social and the individual, (ii) that it is over-agentive, and (iii) that it can serve to reinforce social inequities within a neoliberal world order” (2016, p.2).
HanYu, HanGuoYu

In addition, I use HanYu or Chinese to indicate the Han-yu Pu-tong-hua [汉语普通话] (Hanyu or Mandarin Chinese), the standard language commonly used in the P.R. of China, especially in all formal settings (e.g., in schools and government offices). I also use Han-guo-yu [韩国语] to indicate a Korean variant that is commonly spoken by the people living in the Republic of Korea (or South Korea); the teenage participants in this study considered HanGuoYu as different from Chao-xian-yu [朝鲜语], a Korean variant spoken by ethnic Koreans in China, which has unique features (including notably specific features of Korean-Chinese code-switching).

Although this study does not adhere to essentialist definitions of ethnicity and the claims to cultural difference that they usually entail, and understands ethnicity as a “boundary-making social and symbolic construct” and a principle of politicized social organization that tangles “institutional incentives, differences in power, and pre-existing social networks” (Wimmer, 2013, p. 2), the study adopts the point of view of student participants who self-identify as ChaoXianZu (see p.2 and Section 1.6.1). Translations are delicate. Minzu can also mean in Chinese ‘nationality’, or ‘race,’ as well as ‘ethnic group’ (for more details, see Zhou & Hill, 2009, pp. 3-5). For the participants in this study, ethnicity (or nationality) matters because it structures state allocation of resources (notably the existence of bilingual schools, or ‘ethnic’ schools, to preserve Korean), and binds a closely-held sense of identity and belonging, anchored in a common history and memory that transcends their differences (Ehlert & Moore, 2014).

As I carried out all the translations of non-English texts in this dissertation, I assume full responsibility for any error or misinterpretation that may have occurred during the process.

1.4. Significance of this Study

As noted earlier, this study takes plurilingualism (CEFR, 2001; Moore & Gajo, 2009) as a lens that highlights the unique features of learners’ “plurilingual and pluricultural competence” (Coste, Moore & Zarate, 2009) and their dynamic repertoires and agency in learning (Marshall & Moore, 2013, 2016). This framework is used to analyze how a group
of 22 ethnic Korean learners of Japanese or English as a L3 in a minority trilingual education program conceptualize and talk about their schooling experiences and their aspirations as plurilingual speakers, notably as they were going through various educational and life transitions (e.g., from high school to university). Adopting an emic perspective which “acknowledges the views and opinions of participants” (Pavlenko & Blackledge, 2004, p.25), this study opens better windows for understanding the diversity of learners, their mobile resources, as well as the links between home and institution language usage and learning expectations (Ehlert & Moore, 2014).

The significance of this dissertation lies in the following areas:

1. The study looks at current issues concerning an understudied group in a complex situation (e.g., ethnic minority, 3rd language and trilingual education, times of transition);
2. The study employs a ‘wholistic’ approach to examine current issues and related matters in contemporary classrooms considering an increased level of learner diversity at school and around;
3. The study focuses on looking at emic perspectives (of students) because I am interested in what learners think and in their own understandings of their language learning experiences;
4. The study employs a visual ethnography influenced method to understand their ecological landscapes and use of new technology as ways to communicate, learn and be plurilingual.

In this sense, this dissertation opens the potential to explore strategies of how to support the empowerment of these diverse learners. Because this study aims to illustrate and examine how a group of ethnic Korean teenage students develop their plurilingualism, language learning and literacy practices in and out of formal classroom settings, it opens new windows into learners’ perspectives for educators. New teaching practices could involve better accessibility to and strategies for using plurilingual, multimodal (i.e., new media) and multiliteracy resources in the language classroom. This includes the potential inclusion of literacy practices involving virtual social network sites (V-SNS), such as WeChat, a less formal but essential learning environment for youth. For educators, the results of my research should facilitate the exploration of a new strategic use of plurilingual and media resources as essential learning tools to support diverse learners.
This study is about a small group of learners from a K-MNS in a local context. Nevertheless, it is my sincere hope that the implications from this study will contribute to social studies, linguistic studies and education for a better understanding of diverse learners in similar contexts in different countries and regions.

1.5. Structure of this dissertation

Ch1. Introduction. This chapter consists of two parts. The first part serves as the General Introduction for this dissertation research project and provides the rationale, research questions, as well as clarification of key terms for this study. The second part provides the general background context of this study, trilingual minority education in China, and the teaching of foreign languages in this context. I move on to present the ChaoXianZu [ethnic Korean Chinese] community, as a ‘diaspora in motion’ in the midst of transition and transformation in today’s globalized era. A brief historical background of the ChaoXianZu people reviews some key factors that support what is generally referred as the ‘rise’ of the ethnic Korean education community in China.

Ch 2. Plurilingualism, Plurilingual competence, and multiple identities. This chapter introduces the conceptual framework for this study along with related literature review. This study highlights the significance of employing the framework of plurilingualism and the concept of plurilingual competence as the main analytic model in the study of plurilingual students’ linguistic and cultural repertoire, and their agency in learning foreign languages through their language practices in an increasingly globalized world. With an emphasis on disclosing the complexity involved in the social construction of a foreign language (FL) learner and FL learning, the main topics of the literature review include multicompetence, third language acquisition, language and symbolic power.

Ch 3. Research Site, the Participants, and Methodology. This chapter introduces and rationalizes the main methodology of this four-year longitudinal qualitative study of a group of twenty-two teenage ethnic Korean plurilingual learners. The chapter presents the selection of the research site, the participants, the data collection and data analysis methods, along with the researcher’s reflection notes. This study employs combined
methods of ethnographic and visual research approaches, in order to examine current issues and the complexity involving foreign language learners/learning at school.

Ch 4. Learning Foreign Language (as L3) at a K-MNS. This chapter explores what are the focal ethnic Korean teenagers’ dynamic experiences and complex representations of plurilingualism. In particular a focus is on looking at how they are becoming plurilingual learners, despite the complex discourses about the trilingual education for minorities program under the state government sponsored ethnic Korean minority nationality school (K-MNS) system. This includes an examination of these students’ perspectives on trilingual education with an emphasis on their schooling experiences at a K-MNS school, such as looking at how they practice the multi in their languages, cultures and literacies in and out of classroom contexts. The main topics explored include plurilingualism as a key strategy for success, and learning a FL/L3 as an essential tool for easing transitions from one educational context to another.

Ch 5. Experiences of Plurilingualism, ‘Mobility’ and Learning: Betwixt Multiple Spaces. Aside from the continual exploration of the focal teenagers’ dynamic experiences and complex representations of plurilingualism, this chapter aims to have a better understanding of what being a plurilingual speaker means to these youths. An emphasis is on examining how the focal teenage plurilingual ethnic Korean learners’ experiences and representations of plurilingalism affect their language learning. This is achieved through (i) an in-depth documentation of the teenage students’ experiences and understandings of plurilingualism, mobility; and (ii) an exploration of how and why they value (or not) their dynamic multilingual repertoires (i.e., Korean, Chinese, and Japanese/English) as an asset within the larger context of being Korean Chinese in China; as well as (iii) an examination of how they relate these experiences and perceptions to the ‘multi’ in their language learning and increased levels of mobility.

Ch 6. Plurilingual Youth in Motion: The Multi for Empowerment. This chapter explores how foreign language learning affects the life trajectories of the focal teenage ethnic Korean students. A special focus is on examining how the teenagers engage in multiple identities while being plurilinguals, such as (i) how they weave in and out of ascribed, ideal and normative identifications, loyalties and affiliations, as well as (ii) their practice of the ‘multi’ (i.e., using multilingual and multiliteracies resources) on virtual peer networking spaces.
Key findings suggest that these teenage plurilingual learners are constantly maximizing their agency to create spaces for the inclusion of diverse semiotic resources, complex linguistic practices and new identity performances; for instance, they consider translanguaging as a creative way to learn, share, and transform.

Ch 7. Conclusion: This chapter focuses on the implications and limitations of this dissertation project. Based on the key implications, this study argues that learning foreign language at school is an experience of multiple identities. It highlights the importance of capitalizing on multiple assets of new generation plurilingual learners and viewing their dynamic repertoires as essential empowerment tools to support the success of all students.
1.6. Background – ‘A Diaspora in Motion’

The word ‘diaspora’ is defined, at its simplest, as “the dispersal of people from its original homeland”. (Butler, 2001, p. 189)

Traditional orientations to diaspora have anchored the concept to the homeland from which dispersal occurred. More recently has come the understanding that dispersed populations do not necessarily expect or desire a diasporic return. … This realization has motivated a more decentred, hybrid, even non-cohesive notion of diaspora. (Canagarajah & Silberstein, 2012, p. 81)

As members of a dispersed community with strong attachment to their origins, language and identity, the ChaoXianZu [ethnic Korean Chinese] people are constantly ‘in-motion’, with social networks extending all around the world. The ChaoXianZu is the largest overseas Korean group with a population of almost 2 million, representing nearly 30% of the approximately 7 million total Overseas Korean population in the world. 6 Active internationalization has been increasing diasporic mobility and, with global migration, the community is in the midst of intense transition and transformation, marked by social, economic, and political changes (Lee, 2010), and the need to learn foreign languages (Ehlert, 2014). As Rosa described, this is bearing in mind that

Diasporization involves (1) remappings in which ideas about national identities transform borders between and within languages; (2) diasporization is dynamically linked to processes of ethnolinguistic socialization that take place in institutions such as schools; and (3) disaporization is neither a naturally occurring phenomenon nor merely a matter of personal choice, but a political process in which people (re)define the ethnolinguistic identities to which they are socialized as they navigate their everyday lives. (Rosa, 2014, p. 55)

This increased mobility has also been motivating and challenging educators to actively explore different strategies to support new generations of language learners.

---

6 The Korean diaspora consists of roughly seven million people, both descendants of early emigrants from the Korean peninsula, as well as more recent immigrants from Korea. Nearly four-fifths of expatriate Koreans live in just three countries: China, the United States, and Japan. Other countries with greater than 0.5% Korean minorities include Russia, Uzbekistan, Kazakhstan, Australia, Canada, and New Zealand. All these figures include both permanent migrants and sojourners (Schwckendiek, 2012). If one focuses on long-term residents, there were about 5.3 million Korean emigrants as of 2010. *Source: 재외동포현황 [Current Status of Overseas Compatriots]. South Korea: Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade (MFAT). 2013. Retrieved on March 30, 2014.
This section provides some key features of the background of the ethnic Korean community which should help the readers to better grasp the complexity of the lives of student participants in this study. I begin with a brief historical overview of the ChaoXianZu people, a minority nationality community, and the ‘rise’ of the ethnic Korean education system in China.

1.6.1. Ethnic Koreans in China

Almost 2 million ethnic Koreans [ChaoXianZu] are currently residing in the People’s Republic of China (PRC), a multilingual and multicultural nation that is home to 55 official minority nationality groups (with approximately 105 million people, or 8.4% of China’s total population) and the Han majority (2010 Census). The history of ethnic Koreans in China is a long one. Korean migration to and within China dates back from as early as the Ming and Qing Dynasties7, with a spur from the 1860s due to natural disasters, drastic economic conditions and political turmoil (Kwon, 1997). Traditionally, Koreans have lived in close-knit communities, with their own educational system (Choi, 2001). They have achieved a prominent level of language and cultural maintenance, while identifying politically with China as “their country” (Choi, 2001, p.127), thus achieving the status of a “model minority” (Gao, 2008, 2009) with high educational aspirations.

The ChaoXianZu community is considered to be well established, and has maintained its language and culture. As one of the five Type 1 minority nationality groups8, the ethnic Koreans had regular bilingual education which had functional writing systems that were broadly used even before the founding of the PRC in 1949. Despite various

---

7 Ming Dynasty ruled China from 1368 to 1644, and Qing dynasty ruled from 1644 to 1912.
8 Yang (2005, p.554) reports that China’s minorities can be categorized into three types based on the existence of a specific writing system and access to bilingual education: (i) Type 1 includes five minority groups, the Korean, Kazak, Mongolian, Tibetan and Uygur with a combined population of over 24 million who had functional writing systems that were broadly used before the founding of the People’s Republic of China in 1949, and have had regular bilingual education since then; (ii) Type 2 includes eight minority groups, the Dai, Jingpo, Lisu, Lahu, Miao, Naxi, Va and Yi, with a combined population of 22 million who had functional writing systems in limited use before 1949, and have had only occasional bilingual education since 1949; (iii) Type 3 includes the remaining 42 groups with a total population of approximately 60 million who had no fully functional writing systems before 1949, and have had limited or no bilingual education since then and have Chinese as their primary or only language of instruction.
challenges, they have been profiting from the Korean and Chinese bilingual education, notably the Min-Han [heritage – Chinese] bilingual education system and publicly funded ethnic minority schools (Beckett & Postiglione, 2012; Tai, 2004; Zhou & Hill, 2009). For instance, a large number of students in the community are learning in the Min-Han-Wai [Heritage–Chinese–Foreign] trilingual program at the ethnic Korean minority nationality school (K-MNS), which is an important part of the state government sponsored minority nationality school (MNS) education system. Generally, they are studying three languages: Korean, HanYu (Putonghua or Mandarin Chinese, the Lingua Franca between various ethnic groups in China, plus a foreign language such as English or Japanese.

Under the preferential policies for ethnic minority education, the PRC implemented the Soviet model of multinational state-building (Zhou & Hill, 2009, p. 9) until the early 1990s. While supporting the preservation of traditional ethnic culture and language in the school system, the main goal of these preferential policies was to use the power of a nation-wide public education system as an essential wheel for the training of ethnic minority group leaders to become effective bilinguals in order to contribute in supporting China’s nationalism for the prosperous development of the Zhong-hua Min-zu [the great Chinese race or inclusive Chinese nation]. Changes in political, social and economic policies in the early 1980s, however, also brought changes to the education policies for ethnic minorities, with a shift from the Soviet model of multinational state-building to the contemporary Chinese model of Duo-yuan Yi-ti [one nation with diversity] (Zhou, 2009; Zhou & Hill, 2009). This policy of accommodation is based on pluralistic legislation that protects minorities and minority language rights in China, within a general framework of national convergence, and “[the] concept of diversity in unity of the Chinese nation [that] assumes that the two levels of identities do not replace each other nor contradict each other, but coexist and co-develop with linguistic and cultural diversity” (Zhou, 2012, p. 26).

Rapid industrialization and the relaxing of the restrictive HuKou [户口, household registration system] motived domestic migration, which triggered a wave of migration.

---

9 “The highest level of political identity for all of China’s peoples is the nation, the inclusive Chinese nation (ZhongHua Minzu). All Chinese citizens are members of the “inclusive Chinese nation.” (Zhou & Hill, 2009, p. 9) Beneath this national identity are the official ethnic identities of China’s fifty-six minzu (see Fei, 1999, p. 13).
into the ChaoXianZu community. In particular, the Zhong-Han JianJiao [establishment of the official diplomatic relationship between China and Han Guo] in October 1997 provided more opportunities to the ChaoXianZu people in terms of employment and international labour immigration, including the opportunities to work in Han Guo, their ancestors’ land in the southern part of the Korean peninsula. A large number of Koreans left their traditional territories in Dong Bei [northeast] China, where they had been residing since the late 19th century, and im-/migrated to larger cities and more industrialized eastern coastal areas, as well as to Han Guo or more developed nations, for better economic and other opportunities. These changes have transformed the lives of ethnic Koreans in many ways, allowing for increased mobility and more flexibility in education (Adamson & Feng, 2015; Feng, 2007; Ma, 2010a; Zhou, 2004; Zhou & Hill, 2009). Consequently, many minority groups migrated from local cities to live in larger cities or more industrialized regions on the east coast. For instance, a large number of ethnic Koreans moved to the capital city of Beijing, thus leading to a new dissemination of members. With approximately 37,000 members in 2010, this comparatively new community represents the most important minority group growth in Beijing, where, according to the 2010 census, over 801,000 Shaoshu Minzu [ethnic minority] people lived (or 4.1% of the entire city population, a growth of 36.8% of the population compared to the 2000 census). This shift has had a profound impact on Koreans’ mobility, within and across borders, and has offered more opportunities for interconnectedness (Hanerz, 1996), whether virtual or physical. Particularly since the early 1990s, the ChaoXianZu have been taking more frequent trips to visit their relatives in South Korea, while South Koreans have invested more in China, sometimes also moving to big cities in China for business and education (Kwon, 2007; Kim, 2003). Local communities have likewise been more in touch with the international Korean diaspora, in the United States and elsewhere in the world (Bergsten & Choi, 2003). Such a shift can be revealed through the changes of the Korean population (e.g., due to transnational migration), as shown in Table 1.1 which indicates an ongoing

---

10 In the past decade, Beijing has been undergoing tremendous transformations, experiencing large-scale social change, growth of economy, and intensified globalization (Zhengrong, Lei & Deqiang, 2013). This shift is visible in the city currently ranking 15th, right after Toronto, in the Global Cities Index (12th in 2008), the second city in China after Hong-Kong (ranked 5th). It is also ranked as the 6th city in business activity (from 9th in 2008) (A.T. Kearney, 2010). This index, which ranks 65 cities across the world, uses five dimensions to measure globalization, defined as “the ability to attract, retain and generate global capital, people and ideas” (A.T. Kearney, 2010, p.5). See Ehlert & Moore (2014) for more.
decrease in the proportion of the ethnic Koreans since the early 1950s. In terms of the proportion of ChaoXianZu in the national population, the table illustrates a decrease from 0.193% in 1953 to 0.1374 in 2010. The proportion of ChaoXianZu in its proportion of the minority population, indicates a decrease of almost 1.7% from 1953 to 2010.

Table 1.1. Proportion of the ChaoXianZu among national population and ethnic Minorities in China

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>年度 Year</th>
<th>1953</th>
<th>1964</th>
<th>1982</th>
<th>1990</th>
<th>2000</th>
<th>2010</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>占全国总人口的比重 (%) In national population</td>
<td>0.193</td>
<td>0.185</td>
<td>0.176</td>
<td>0.169</td>
<td>0.150</td>
<td>0.1374</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>占全国少数民族的比重(%) In the minority population in China</td>
<td>3.009</td>
<td>3.348</td>
<td>2.625</td>
<td>2.105</td>
<td>1.507</td>
<td>1.308</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Unit: person, %
(Source: Census 2010)

A main contributing factor for such a large population decrease is an increased level of domestic and transnational migration especially since the 1990s. Table 1.2 shows such movement, a large population change in the ChaoXianZu communities in the three main provinces located in northeast China mainly is due to the domestic and transnational im-/migration (Jin, 2007; also see Freeman, 2011). The survey indicates that the ChaoXianZu population in Heilongjiang decreased from 1.95% in 1953 to 1.07% in 2000, and to 0.86% in 2010. In the case of Jilin, the population decreased from 6.69% in 1953 to 4.2% in 2000, and to 3.79% in 2010. Compared to these two provinces, there is no major population change found in the case of Liaoning, but it still shows a decrease from 0.65% to 0.54% between 1953 and 2010. As will be discussed again in Section 1.6.3, such “population minus growth” contributed to various current issues among the ethnic Korean education community, including student intakes at K-MNS schools (Jin & Liu, 2007a, 2007b).
Table 1.2. Proportion of the population of the ethnic Koreans in the three provinces of Northeast China 东北三省总人口中朝鲜族人口比重

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>年度</th>
<th>项目</th>
<th>吉林省</th>
<th>黑龙江省</th>
<th>辽宁省</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>项目</td>
<td>JiLin Province</td>
<td>HeiLongJiang</td>
<td>LiaoNing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1953</td>
<td>总人口 total Population</td>
<td>11,290,073</td>
<td>11,897,039</td>
<td>20,386,458</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>朝鲜族人口 The Koreans</td>
<td>756,026</td>
<td>231,510</td>
<td>132,869</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>所占比重（%）</td>
<td>6.69</td>
<td>1.95</td>
<td>0.65</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1964</td>
<td>总人口 total Population</td>
<td>15,668,663</td>
<td>30,132,771</td>
<td>26,946,200</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>朝鲜族人口 The Koreans</td>
<td>866,627</td>
<td>307,504</td>
<td>146,513</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>所占比重（%）</td>
<td>5.53</td>
<td>1.53</td>
<td>0.54</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>朝鲜族人口 The Koreans</td>
<td>1,104,074</td>
<td>431,644</td>
<td>198,252</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>所占比重（%）</td>
<td>4.89</td>
<td>1.32</td>
<td>0.56</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1990</td>
<td>总人口 total Population</td>
<td>24,658,721</td>
<td>35,324,873</td>
<td>39,459,697</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>朝鲜族人口 The Koreans</td>
<td>1,181,964</td>
<td>452,398</td>
<td>230,370</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>所占比重（%）</td>
<td>4.78</td>
<td>1.28</td>
<td>0.58</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2000</td>
<td>总人口 total Population</td>
<td>26,802,191</td>
<td>36,237,576</td>
<td>41,824,412</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>朝鲜族人口 The Koreans</td>
<td>1,145,688</td>
<td>388,458</td>
<td>241,051</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>所占比重（%）</td>
<td>4.20</td>
<td>1.07</td>
<td>0.58</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2010</td>
<td>总人口 total Population</td>
<td>27,462,297</td>
<td>38,312,224</td>
<td>43,746,32</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>朝鲜族人口 The Koreans</td>
<td>1,040,167</td>
<td>327,806</td>
<td>239,537</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>所占比重（%）</td>
<td>3.79</td>
<td>0.86</td>
<td>0.54</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Unit: person, %
(Source: 2010 National Census)

In spite of all the new changes in the past two or three decades, today Korean minorities are still living in the three Northeast provinces [Dongbei San-sheng], namely Jilin, Liaoning and Heilongjiang. Before the major innovative reform era at the end of the 1980s, the majority (over 98%) of the Korean population in China was concentrated in this
region. Figure 2.1 illustrates the main territory of the ethnic Koreans in Northeast China, including the Yanbian ethnic Korean autonomous prefecture (Yanbian). Attributable to its geographic position and economic connection to Russia and the Korean peninsula especially since the 1990s, the great Yanbian area has been called the “Golden Triangle”.

![A map of Northeast China: The “Golden Triangle”](Source: iStock.com, 2018; adapted.)

As noted in Section 1.3.2 for the clarification of key terms, this study adopts the point of view of student participants who self-identify as ChaoXianZu [ethnic Korean or ethnic Korean Chinese; 朝鮮族 in Korean, 朝鲜族 in Chinese]. For these youths, ethnicity (or nationality) matters because it structures state allocation of resources (notably the existence of bilingual schools, or ‘ethnic’ schools, to preserve Korean), and binds a closely-held sense of identity and belonging, anchored in a common history and memory that transcends their differences (Ehlert & Moore, 2014). Zheng (1999) describes how the ChaoXianZu obtained an official status as a ‘minority nationality’, in acknowledgement of their fighting for freedom against foreign invasions during the process of establishing the People’s Republic of China:
Through this historical process, these Koreans gradually considered China as their homeland, and address themselves as ChaoXianZu, instead of North Korean Residents or South Koreans in China. (Zheng, 1999, pp. 302-303)

Despite their geopolitical importance in China, the complex factors concerning the make-up of the ChaoXianZu, whether due to their new intraterritorial mobility and/or transnational links (Colin, 2003; c.f., Ehlert & Moore, 2014), are still very rarely a topic of study, notably from the perspective of multilingual studies and language planning in education.

1.6.2. Life as a Minority Nationality in China

China’s other Binary System: 民族区隔

Along with the ‘city-rural binary system’ [Cheng-Xiang Er-yuan Jie-gou], a key to understanding the complexity involving matters and related current issues pertaining to minority nationalities can be seen from "China’s other binary system" [中国的另一类 “二元结构”] (Ma, 2010a). From a social review, Ma remarks on the politics of how this new nationality ‘binary system’ separates the Han majority and minority nationality groups:

1949 年建国后的 “民族识别” 给每个国民确定了“民族成分”，制定了一系列以少数民族为对象的制度和优惠政策，在这些制度和政策的实施过程中逐步形成了“汉族”和“少数民族”之间的区隔，客观上出现一个新的民族“二元结构”。...从这半个多世纪的实践来看，这个“二元结构”其实很不利于民族之间的沟通和交流，也不利于相互学习和文化的融合，特别是在政治认同方面弱化了“中华民族”的意识. (Ma, 2010a)

[“Minzu recognition” policy after the establishment of our nation-state in 1949 assigned an “ethnic status” to each citizen, and developed accompanying system and preference policies specifically for minority nationalities; in the process of reinforcing these systems and policies, a separation was gradually formed between the “Han” majority and “minority nationalities”, [which] in effect led to the emergence of] a new nationality ‘binary system’. ... Judging from the practices over more than a half
century, this ‘binary system’ actually hinders communication and collaboration between ethnic groups, and mutual study and cultural integration, especially in terms of political identification, it has weakened the identification with the “Greater Chinese” nationalism.]

Tensions raised in relation to this binary system inevitably play out in education, especially with the complex matters concerning languages of minority nationalities (Ma, 2007, 2009; Zhou, 2004, 2005, 2009). A good example is the gaps in bilingualism between education systems set for the minorities and the Han majority (Feng, 2007). Min-Han [heritage-Chinese] bilingual education for minorities (BEM) is an outcome of China’s Preferential Policy for minority nationalities [少数民族优惠政策], as part of strategies for training the leaders of ethnic minority communities, active reinforcement of the BEM program through the minority nationality school (MNS) education system.

**Min-han Jian-tong or GuoJiHua?**

The BEM system provides opportunities for many ethnic minorities to learn both their heritage and national languages and cultures. As Ma (2010a) pointed out, however, the system is apt to separate the minority community from the Han mainstream groups. In particular, tensions concerning questions about Min-Han JianTong [知识中国] Knowledgeable in both heritage and Chinese language and culture] or GuoJiHua [国际化; with global mindset] reveal the complexities involving the multilingual education for minorities (Feng, 2007). Based on various empirical studies, Feng and the authors in his volume on the study of Bilingual Education in China highlight the significance of understanding the gaps between bilingualism for the majority and minorities. As the main guiding principle of the bilingual education minorities for over a half century since China’s liberation in 1949, Min Han Jian-Tong policy aims to train students who are knowledgeable in both national and minority languages and cultures. In contrast the key educational objective for the Han majority schools is to train Fuhexing RenCai [multi-talented human capital] who are competitive in today’s dynamic and highly globalized world. For Feng, the notion of Min-han Jiantong Rencai is confined to the bi- or multi-lingual education of minority groups, while Fuhexing Rencai is applied to the bilingual education of the Han majority group. He considers that Min-han Jiantong promotes bicultural identities for the minority people, while the notion of ‘multi-talented human...
capital’ does not require changes in cultural identities because it can be seen as additive bilingualism to the Han majority. In this regard, Feng argues that the differences in these two notions reveal the inequality between China’s bi- and multi-lingual policies toward majority and minority groups.

The *Min-Han JianTong* approach has played a key role in protecting and preserving the heritage languages and cultural traditions of many ethnic minority groups. More specifically, it aims to train ethnic minority leaders to understand the essence of Chinese nationalism (i.e., unification of China) and act as future leaders of the minority nationality communities. On the other hand, some Chinese scholars (e.g., Ma, 2009; Yang, 2005) have expressed their concerns about the *Min-han Jian-tong* approach. They consider that this may explain the stagnation of the minority education system today. For instance, Yang (2005) pointed out a range of factors that may negatively impact the educational achievement of ethnic minority background students from the MNS especially in English as the third language (EFL as L3) education. Based on empirical evidence from the study of the Tibetans (2005) and the Uhgurs (2009), Ma also expressed his concern about the effectiveness of the bilingual program through the MNS. One of his key concerns related to the quality of *Hanyu* education in the MNS. For example, drawing on a study that examined the Uhgur ethnic minority university/college students in the *Xinjiang* autonomous prefecture in northwest China, Ma (2009) questions the survival of bi-/trilingual programs at the MNS. He found that poor Chinese proficiency of the focal Uhgur ethnic minority students was a key contributing factor that hinders their employment. He observed a strong connection between the low academic performance of these minority nationality youths and their low employment rate, especially for the ones that graduated from a MNS when compared to their Han counterparts.

In particular, Ma expresses concern that this type of unfavorable outcome might negatively impact the other ethnic minority students’ aspirations for learning their own heritage language through the MNS educational system. For this author, one possible factor impacting these students’ aspiration towards the *min-han* bilingual program is their parents’ concern about the unsatisfactory quality of *Hanyu* education in the designated schools. Parents from ethnic minority communities often believe that (i) low competence in *Hanyu* will impact their children’s overall success at university and when working in the
dominant Chinese society (Ehlert, 2011), while some parents (ii) highlight more focus on heritage language education as they reject Han/Mandarin dominance (i.e., over-valuing HanYu/Mandarin) as it is atheistic and assimilationist and threatens their cultural/religious tradition. Consequently, parents in the former group tend to transfer their children to a Han majority school. Similar conclusions are also reported by other scholars, such as Postiglione, Jiao, Zhou and Tsering’s (2009) (see their examples in the study of a group of Tibetan students in Neidiban [In-land school]). The K-MNS in northeast China do not escape such a tendency, as will be discussed more in the later sections.

**A New Shift: Bilingualism to Trilingualism**

As such, tensions between Min-han Jian-tong or GuoJiHua reveals the complexity involving the lives of minority nationalities under China’s Binary System. It also motivated a new change in the education for the minority nationalities, a new shift from bilingual education to trilingual education in the MNS schools including the K-MNS schools. Researchers and practitioners who affirm the significance of the trilingual education programs in minority regions point to its key role for the survival of minority nationality schools, while suggesting the urgency of innovative reform to the curriculum and pedagogy of these schools (Lin & Chi, 2007).

Similar to other minority nationality schools, the K-MNS aims to train a talent of Min-han Jian-tong as a key educational objective (Dai & Dong, 1996, p.2). It has been considered a strategic solution for easing the tension between the majority and minority groups in the PRC since the early stage of its establishment. In particular, this approach presumes that the underlying assumption of China’s Min-han bilingual education policy balances the ethnic minority students’ right to learning their own ethnic minority language while also gradually learning Hanyu. Especially since the early 1980s, however, Min-han-wai Jian-tong [民汉外兼通 mastery of ethnic language, Chinese and foreign language] has become its main educational objective to support an increased level of globalization. As the former chairman of the ethnic affairs bureau in the central government of China Li (2003) highlighted; this is considering that

对于少数民族学生来说，不仅要学好本民族语言，而且应当努力学好汉语、学好外国语。[For ethnic minority students, learning their heritage language
it is important but also essential to master a good command of \textit{Hanyu} and a foreign language.] (Li De-zhu, 2003, p.4)

Intrinsically, carrying out a high quality trilingual education for the community became a key agenda for the K-MNS schools, to train students who can fulfill the high demands of rapid social economic development of China in today’s innovative reform era, as well as to better support the youths who are searching for their aspirations through schooling in the ethnic Korean education system.

The Min-Han-Wai trilingual education for minorities program is a symbol of a new shift in education strategies for the MNS schools: from Min-Han \textit{JianTong} to GuoJiHua, from bilingual education to trilingual education. This shift brought new changes to people in the ethnic minority groups, which helped them to have more opportunities to explore new and alternative connections with different worlds for example through learning foreign language(s). In this sense, this shift is particularly important to understand the situation of plurilingual learners in the K-MNS, considering its strong impact on the dynamic languages and literacies practices of youths in K-MNS.

1.6.3. The Rise of the ChaoXianZu Education Community: K-MNS Schools

The ChaoXianZu education community [朝鲜族教育共同体] in China is relatively well established. As one of the five Type 1 ethnic Minority groups, ethnic Koreans have a well-established Korean-Chinese bilingual education system stemming from before the establishment of the PRC government. The community consists of a publishing house, a radio station, a variety of newspapers and schools, along with being made up of various autonomous areas (YanBian, and other townships and counties and villages) in northeast China and Inner Mongolia. Nonetheless, the community has been going through various dilemmas especially over the last two decades.

As an essential part of the general minority nationality education system in China, the ethnic Korean minority nationality schools (K-MNS) have become a main vehicle that has been supporting the education of the off-spring of the ethnic Korean diaspora. Mainly serving the ChaoXianZu communities in northeast China where a large number of ethnic
Koreans have been traditionally inhabiting, the K-MNS is an important part of the ChaoXianZu education community, which specializes in providing Korean-Chinese bilingual education along with a foreign language as an L3 education program. Mainly through the K-MNS, the majority of Koreans have been learning multiple languages from a well-established bi-/multilingual education program (Jin, Z. L., 2007, p.137). Both Korean and Chinese languages are used as instructional media in the program. Generally, students in the program learn both Korean and Chinese (Hanyu) from the first grade, and begin foreign language (e.g., English, Japanese or Russian) studies from the third grade. Fostering a pluralistic approach, schools in the K-MNS in northeast China have been offering multilingual (Korean-Chinese bilingual or Korean-Chinese-foreign trilingual) education programs, as will be discussed in detail in Chapter 4.

**Schooling**

Youngsters in the ChaoXianZu communities generally attend 9 years of compulsory schooling. *Xiao Xue* [小学, elementary school] for years 1–6 which is followed by secondary school *Zhong Xue* [中学, Junior high school] for years 7–9. Children between five and six attend optional Kindergarten (*Xue Qian Ban*) in some school districts before they enter elementary school. Many children living in urban areas attend Kindergarten, as well as extra-curricular activities that are offered by after-school education centres, a family daycare home or an open after-school program.

As a result of the recent social political and economic changes, youth from the ChaoXianZu community in China today can be divided in to two main groups: (i) *Ben Di Youth* [本地学生 Local Students]: The youths who are remaining in their hometown in northeast China where ethnic Koreans have been traditionally residing (where they usually attend the K-MNS system), and (ii) *Ju Wai Youth* [居外学生 Non-Local Students]: the youths who have moved to larger cities and more industrialized eastern coastal areas with their families.

Teenagers in the Ben Di Youth group are of particular interest because they share several commonalities that make them stand apart from other ethnic Koreans in China. They represent a new generation who, over the last decade, (a) have remained in the remote parts of China where their families had been residing in close-knit and largely
segregated areas, and (b) have taken full advantage of the Chinese pluralistic language policies that allowed them to run their own schools and educate their children primarily in Korean, thus maintaining a high level of language vitality. A large number of these youths hope for social upward mobility through schooling in their hometown (Jin & Liu, 2007). Even though in different ways, these youths have been making ongoing efforts to navigate new social networks and language expectations, confronting the challenges of language maintenance in their minority language and high fluency in Chinese.

Figure 1.2. A School Selection Model of Ethnic Korean Students
(This figure is adapted from the Figure 1 in Ma, 2010c, p.16; see Note 11)

Three main schooling patterns can be observed within the Korean community: schooling through the K-MNS, the Han majority school, and International schools. Other Type 1 minority nationality groups usually face the same schooling choices and opportunities (Feng, 2007; Zhou and Hills, 2009). While the youths in the Ju Wai group generally attend Han majority schools or international schools, the youths from the Ben Di group have an additional option of attending K-MNS. Figure 1.2 illustrates the schooling choices for ChaoXianZu children. The figure illustrates the two main schooling paths,
depending on the residential contexts: the Duo-minzu Hunju Region [多民族混居地区] (Area A) is a multi-ethnic context, with both Han and ethnic minority students; the Hanzu Juju Region [汉族聚居地区] (Area B) is mostly a Han majority group context (Ma, 2010c).11

(A) Students in the Multi-ethnic “HunJu” Region are attending one of the four types of schools: (1) a K-MNS school using Korean as main instructional medium which is solely designed for ethnic Korean minorities (K-MNS 1); (2) a K-MNS school using Korean and Chinese as main instructional medium (K-MNS 2), where non-Korean heritage students can also be attending; (3) an international school; and (4) the Han majority school. The majority of K-MNS schools in northeast China belong to the second type (with a new bilingual model).

(B) Students in the Han “JuJu” Region are attending one of the two types of schools: (1) the Han majority school where Mandarin Chinese is the main instructional medium, or (2) an international school, where English is the instruction language.

In general, plurilingualism is the norm in the K-MNS schools. Multilingual textbooks and learning materials are actively used in different classes. Figure 1.3 illustrates an example from a K-MNS in Mudanjiang, Heilongjiang Province. Most Korean-Chinese bilingual textbooks and learning materials used in the school are prepared and published by YanBian Publishing house, while most of the practice materials are from general publishing houses (the same as the materials provided to the Han schools. More details about the pluralistic education model that the K-MNS employs will be introduced in Chapter 4.

11 Also see Figure 1 in Ma (2010c, p.16 in Chinese). The figure is helpful in understanding how various ethnic background students in China at large are generally selecting a school.
Current Issues

Current issues and challenges faced by the K-MNS schools have a strong connection to the politics concerning multilingual education for ethnic minorities at large. Indeed these issues are produced by multi-layered discourses as revealed through two main tendencies toward languages and language learning, in the Yi-bian-dao [一边倒; overly one-sided] phenomenon of multilingualism in the ethnic Korean education community (It’s a community-wide tendency): (i) A tendency of devaluing their heritage language while over-valuing Chinese (KHL < CNL); (ii) A tendency of devaluing Japanese as foreign language while over-valuing English (JFL < EFL).

These tendencies cannot be discussed without consideration of macro and micro level "sociolinguistic contexts" (Cenoz, 2008) (e.g., the rapid industrialization in China, its connection to South Korea and other international communities), including an increased level of mobility of the ChaoXianZu community as a whole. Most importantly, such tendencies have a strong influence on the lives of the youth in the community.

A review of current literature affirms many positive aspects accompanying the development and implementation of the bi-/tri-lingual education in the ChaoXianZu
community. At the same time, it also suggests three key areas of current challenges that hinder the active development of the Bi-/trilingual program in the K-MNS schools:

1) Low student intake, especially challenges in maintaining a sufficient level of ‘good’ student intake, which is often connected to government funding;

2) Insufficient resources for better supporting the development of multilingual education programs;

3) Power struggles between foreign language programs such as in the selection of the primary foreign language, for instance, between Japanese and English.

‘Small size, low student intake’ [学校规模减小，生源不足] has been a general but essential issue faced by the K-MNS schools in northeast China. A contributing factor to this issue includes the ‘population minus-growth’ (Jin & Liu, 2007a) in the ethnic Korean community especially since 1990, as noted in Section 1.6.1 (see p. 22). In the case of Heilongjiang province, for instance, a research report in 2006 on the ethnic Korean education in the Heilongjiang province [关于黑龙江省朝鲜族教育情况的调研报告] indicates that only 29 out of 86 elementary schools under the K-MNS system maintain over 100 total student numbers, while 36 of the schools have less than 50 students, and 15 of them have 50-100 students. Elementary and secondary schools both in the urban and rural areas showed a decrease in the student enrollment rate. The total number of elementary schools in Harbin (the capital city of Heilongjiang) decreased from 102 in 1997 to 36 in 2004, while total student enrollment decreased from 9442 in 1997 to 2038 in 2004. Lack of ‘good’ student intake is a contributing factor, which is an outcome of the increased number of ‘left-behind’ students. While the good students contribute to maintain or help to improve the school’s success rate such as increasing the number of university entrants, the left-behind [liushou 留守] students often do not have sufficient parental support and often become “an issue as their academic performance is relatively low compared to that of the students living with their parents” (Mr. Li, the Principal of a K-MNS school in Heilongjiang, personal communication, December 2014).

Lack of human resources is another current issue that hinders students’ active development in the multilingual education programs. Similar to the situations in many other MNS schools, the K-MNS schools were struggling with ongoing issues concerning the
supply of high quality teaching staff, support services and efficient information channels (Feng, 2007; Yang, 2005; Zhou, 2004; Zhou & Hill, 2009). In terms of FL/L3 education, for instance, the schools, especially the ones in the remote areas, were often struggling to recruit high quality young teachers, provide sufficient teacher training, as well as utilize up-to-date teaching resources. The latter is due to the constraints regarding internet access in classrooms, and access to other new pedagogical strategies that would enable the teachers to better support their students.

Finally, various changes in the ChaoXianZu community also triggered accompanying changes and challenges to foreign language programs at the K-MNS schools. The ongoing power struggles between different languages at school (e.g., Hanyu vs. Korean, Korean vs Hanyu) often motivate or hinder (constrain) the active development of foreign language programs in the K-MNS. On the one hand, the over-valuing of Chinese, the national language (KHL< CNL>FL) impacts the development of FL programs. Even though it was not as overt compared to other minority nationality groups, this higher value given to Chinese over any other languages within the ChaoXianZu community is a good reflection of “the inequality [or gaps] between the theory and practices of China’s minority language policies” (Zhou, 2004). Ideally the state government policy encourages people in the community to send their children to MNS schools; in reality, not all parents in the community take advantage of the preferential policies. In his study of English as the third language education for ethnic minorities in western China, Yang (2005) reported that many minority students and their parents, including some regional government officers, showed a tendency to neglect ethnic languages. Similar observations were reported in ethnic Korean communities in northeast China. Parents are apt to focus more on having their children learn Chinese and English or other prestigious international languages, languages that they consider would bring more practical value as part of their investment in being successful, and help their children to settle into, and become active legitimate members of, the dominant society. For these parents, compared with having their children learn home languages – minority languages that are valid only at a local level – the learning of Mandarin Chinese (a national language) or English (an international language) brings more returns from their investments in time and finances. For them, learning powerful languages is an increasingly valuable resource for getting into good universities and gaining access to good jobs. Nonetheless, it seems that many parents in
the minority nationality communities including the Koreans show strong emphasis on learning Hanyu rather than a foreign language. On the other hand, ongoing tensions between Japanese and English programs, especially since the late 1990s, also reveal the power struggles among languages at the K-MNS. Zhang et al. (2008) and Zheng (2007), for example, note the strong tendency to over-value the learning of English over Japanese (JFL < EFL) in the ChaoXianZu educational community at large. These power struggles among the languages in the community motivated and pushed the K-MNS schools’ implementation of English programs; as a consequence, the JFL programs were pushed away or had to downsize. Thus, the FL programs at the K-MNS have been facing an era of innovation and reform.

**Foreign Language Education**

As such, current issues and tendencies toward multilingual education in the ChaoXianZu community have influenced the overall development of foreign language (FL) programs. For over three decades since the late 1970s, Japanese as a foreign language (JFL) education dominated the FL education programs in the K-MNS educational system. With the establishment of closer China-Korea diplomatic relationships in 1993, English as foreign language (EFL) program in the K-MNS has been gaining more popularity especially since the mid 2000s.

**The Spread of Japanese as Foreign Language**

The PKSS is one of the K-MNS schools that I attended during my early youth in Heilongjiang, northeast China. I learned my first foreign language, Japanese, which was the only foreign language offered by the school. It was also the general situation in the other K-MNS schools in Mudanjiang and northeast China at that time especially from late 1970s until mid 1990s; the popularity of Japanese as FL program among the K-MNS in northeast China is related to complex political and historical factors. A quick historical overview of the development of Japanese language programs at K-MNS in China shows the complication involved in the historical and political factors; notably this is in relation to the importance of the imperial Japanese government in this part of the world for almost half of the 20th century and until the end of World War II (WWII). A good example is the Chinese-Japanese dispute in 1931, represented by the “Wanpaoshan Incident” [万宝山事
on September 18 which triggered the second Sino-Japanese War. This dispute led to the establishment of the Manchukuo [Mânzhōuguó; 滿州国] (State of Manchuria) (1932-1945), by imperial Japan wishing to secure northeastern China as an industrial colony and a base of military expansion. The Imperial Japanese government’s ‘occupation’ deeply impacted the Korean community, their language and cultural education, and this is still affecting their lives today. Because of the political and military power of Japan in northeast China during the period of the second sino-Japanese War, a large number of schools in the region taught Japanese as a main language, and Japanese was also used as a language of instruction for other disciplines. As will be discussed more in Chapter 3 (see Section 3.2.1), this imposed language of education still impinges FL education in the K-MNS educational system in northeast China. When the China-Japanese diplomatic relations improved in the 1970s, schools started to offer Japanese again. But while Japanese was a language of education for the parents of today’s teenagers, it has acquired a status of (maybe privileged) foreign language for these youths today.

**The spread of English as Foreign Language**

With the largest population in the world, China is a main source country for a vast number of students learning English as their primary foreign language, mainly because of the new sociopolitical and economic changes along with rapid industrialization, especially since the early 1990s. Many Chinese people have begun to recognize the power of English as a Lingua Franca in global trade and academia, which has resulted in more and more people from China learning EFL. For many Chinese students in the formal education system, English or Japanese is not only simply a foreign subject; it is an essential resource connected to their educational and career aspirations for a better future. In particular, English has become a top FL subject to learn and teach in China. Besides the status of English as a key language in international trade, solid evidence of the popularity of English is that an increasing number of universities have established the passing level for the

---


13 For instance, this includes the period around the Japan–Korea Annexation Treaty (1910-1945) when Korea was a Colony of Japan. For more details, see Section 3.2.1 in Chapter 3, and the “Japanese occupation of Korea” [일제강점기 (日帝強佔期), 1910-1945; Ilje gangjeomgi] at https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Korea_under_Japanese_rule (Oct 2, 2015).
College English Test at band four [Daxue YingYu Siji] as a mandatory requirement for graduation (Zheng & Cheng, 2008). However, foreign language educators constantly struggle with developing more current and effective strategies for maximizing foreign language learners’ communicative competence in their target languages, including EFL educators in the Yanbian Korean Autonomous Prefecture (YKAP or Yanbian; 延边朝鲜族自治州) in the province of Jilin, northeast China.

In summary, the K-MNS school context that is the background of this study is a particularly complex one. Because of complex historical, political and social circumstances, for many, language learning was not a choice but a political act, a responsibility, or a necessity. The social impact and political significance for teaching and learning foreign languages in the region are enshrined in a long history of cultural resistance and struggle for emancipation. Plurilingualism, whether endured or desired, is therefore a core characteristic of the ChaoXianZu community. In an age of increased and new patterns of transnational mobility, plurilingualism therefore provides a particularly befitting conceptual framework to gain a nuanced understanding of the lived experiences of language learners.
Chapter 2.

Plurilingualism, Plurilingual Competence and Multiple Identities

This chapter aims to develop a conceptual framework that will serve as the backbone of this study which focuses on the experience and perspectives of foreign/third language (FL/L3) learners in today’s increasingly globalized world. From an educational sociolinguistic perspective, this study employs the framework of plurilingualism (Council of Europe, 2001) and the concept of plurilingual competence (Coste, Moore, Zarate, 1997/2009; Marshall & Moore, 2016) as the main analytic model to study plurilingual learners' dynamic repertoires and agency. In the upcoming sections, I first introduce the main conceptual framework that this study employed - a ‘dynamic wholistic’ approach that advocates for pluralist education. Then I present a review of relevant literature with an emphasis on multicompetence, trilingualism and third language acquisition, language and symbolic power.

2.1. A Dynamic Wholistic Approach

This study adopts a conceptualisation of plurilingualism in the study of individuals’ repertoires and agency in several languages. Mainly drawing from the framework of plurilingualism (Council of Europe, 2001) and the concept of plurilingual and pluricultural competence (Coste, Moore, Zarate, 1997/2009), one key emphasis is on a dynamic ‘wholistic’ approach to language learning (Castellotti & Moore, 2010). As a learner-centered wholistic approach, the framework of plurilingualism counters monolingual orientations which often view bi-/multilingual competence as a deficit in formal educational settings14 (Coste et al., 2009; Ehler & Moore, 2014), while highlighting the significance of the active promotion of plurilingualism and intercultural education for the benefit of all learners (Castellottie & Moore, 2010; Zheng & Ehler, 2015). In turn, this learner-centred

---

14 Such tension mainly involves an ongoing debate concerning binary questions such as whether the “Multi-”(lingualism, culturalism, competence) is an asset or deficit (for learning).
approach emphasizes the significance of developing alternative pedagogical approaches that examine the challenging issue of diversity. For instance, this includes designing better language education policies, preparing better training, as well as developing better curricula design and pedagogical strategies (FREPA, 2015).

2.1.1. Plurilingualism, Plurilingual Competence and Multiple Identities

Plurilingualism offers a dynamic vision for learners’ competencies. It is a multilingual view which does not describe separate competencies in fixed and labelled languages but views languages as “mobile resources” (Blommaert, 2010, p.43) within an integrated repertoire (Lüdi & Py, 2009) that can include translingual practice (Canagarajah, 2013). More specifically, the conceptualization of plurilingualism is based on a ‘wholistic’ definition of the repertoire as one (Grosjean, 2008) with features that have been socially constructed as belonging to separate languages (Calvet, 2006), and a dynamic understanding of competence in multiple languages (Moore & Gajo, 2009, p. 139), in which each individual currently practicing two (or more) languages, and able, where necessary, to switch from one language to the other without major difficulty, is bilingual (or plurilingual); by contrast, the distance between languages, the method of acquisition and the degree of symmetry between the two levels of competence, can vary considerably. (Lüdi & Py, 2009, p. 158)

Accordingly, this approach highlights the importance of understanding (i) the unique feature of plurilingual and pluricultural competence - a dynamic vision of competence, language relations and learning, as well as (ii) the complexity and dynamics involving learners’ languages and their use of different languages at home, at school and around the community at large. While focusing on interactions among, within and across language practices, this approach involves paying close attention to communicative ecologies and their interaction with learning (Ehlert & Moore, 2016).
Plurilingual speaker/learner

The dynamic wholistic view highlights the importance of paying attention to key characteristics of a plurilingual speaker who “develops a dynamic repertoire [which] consists of various languages, varieties of languages, and different forms of knowledge. These resources constitute linguistic, cultural capital and multiple forms of investment” (Moore & Gajo, 2009, p.142). In other words, plurilingual speakers are the owners of their ‘dynamic repertoire’ of multiple languages and cultures. They are familiar with different languages (e.g., Chinese, Japanese, English, French or Spanish), a variety of dialects of a language (e.g., Mandarin and/or Cantonese in Chinese; native or non-native accented English), and have different forms of knowledge (e.g., formal and informal forms in a language; the gaps in academic or business culture between different societies). Using the multiple resources in their repertoire, speakers engage in different investments such as when and how to learn an additional or foreign language, and ways of navigating their different languages. Most importantly, plurilingual learners engage in imaginative uses of their linguistic resources, constantly exploring and developing various strategies of managing the “multi-” in their dynamic repertoires:

the speaker can throw in light or shade certain zones of his/her competence, (dis)activate, (re)invent and negotiate his/her multiple resources in context. Depending on how the speaker interprets and categorizes the situation of communication, she/he can be encouraged to use her/his repertoire as a bilingual or as a learner and sometimes, even, as a monolingual. (Moore & Gajo, 2009, p.142)

For example, ‘code-switching’ (Milroy & Muysken, 1995), ‘code-meshing’ (Canagarajah, 2006) or ‘translingual practice’ (see examples in Canagarajah, 2013a & 2013b; Marshall & Moore, 2013) are the outcomes of such inventions. Code-switching is a traditional term that describes an important feature/characteristic of a bi-/multi-/plurilingual speaker’s language practice; it generally occurs when the language speaker alternates or switches between two or more languages, or language varieties, in the context of a single conversation or utterance. As a relatively newly developed term, ‘code-meshing’ refers to a strategy for merging different codes into a conversation; this includes strategic utilization of different emoticons in virtual communications by using new media tools. For Canagarajah (2006), code-meshing also refers to the braiding of local varieties

39
with the written standard in a move toward the gradual pluralization of academic writing
and the development of multilingual competence for translanguaging relationships.

The pluralist education model promotes the importance of having a good
understanding of such diversity in language learning strategies. The plurilingual framework
emphasizes the plurilingual speakers’ dynamic repertoires as an essential resource to
trigger increased motivation and creativity for language learners.

**Plurilingual Competence as an Asset**

As previously defined, the framework of plurilingualism and the concept of
plurilingual and pluricultural competence offer more complex and dynamic conceptions
and understandings of competence in multiple languages, giving greater attention to the
speaker’s voice and self-determination, and to the possibilities of empowerment and
resistance through differentiated language use, choices and actions (Coste, Moore &
Zarate, 2009). As such, language practices intertwine socio-political institutionalisations
and social awareness (Calvet, 2006), social representations and expectations (Moore &
Py, 2011), intentionality (Canagarajah, 2013a) and agency (Giddens, 1991). In this sense,
activating, developing and capitalizing on plurilingual competence is essential for
empowering the FL/L3 learners.

The framework of plurilingualism and plurilingual competence (PPC) reflects the
importance of acknowledging and promoting “plurality” at school. In particular, it places
emphasis on understanding the nature of and conceptualizations pertaining to diverse
learners’ *plurilingual and pluricultural competence*, and their strong connections to
learners’ academic performance in classrooms. As highlighted by a group of three
European scholars, Coste, Moore and Zarate (2009), plurilingual and pluricultural
competence is considered as an essential “life-long capital” of plurilingual speakers. More
specifically, plurilingual and pluricultural competence refers to

the ability [of a plurilingual speaker] to use languages for the purposes of
communication and to take part in intercultural interaction, where a person,
viewed as a social actor has proficiency, of varying degrees, in several
languages and experience of several cultures. This is not seen as the
superposition or juxtaposition of distinct competences, but rather as the
existence of a complex or even composite competence on which the social actor may draw. (Coste, Moore & Zarate, 2009, p.v)

In this sense, Coste et al. consider that plurilingual and pluricultural competence has strong connections with the academic success of all students:

[plurilingual and pluricultural] assets represent more than their economic or fiduciary connotations. If, in the relationship with plurality, the school directly or indirectly promotes attitudes of tolerance, of curiosity about things new and different, of intercultural perception and of identity awareness and affirmation in a world where levels and degrees of belonging display multiple and complex aspects, it will play a full role in civic and ethical education which today, in widely differing contexts not unaccompanied by renewed debate is at the centre of much reflection about schools. (2009, p.25)

More specifically, for Coste et al. (2009, p.22), the specific nature of the concept of plurilingual and pluricultural competence is defined by a complex intermeshing of sociolinguistic representations and language practices that can be construed around three key aspects affecting learning and cognitive trajectories:

• its inclusion in a particular family and occupational path, which implies a particularly important investment over time;

• a high degree of familiarity with otherness, which implies an ability to make choices, to manage risks optionally and to employ diversified strategies within partly compatible social and cultural logics;

• a relationship with the educational establishment leading to autonomous conduct with respect to school orthodoxy.

In this view, plurilingual individuals’ competencies are not perfect by definition (Lüdi & Py, 2009); they vary in different contexts and situations and are dependent on biographic circumstances, which play important roles in the learning process and the development of identity. They are closely connected to the speaker’s social representations, reflexivity, and awareness of pluri-/multi-lingualism, the three key aspects related to learners/learning of multiple languages that Moore and Gajo (2009) articulated.

[Plurilingualism] highlights social representations, reflexivity (in the sociological sense: i.e. individuals monitoring situations and norms as part of their interactional strategies), and awareness of bi/plurilingualism as central to the process of language learning and to the development of multiple identities. (Moore & Gajo, 2009, p. 138)
As such, it is important to utilize such multiple resources of the plurilingual learners in a situated learning context such as at school.

In summary, plurilingualism and plurilingual competence, though unique for each speaker, cannot be reduced to their individual dimensions. They relate to plurilingual speakers’ social trajectories and paths; and it is in this sense that plurilingualism and plurilingual competence are phenomena which assume full meaning along a “family path” (Coste et al. 2009, p.20), in which the experiences of previous generation(s) constitute a form of social, cultural and symbolic capital. Working with teenagers makes the family dimension even more central to a theoretical and methodological discussion on the study of plurilingualism and multiple identities since, as is the case in this study, youth represent a “generation which inherits a bi-national linguistic and cultural capital has more chance of making this capital yield a profit, and of giving it a plurilingual and pluricultural form” (Coste et al., 2009, p.20; also see Ehlert & Moore, 2014).

**Learning as Experience of Identities**

As Pavlenko and Blackledge (2004) state, identities can be viewed as social, discursive, and narrative options in a specific time and place. In contexts of mobility and language and cultural contacts, they become particularly salient as “multiple interpretations or meanings collide, resulting in a power struggle as to whose interpretation prevails” (Pavlenko & Blackledge, 2004, p.19; see also Block, 2008). Identity is therefore a negotiated and situated experience, in and across social communities where learning occurs (Kramsch, 2009; Norton & Toohey, 2011). As Wenger states (1998, p. 215): “Because learning transforms who we are and what we can do, it is an experience of identity. It is not just an accumulation of skills and information but a process of becoming” (Ehlert & Moore, 2014). See Section 2.4 for more details.

While studies have clearly highlighted the impact of national policies and the demographic effects of economic decisions regarding language and cultural transmission, stress needs to also be placed on the family dimension. This methodological choice makes it necessary to also give special importance to generational and family factors in understanding experiences of transitioning and mobility in language usage and the development of plurilingual learners’ identities. As Kolb & Kolb (2009) state:
A learning identity develops over time from tentatively adopting a learning stance toward life experience, to a more confident learning orientation, to a learning self that is specific to certain contexts and ultimately to a learning self-identity that permeates deeply into all aspects of the way one lives their life. (p. 5)

To conclude, the dynamic wholistic approach to language competence benefits all learners, including students from both dominant and non-dominant linguistic and cultural groups. A key point here is that, in the process of their learning, not only to acknowledge plurilingualism (the What), but it is also important to have a solid understanding of the full features of a plurilingual learner (i.e., the Why & How). Depending on how it is used, the practice of plurilingualism (i.e., the practice of ‘multi’) may box learners into restrictive discursive spaces or it can be used to explore and invent new and open-ended sites of discovery and representation (Boschman & Ehlert, 2016).

2.2. Multicompetence

Multi-/Plurilingualism is an essential element in the lives of many people today. However, its integration into the formal education system (i.e., plurilingual practice at school) is still frequently questioned by educators, stakeholders, and policy makers who instead support stereotyped monolingual orientations toward the competence of a plurilingual/multilingual speaker (Marshall & Moore, 2013). Studies show there is an ongoing tendency of not properly acknowledging the diverse ways that multi-/pluri-lingual speakers learn, as will be illustrated in Section 2.2.1. Mainstream academic discourses have for a long time problematized the deep-seated habit of assuming monolingualism as the norm for all individuals and societies. As briefly introduced in Chapter 1, the politics regarding plurality in education are often revealed through ongoing tension between monolingual and multilingual educational orientations and the competencies of plurilingual/multilingual individuals.

Since multilingualism [plurilingualism] is still considered exceptional in our part of the world, it is measured against monolingual standards, that is, a [bilingual or] trilingual person is thought to consist of [two or] three monolinguals in one, and this view has been accompanied by the belief that a true multilingual never mixes his/her languages. Unfortunately, this monolingual perspective of multilingualism is still prevalent in traditional
research on language acquisition. ... The origin of these monolingual norms is based on Chomskyan linguistics, which centers on the competence of the native speaker who, although not expressed explicitly, is monolingual. (Jessner, 2008, pp. 20-21)

Along with a rapid increase of globalization since the late 1990s, multi-/plurilingualism has been gaining increasing acknowledgment in various academic disciplines. A “new movement” in the multi-/plurilingual’s view recognizes the dynamic competencies of second/third language (L2/L3) speakers (i.e., multicompetence and the plurilingual competence) and gives voice to bi-/multilinguals’ perspectives.

Scholars who support a pluralistic approach to understanding a plurilingual speaker’s repertoires and agency began to problematize what they coined as a ‘monolingual view of bi-/multi-lingualism’ in research as early as the 1980s. While highlighting bi-/multi-linguals as “fully competent speaker-hearers” (Grosjean, 1989), they proposed a ‘bilingual (or wholistic) view of bilingualism’ (Grosjean, 2008, p.13). Following Gumperz’s (1982a) focus on interactional sociolinguistics, this wholistic view is significant as it emphasizes that the language competence of bilinguals should not be regarded as the simple sum of two monolingual competencies, but rather be appreciated in conjunction with the user’s repertoire of total linguistic resources.

The notion of ‘multicompetence’, as developed by the British scholar Vivian Cook in the early 1990s, brought significant implications to the study of the unique features of plurilingual speakers/learners’ competence, notably the idea that multilingual speakers develop a different metalinguistic awareness when compared to speakers who are competent in only one language (Moore & Gajo, 2009). Drawing on Grosjean’s concept of bilingualism (e.g. 1985, 2008), which portrays the bilingual as a competent but specific speaker-hearer, Cook (1992, 2003, 2006) argues that the L2 user – a term which he differentiates from ‘bilingual’— develops a multicompetence that is considerably different from a monolingual competence. He considers a key reason for this difference in competence to be because the multilingual learner cannot simply be described as a monolingual with some extra knowledge. That is, “in contrast to monolinguals, bi- or multilinguals have a different knowledge of their L1, their L2, a different kind of language awareness and a different language processing system” (Jessner, 2008a, p.21).
In short, advocates for a pluralist educational approach urge that a reorientation considering the dynamics of multilingualism should replace a conventional monolingual norm.

Pointing to parallels between their fields, a number of researchers interested in bi/plurilingualism from sociolinguistic, acquisitionist and educational points of view have worked towards a rapprochement and have been successful in establishing a tradition of sociolinguistics within language education. New discussions, anchored in a sociolinguistic approach to multi/plurilingualism and second and third language acquisition, called to pay more attention to the dynamics and symbolic values of language use in social interaction. These avenues of research, drawing upon sociological, sociolinguistic, anthropological and ethnolinguistic traditions, brought new insight and precise ways of addressing the complexity of bilinguals’[multilinguals’] linguistic and cultural repertoires and practices in a variety of contexts, and at their various junctures. ... Within these orientations, the focus on the individual as the locus and actor of contact has encouraged a shift of terminology from multilingualism (the study of societal contact) to plurilingualism (the study of individual's repertoires and agency in several languages). (Moore & Gajo, 2009, p.138)

A trigger for the shift in terminology from multilingualism to plurilingualism is, as introduced in Chapter 1, based on the complex yet subtle differences in the frameworks that support scholars’ work. Researchers have been striving to address the complexity of multi/plurilingualism as a social phenomenon. Debates concerning foreign language (FL) learners and their third language education moved away from second language acquisition (SLA) mainly considering foreign language learning in cognitive terms to embrace learning styles, as well as the dynamics and multiplicity of individual learners’ linguistic repertoires, their prior experiences and their agency in learning.

### 2.2.1. Learning a FL as a L3

Foreign language education has a significant impact on foreign language learners regardless whether they learn a foreign language (FL) as their second or third language. The main tension between monolingual and multilingual views of the competencies of plurilingual speakers (i.e., FL learners) can be revealed by the complex discourses on the role of a language learner’s prior linguistic knowledge and experience, such as if foreign language learners’ prior linguistic knowledge is framed as an asset or hindrance in their
FL (e.g., as L3) learning. More specifically, this includes the role of mother tongue (L1) in learning a foreign language and whether language contact markers in discourses are viewed in the learners’ L1 knowledge as interfering with or positively transferring in learning a new language. In the field of foreign language education, the inconsistent understandings of plurilingual speakers’ communicative competence raised considerations about the important aspects of FL/L3 learners and their learning processes. While second language education was more concerned about how the first language might influence (and hinders) second language acquisition, the focus on L3 learning invited complex understandings of how learners navigate their different languages. In particular, more consideration was devoted to:

i) cross-linguistic influences or language distance, including questioning what languages are easier to learn (See examples below and Section 2.3);

ii) attitudes and awareness of different languages, including questioning which languages are most valuable and relevant to learners’ academic or career goals (see Section 2.4).

A Chinese Perspective

FL/ L3 education in China today is situated within this same tension, and reflects divergent views among scholars of trilingualism and trilingual education. In the FL/ (as L3) education, one group of researchers emphasizes the interference of prior linguistic knowledge (i.e., L1/L2) in learning FL/L3, while another group accentuates the positive transfer of prior linguistic knowledge. Within the first view, minority national students learning a FL (e.g., English or Japanese) as their L3 have more difficulties [少数民族学生学习外语 (L3) 的难度大] in learning when compared to students who attend the Han majority schools and learn a FL as their L2. Researchers interpret that such difficulties are mainly due to the increased burden of learning one more language. For an example, researchers suggest that English as a Foreign Language (EFL) learners from a minority nationality school (MNS) who often learn English as their L3 have more difficulties compared to the ones from a Han majority school who generally learn English as their L2.

少数民族学生学英语的干扰比汉族学生多。既有来自本民族语言的，也有来自汉语的。这无形中增加了少数民族学生学习英语的难度。（Zhang, 2009）[There are more factors impeding minority students’ learning of English, compared to that of the Han Chinese students. Some of the interferences are from their heritage language while some are from]
Mandarin Chinese. Ultimately this increased the difficulties in their English language acquisition.]

Based on a study of L3 learners of EFL in Xin-Jiang, Jiang (2010) similarly considers how students’ prior linguistic knowledge negatively impacts their study of English pronunciation.

On the other hand, an increasing number of scholars now recognizes the importance of the positive transfer of students’ L1/L2 knowledge in their FL as L3 learning (Zhang, 2004; Nan, 2008). However, many of the studies on multilingualism and multilingual education in China have been published in non-English texts (e.g., in Chinese, Korean and Japanese) and are thus not well-known in the West (See Section 2.5.3). Zhang’s (1998; 2004) “double positive transfer teaching model” [双重正迁移教学模式] for EFL as L3 learners is evidence of such initiatives to study multilingualism and multilingual education. Zhang argues for the essential role that L1/L2 knowledge plays in L3 learning based on her long term study of trilingualism and multilingual education in the YanBian autonomous Korean prefecture in northeast China and was pioneered by the work on ChaoHan ShuangYu Ren [朝汉双语人; Korean-Chinese bilingual speaker] (of English as L3) from 1998. Another ethnic Korean scholar, Nan (2008), also provides meaningful rationale for the application of the double positive transfer model to EFL as L3 training for Korean-Chinese bilingual students who study in China.

The intention of the double positive transfer teaching model is to promote a strategic integration of cross-linguistic knowledge, which highlights the importance of utilizing students’ bi-/multilingual knowledge in order to maximize double positive transfer. Nan’s (2008, 2015) studies exemplify strategies for the successful implementation of the positive transfer teaching model in FL/L3 teaching.

[In terms of grammar, with a consideration of the similarities in the basic sentence structures between English and Mandarin Chinese, an English-Chinese comparative method would be the best approach to apply in the learning of personal pronouns in English, to minimize negative crosslinguistic transfer. However, English-Korean comparison can be a good method to employ for the mastery of possessive pronouns in English.]

In her study of a group of plurilingual learners from ethnic Korean communities in China, Nan discusses rationales and examples of the application of a positive dual transfer mode
in their English educational practices. She provides some good examples of the application of the double positive transfer model in teaching English as L3 to Korean-Chinese bilingual speakers, such as how to utilize a FL/L3 learner or a practitioner’s knowledge of different languages to help master a new language. Nan gives inspiring examples of the potential for a learner’s prior knowledge of other languages that bridge learning. Nan observes that the structure of Korean reflects some cultural aspects, such as the fact that it is more centered on the collective while English is more focused on the individual. Here is one of her examples: when learning the English words “my” (나의) and ‘mine’ (나의 것), the phrase “my father” in Chinese is “我的爸爸” [wo-de baba] (my father); in Korean, however, this phrase is generally used as “우리 아빠” [Uri Ahpah] (our father; 我们的爸爸) even though “uri” indicates plurality. As such, Nan considers how this effort to distinguish the uses of different languages can help clarify English possessive for students.

2.2.2. The ‘Mobility’ of (FL/L3) learners

As stated earlier, the politics concerning differences in societies have a strong impact on the construction of learner diversity. Often characterized by various complex factors such as political leanings, socio-economic status, languages, cultures, and literacies (Cummins, 2006, 2014; Gee, 2004), diversity in contemporary classrooms is more complex along with the growth of globalization. In particular, an increased level of (physical and virtual) mobility of the learners has also become a key factor related to the diversity at schools today:

- the emergence and global spread of the internet, other forms of mobile communication technologies (synchronous with the new forms of migration), and unprecedented work-related migration around the globe have created a ‘network society’ (c.f., Castells, 1996) in which people live and act in relation to long-distance, “virtual” peers in sometimes enormous online communities. (Van de Vijver, Blommaert and Gkoumasi, 2015, p. 2)

As such, the politics concerning the competence of a second/third or foreign/additional language learner is no longer only about matters of the nativeness of the language speaker (e.g., accent), but also involves other dynamic factors (Darvin & Norton, 2015, 2016) including increased level of plurilingual learners’ ‘mobility’ between multiple
linguistic, cultural, and geographical spaces. The rapid development of technological new media tools in today’s ‘network society’ adds another dimension to mobility as they navigate new virtual spaces of learning.

In this sense, the key to better supporting learner diversity is to understand their ‘mobility’ in multiple spaces. People’s increased mobility often impacts the linguistic landscapes that are used to understand societies (Blommaert, 2010; 2013). Because mobility adds complexity and unpredictability, Blommaert highlights the significance of paying close attention to the dynamics of present day classrooms – the main arena for generating and acquiring knowledge, and “[pushing] us to a perpetual revision and update of what we know about societies” (2013, p.11). As a result, the impact of increased diversity in classrooms often triggers questions about “the foundations of our knowledge and assumptions about societies, how they operate and function at all levels, from the lowest level of human face-to-face communication all the way up to the highest levels of structure in the world system” (Blommaert, 2013, p.11). Interestingly, language appears to take a privileged place in defining this paradigmatic impact.

In short, the exploration of strategies to better support diverse learners is a key part of education today and is characterized by an influx of highly mobile learners. In this sense, employing a dynamic wholistic approach in the study of plurilingual learners’ dynamic repertoires and agency in and out of school is essential, as we can see in the case of third language acquisition.

2.3. Third Language Acquisition (TLA)

Current issues and related matters concerning third language (L3) education and research are complex, due to a range of factors involving third language acquisition (TLA). As stated previously,

The misunderstanding of the phenomenon of multilingualism is rooted in the long-standing Western tradition of prejudice against bi- and multilingualism, ascribing a negative and harmful effect on the cognitive development of bi- or multilingual children (e.g. Laurie 1890; Jespersen 1922). On the other hand, recent research promotes bilingualism as a kind of guarantee for lifetime cognitive advantages over monolinguals (Bialystok
The benefits of multilingualism and multilingual education have been advocated during the last decade. In particular, findings in the area of third language acquisition and trilingualism, which has established itself as a field in its own right, have contributed to a better understanding of multilingual processes and use. Third language teaching, in consequence, has been informed by various trends in research of multilingual acquisition, but is also challenged by these findings. (Jessner, 2008a, p. 15)

Even though the TLA research dates back to the 1960s, it has been gaining increased popularity especially since the late 1990s. While affirming various common features with second language acquisition (SLA), researchers pointed out the differences between the SLA process and the TLA process (Cenoz, 2009; De Angelis & Dewaele, 2014; Hufeisen & Marx, 2007; Moore & Gajo, 2009; Otwinnoska & De Angelis, 2014). On the one hand, they affirm a strong interrelatedness between these two fields; the effects of bilingualism on third language acquisition are one of the most crucial aspects of third language research. A good example of studies shows the intertwined-ness of TLA and SLA is about the influence of the prior linguistic knowledge (i.e., L1) in the learning of a new language. On the other hand, as they point out an increased level of complexity in the TLA, researchers claim learning an L3 is different from learning a L2 in many respects. This is taking into consideration that “foreign/L2 learning-specific factors” such as individual L2 learning experiences, foreign language learning strategies and interlanguages of other learned languages (see Figure 2.1; c.f., Jessner, 2008a, p.23). In TLA development, the L2 often takes over the role of a bridge or supporting language (e.g. Hufeisen & Marx, 2007) because L3 learners have language specific knowledge and competencies at their disposal that L2 learners do not (De Angelis & Dewaele, 2014).

In her review of multilingualism and third language teaching, Jessner (2008a, pp. 19–20) introduces three key areas that reveal the complexity and diversity involving third language acquisition (TLA):

i) Its spectrum that covers a range of multilingual acquisition and use patterns, which can be seen from at least three main types of L3 learners;

ii) increased level of the acquisition/learning routes;

iii) increased level of complexity in the L3 learning process.
In terms of the first key area, some examples of L3 learners discussed in the literature on multilingualism include (a) children growing up with three languages from birth; (b) bilingual children learning an L3 at school at an early age; (c) bilingual migrant children moving to a new linguistic environment. The (b) and (c) groups include adolescent students and young adults learning an L3 relying mainly on foreign language classes at school or in an academy. SLA distinguishes two [acquisition] routes, that is, one can learn an L2 in parallel to the L1 from birth as is the case in childhood bilingualism, or one starts learning an L2 consecutively. On the other hand, in TLA, the number of routes of acquisition increases. Cenoz (2000) describes at least four types of acquisition order: (a) simultaneous acquisition of L1/L2/L3; (b) consecutive acquisition of L1, L2 and L3; (c) simultaneous acquisition of L2/L3 after learning the L1; (d) simultaneous acquisition of L1/L2 before learning the L3. Finally, multilingual acquisition, with the complexity in the learning process of L3 is increased, the learning process of L3 is often interrupted because the learner starts learning another language. This process might be reversed by reactivating and starting to relearn the L3. The possibility of interruption and restart of language learning leads to an increase in diversity in TLA, in contrast to SLA. Additionally, language learning can take place in either naturalistic or instructed settings or in a combination of both. In a TLA context the possibilities of combinations are once again increased. In this sense, the complexity of TLA is also linked to individual or psycho-social factors in language learning. As shown by various studies in an SLA-context, the interplay between the various individual factors influencing the language learning process is rather complex. It is assumed that, in TLA, the complexity increases. Unfortunately, the number of studies focusing on more than one variable at a time is still limited (Gardner, Tremblay & Masgoret, 1997) but it might turn out that the results differ in a multilingual learning context (Jessner, 2008).

2.3.1. Current Models

The complexity and diversity involved in TLA can also be seen from the dynamics in current models of L3 education. As stated in the previous section, most of the models used in research on multilingualism have been developed from a psycholinguistic perspective. Since research on TLA seeks to bridge the areas of second language acquisition (SLA) and bilingualism, studies from both fields have been taken into
consideration. Some of them are concerned with multilingual processing only, while others try to meet educational needs. Furthermore, a dynamic systems theory approach has changed perspectives in the study of multilingualism.

Current models of TLA can be summarized into the following seven:

1) Bilingual and multilingual production models (De Bot 1992, 2004; Clyne 2003a);
2) The language mode hypothesis (Grosjean 1998, 2001);
3) The factor model (Hufeisen 1998; Hufeisen & Marx 2007b)
4) The multilingual processing model (Meißner 2004; c.f., Jessner, 2008a);
5) A dynamic systems theory model of multilingualism (Herdina & Jessner 2002; c.f., Jessner, 2008a, pp. 25-26);
6) The model of multilinguality (Aronin & ´O Laoire 2004; c.f., Jessner, 2008a, p. 26)
7) Positive Double Transfer Learning model (Zhang, 1998; 2005)

The first six models of L3 acquisition suggest current TLA models developed in the west (Jessner, 2008a, pp. 21-22). Current studies about the situations in China show many commonalities with the cases in the west, but with some differences. The last model, namely the “Positive double transfer learning model”, reflects a Chinese perspective in continuation of a discussion about the multicompetence of FL as L3 learners in Section 2.1.

Considering the key objectives of this study, as background information of TLA and L3/FL learning, this section first provides a brief review of the “factor model” and the “dynamic systems theory model of multilingualism model. Then I provide more information about the “double positive transfer learning model”, a key learning model which was suggested by an English as L3 educator and researcher that has been implemented to the minority nationality school (MNS) system in China today especially since the late 1990s. It is particularly applicable in the case of the ethnic Korean community, the target community of this study (see Chapter 1, Section 1.6), where student participants of this study are from.
The Factor Model

Hufeisen’s (1998) model concerning third language education introduces some specific factors that impact foreign language learning. As shown in Figure 2.1, Hufeisen & Marx (2007) list a number of factors that they believe control or exert substantial influence on the language learning process. They range across five areas, including: (a) Neurophysiological factors such as general language acquisition capability, age -- which provide both the basis for and precondition of general language learning, production and reception capability; (b) Learner external factors, such as learning environment(s), type and amount of input, and L1 learning traditions -- the learning environment includes socio-cultural and socio-economic surroundings, including culture-specific learning traditions, as well as the type and the amount of input the learner is exposed to; (c) Affective/Emotional factors, such as motivation, anxiety, assessment of their own language proficiency, perceived, closeness/distance between the languages, attitude(s), individual life experiences -- emotional factors such as anxiety, motivation, or acceptance of the new target language; (d) Cognitive factors, such as language awareness, linguistic and metalinguistic awareness, learning awareness, knowledge of one’s own learner type and the ability to employ learning strategies and techniques; (e) Linguistic factors as included in the learner’s L1(s). In addition, Hufeisen & Marx consider Foreign Language Specific Factors are essential, such as “individual foreign language learning experiences and strategies (i.e., ability to compare, transfer, and make interlingual connections), previous language interlanguages, interlanguages of target language” (2007, p.314).
Figure 2.1. Learning an L3: Foreign Language Specific Factors

A focus of Hufeisen’s model is on looking at key factors that show the differences between the SLA process and the TLA process. Based on her key findings, Hufeisen suggests that TLA cannot be simply subsumed under SLA. For her, these new features are part of a new set of factors: foreign/L2 learning-specific factors such as individual L2 learning experiences, (explicit or subconscious) foreign language or L3 learning strategies and interlanguages of other learned languages. A learner’s L2 may take over the role of a bridge or supporting language in TLA development (e.g., Hufeisen 1991). In short, in the factor model, L3 learners are considered to have language specific knowledge and competencies at their disposal that L2 learners do not.

Dynamic Model of Multilingualism: The “M-Factor”

Multilingualism is a dynamic process which lends itself to the application of a dynamic systems theory (DST), which provides an adequate conceptual metaphor for discussing multilingual development (Jessner, 2008b), as suggested and highlighted by Herdina & Jessner (2002) in their dynamic model of multilingualism (henceforth DMM; see also Jessner, 2008a, 2008c, 2008d). According to DMM, the development of a multilingual system changes over time, and is non-linear, reversible – resulting in language attrition.
and/or loss – and complex. It is also highly variable since it depends on social, psycholinguistic and individual factors, apart from the different forms of contexts in which language learning takes place, as explained above. The model is conceptualized as an autonomous model of multilingualism to serve as a bridge between SLA and bilingualism research. It indicates that future language acquisition studies should go beyond studies of the contact between two languages, turning their attention towards trilingualism and other forms of multilingualism. Furthermore, it provides a scientific means of predicting multilingual development based on factors found to be involved (Herdina & Jessner 2002, p. 25). The DMM is based on several assumptions. The discussion is centred on psycholinguistic systems (LS1/LS2/LS3/LS4 etc.), which are defined as open systems depending on psychological and social factors. These systems are interdependent and not autonomous systems, as they are perceived in mainstream research. In the DMM, systems stability is related to language maintenance. The perceived communicative needs of the multilingual speaker influence language choice.

The holistic approach taken in the DMM is a necessary prerequisite for understanding the dynamic interaction between complex systems in multilingualism. “Multilingual proficiency” (MP) is defined as the dynamic interaction between the various psycholinguistic systems (LS1, LS2, LS3, LSn), crosslinguistic interaction (CLIN), and the M(ultilingualism)-factor or M-effect (Jessner 2008, p.26), as shown in the following crude formula:

\[ \text{LS1, LS2, LS3, LSn + CLIN + M-factor} = \text{MP} \]

**Double Positive Transfer Learning Model**

Both the factor model and the DMM indicate the complexity and dynamics involved in multilingual education, which can also be reflected by the TLA research in China today. A good example is the Double Positive Transfer (DPT) learning model suggested by Zhang (1998; 2005). Zhang (2005) explores the features of English education in Yanbian Korean Autonomous Prefecture (Yanbian), a Chinese government sponsored minority nationality community where a large group of the ChaoXianZu [ethnic Korean Chinese] people are residing. In Yanbian, third language learning based upon the existing two languages - Korean and Mandarin Chinese – is the fundamental characteristic of foreign language education, including the teaching of English. Through *A comprehensive review*
of English teaching for learners of Korean ethnic group in China: The study of the third language acquisition, Zhang (2008) claims “It has been proved that Chinese-Korean bilingual learners can successfully restructure their strategies in Japanese learning. For English teaching, however, the bilingual background has a negative effect which interferes the learners to make positive use of the knowledge in store”; accordingly, she argues that the significance of adaptable pedagogy must be found so as to advantage the learners’ bilingual aptitude in the third language acquisition (p. 77).

As such, Zhang puts forward the “double positive transfer” (DPT) learning model; she argues that the English as L3 learners’ knowledge of the prior two languages has a positive effect on their L3 learning with proper input by the teachers. Figure 2.2, showcases her DTL model, which highlights that

English learning is not singularly supported by one language like MOs [mother tongues] or students in Korea, but is backed by two languages. The triangle with solid lines constitutes the linguistic relationship between the three languages. At the top point is the target English language, which is supported by Korean at the left bottom point and Chinese at the right bottom point. BIs [bilinguals] can make use the linguistic resources, comprised of the two languages features they have accumulated through the previous language learning. Parallel with the linguistic triangle, there is an implicit cognitive triangle marked by the discontinuous lines. (Zhang, 2005, p. 268)

For clarity, she separates the originally-overlapping triangles. By adding the cognitive triangle, she considers that “bilinguals may mobilize their linguistic awareness, resistance of linguistic interference between two different languages, and sensitivity to communication, acquired quite naturally through two processes of language acquisition and learning, to the transfer process of the third language learning” (Ibid.). With a key objective of exploring “how this triangle works in the process of English learning”, Zhang carried out long term research mainly on the study of learners of English as an L3 from the ChaoXianZu community, namely the Chao-Han shuang-yu-ren [朝汉双语人; bilingual speakers of Korean and Chinese]. Based on the key findings from her studies over a two-decade period since she first suggested this model in 1998, Zhang argues that the DPT teaching model brings more benefits than negative impacts.
The intention of the double positive transfer teaching model is to promote a strategic integration of cross-linguistic knowledge, which highlights the importance of utilizing students’ bi-/multilingual knowledge in order to maximize double positive transfer. As mentioned earlier in Section 2.2.1, Nan’s (2008, 2015) studies exemplify strategies for the successful implementation of the positive transfer teaching model in FL/L3 teaching. Studies relevant to the double positive transfer model also include Liang (2013), Nan (2012; 2015), Zhang et al. (2008), Zheng & Zheng (2013), and Zheng & Ehlert (2015).

In short, current issues and related matters concerning third language (L3) education and research are complex. As will be discussed in the next section, this is mainly due to a range of factors involving plurilingual learners' languages and identities.

2.4. Languages and Symbolic power

A chief contributing factor to the complexity and dynamics involving third language acquisition (TLA) and L3 education is multilayered and hegemonic discourses concerning different languages. Often, as critical scholars such as Dei pointed out, “the bland, pluralist, multicultural talk celebrating ‘cultural diversity’ and/or ‘cultural difference’ fails to
affirm the context of power in which differences are produced, and the significance of
dislodging such power relations” (Dei, 2007, p. 188). This is mainly attributable to the
“symbolic power” that is attached to different languages in the social world (Bourdieu,
1991), which learners are often unaware of, and it can be revealed through

“[the] integration into a single linguistic community, which is a product of
the political domination that is endlessly reproduced by institutions of
imposing universal recognition of the dominant language, is that condition
for the establishment of relations of linguistic domination.” (Bourdieu, 1991,
p. 53)

The dichotomy between “language as a problem” and “language as a right” orientations
(Ruiz, 1988; c.f., Bahry, 2009, pp.18-22) is strongly related to these tensions. A good
example is the case of Chinese scholars’ debates on the role of a learner’s prior linguistic
knowledge on foreign language in L3 education (see Section 2.1.1). As such, a solid
understanding of the complexity involving languages and identities of L2/L3 or
foreign/additional language learners (i.e., plurilingual speakers) is essential. As briefly
mentioned in Section 2.2.1, it is because learning can be considered an ‘experience of
identity’ (Wenger, 1998) especially in relation to the plurality involving languages and
identities of the learners. More specifically, this relates to the idea that “identity is multiple
and frequently a site of struggle, investment is also complex, contradictory, and often in a
state of flux” (Darvin & Norton, 2016, p.20).

This section focuses on looking at how the imbalanced (symbolic) power of a
language is related to (foreign/additional/L3) language learners/learning. Key topics
include (i) the politics pertaining to languages in the social world, especially as a resource
with imbalanced ‘symbolic power’; (ii) the complex relation between language and identity
negotiation, which has a strong connection to a (foreign/L3) language learner’s past,
present and future, along with their active and strategic exploration of new identities; and,
(iii) the dynamics related to language learning, specifically foreign/additional language
learning as an ‘investment’.
2.4.1. Language as a Resource

‘Habitus’ and the (linguistic) Market: ‘Capitals’

French sociologist Pierre Bourdieu’s (1977; 1991) view on the dialectical relationship between the individual and society is particularly helpful in understanding the unequal distribution of different forms of resources (e.g. linguistic and cultural resources) in schools and in society at large. Central to Bourdieu’s (1991) conceptualization of symbolic power and identity is the notion of ‘habitus’, which he refers to as a set of embodied dispositions that a person acquires through his or her intensive, ongoing involvement in everyday life. The accumulation of ‘habitus’ actually starts in the home before students begin school. Most importantly, acquired habitus functions as a lens through which individuals can see themselves and others, as well as it conditions their language, behavior, and attitudes. Accordingly, habitus can produce a number of practices and perceptions, notably at school. For Bourdieu, practices and perceptions are the result of the relationships between habitus and the market. To him, a market is a “structured space of positions” (p.14) in which the interrelationship of positions is determined by the distribution of resources, what he refers to as “capital”. Bourdieu elaborates on various forms of capital, including the following three: economic capital (e.g. money, capital goods), cultural capital (e.g. knowledge, skills and educational qualifications), symbolic capital (e.g. prestige, honour), as well as linguistic capital (e.g. such as speaking the right form of language) (Bourdieu, 1986, 2006)\(^\text{15}\). In this sense, he highlights the significance of understanding language as an essential ‘capital’, considering the imbalanced power attached to different languages.

Supporting Bourdieu’s market theory, many researchers and scholars focusing on second/foreign language education consider language as an essential ‘resource’ in learning (see examples from Byrd Clark, 2009, 2012; Cummins, 2000; Han, 2007; Moore, 2005; Norton, 1995, 2000, 2013; Toohey, 2000, 2007). For them, language can also be ‘a place of identity negotiation’ (see Section 4.2), or an important ‘investment’ for a language learner (see Section 4.3). One key aspect that they highlighted is the ‘social’ and ‘power’

\(^{15}\) In Bourdieu’s long career as a sociologist, his definitions changed over time. For a more detailed review on the development of Bourdieu’s ideas (notably on habitus, power, and capital), see John Thompson’s introduction for Bourdieu (1991).
embedded in a language, which is “a principal means for regulating access [of learners] to the social networks and situations in which value is assigned to [their] resources and in which those resources are produced and distributed” (Heller and Martin-Jones, 2001, p. 214). Thus, the distribution politics of these resources often becomes a trigger for generating various degrees of power relationships within and between the different languages of individuals and communities (Dei, 2007). More specifically, the politics concerning the distribution of resources has a strong connection to social inequality, as is often revealed through the politics pertaining to the distribution of educational resources (e.g., access to languages and learning materials) at school or in the academy.

In this sense, language learners’ agency and their social identities are strongly related to practice. Advocates of a pluralistic approach highlight the position of a ‘learner as an agent’, who actively takes possible risks and who may also receive great benefits from the investment into (learning) a new language (Moore & Gajo, 2009), and who often reveals or asserts his/her identities through various active situated ‘practices’.

In summary, language is an essential ‘resource’ for the ‘learner’ in practice. This view reveals imbalanced symbolic power attached to different languages. As will be discussed in the next section, the complexity involving the ‘social’ and ‘power’ of different languages also has a strong relevance to plurilingual speakers’ identities. The same is valid for foreign language learners who are making various ‘investments’ by learning new languages to accumulate symbolic capital; they choose and learn a target language, based on their different awareness of language values. In terms of my dissertation research, this view is important for me to have a better understanding of the complexity involving L2/L3/FL language learners/learning. More specifically, the view helps me to

16 In the case of China, people often see languages as resources for investment. For example, Yang’s (2005) study shows that many minority parents, students and regional government officers acknowledge the importance of learning the heritage language through formal schooling, while often at the same time neglecting to learn their own ethnic language. They are apt to focus more on studies of Mandarin Chinese and English, or other prestigious international languages that bring more practical value, as part of their investment in being successfully settled into and an active legitimate member of the dominant society. For these parents, compared with having their children learn home languages – minority languages that are valid only at a local level – the learning of Mandarin Chinese (a national language) or English (an international language) brings more returns from their investments in time and finances. For them, learning powerful languages is an increasingly valuable resource for gaining access to good jobs, and going to good universities.
investigate how such complex factors are related to the teenage plurilingual students’ development of language representations, identity and their agency in learning.

2.4.2. Language, Agency, and Identity Negotiation

As noted previously, the role of language is significant. Not only is it an essential resource which often has different levels of symbolic power, language is also a place of identity negotiation.

Language is “the place where actual and possible forms of social organization and their likely social and political consequences are defined and contested. Yet it is also the place where our sense of ourselves, our subjectivity, is constructed” (Weedon, 1987, p. 21).

Identity of the learner is often changing over time because spaces of socialization and knowledge construction continue to multiply. (Norton, 2000; c.f., Darvin & Norton, 2016, p.20)

In this sense, language can be considered as a medium of or the place for identity construction and negotiation; it has a strong relation to a language learner’s agency in active learning and communication.

British scholar Anthony Gidden’s (1984, 1991) theory of structuralism, especially social structure and agency, helped me to gain a better understanding of language, agency and power. In particular, his notion of ‘agency and power’ was particularly helpful in understanding the situation of my participants, a group of teenage plurilingual (i.e., FL/L3) learners with ethnic Korean heritage. For Giddens,

Agency refers not to the intentions people have in doing things but to their capability of doing those things in the first place (which is why agency implies power: cf. the Oxford English Dictionary definition of an agent, as ‘one who exerts power or produces an effect’). Agency concerns events of which an individual is the perpetrator, in the sense that the individual could, at any phase in a given sequence of conduct, have acted differently. (Giddens, 1984, p.9)

His view on the close interrelations between resource and power is also helpful:

Resources are media through which power is exercised, as a routine element of the instantiation of conduct in social reproduction. ... Power
within social systems which enjoy some continuity over time and space presumes regularized relations of autonomy and dependence between actors or collectivities in contexts of social interaction. But all forms of dependence offer some resources whereby those who are subordinate can influence the activities of their superiors. This is what I call the ‘dialectic of control’ in social systems. (Giddens, 1984, p.16)

My understanding of human agency, as the capacity for a human being (a person or an agent) to make decisions and enact them on the discursive practices in a social world, is also inspired by Holland, Skinner, Lachicotte & Cain (1998) who consider “persons [as human beings] are malleable, changeable, and subject to discursive powers” (p.5). For Holland, et al., the term Agency means “human’s 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 those forces” (1998). Accordingly, they suggest examining “the development of identities and agency specific to practices and activities situated in historically contingent, socially enacted, culturally constructed ‘[figured] worlds’” (p. 7), in order to look into identities and agency of an individual, Holland et al emphasize the significance of examining the complex power relations produced or shaped by multiple discourses in a sociocultural world, namely the “figured world”\(^{17}\). They highlight that identities and agency are formed dialectically (i.e., practice of arriving at the social reality by two-way collaboration) and dialogically (i.e., practice of, relating to, or written in dialogue) in myriad figured worlds (i.e., home, community, school/university, nation-state). In a similar sense, I consider the agency of the plurilingual and pluricultural individuals/learners is enabled or constrained by multiple and multilayered discourses that are produced or shaped by the uneven exchange of various degrees of power. Such power includes, for instance, what Said (1978; 2003) refers to as “power political”, “power intellectual”, “power cultural” and “power moral”

\(^{17}\) For Holland, et al., the notion of “figured world” means “a socially and culturally constructed realm of interpretation in which particular characters and actors are recognized, significance is assigned to certain acts, and particular outcomes are valued over others. (1998, P.52)
Discursive fields’ are themselves made up of competing discourses that produce different subject positions and forms of identity (Weedon, 2004).\(^\text{18}\)

In short, the relationships between languages and identities of plurilingual and pluricultural individuals (i.e., FL learners) are complex, and depend on a wide range of factors around the value of (foreign) language learning in their particular situation, as well as their past and present and (imagined) future.

**Identity Negotiation: Past, Present and Future**

The complexity involved in the dynamic features of identities illustrates that an individual’s identity construction is part of a process through which an individual relates himself or herself to his or her past, present and future (often through different language and language learning). As such, one’s identity is a ‘wholistic’ history that connects a person’s past, present and future.

Identity is not simply about “where we come from” (or the Root) or a “recovery of the past”, but it is also about “who we might become” (or the Route we may choose) (Hall, 1996). The location of such identity (re)construction and (re)negotiation is consistent with the notion of “being and becoming” (Ibrahim, 1999; see also Giampapa, 2004).

*Being* is being distinguished here from *becoming*. The former ["being"] is an accumulative memory, an experience, and a conception upon which individuals interact with the world around them, whereas the latter ["becoming"] is the process of building this conception (Ibrahim, 1999, p. 354)

\(^{18}\) Weedon (2004) emphasizes the great social power at play in relation to languages and identities of people from different social categories (e.g. dominant vs. subordinate, privileged vs. marginalized) in social worlds. In particular, Weedon’s perspective on the *subject* and *subjectivity* has a greater focus on agency and the social agent. For Weedon, ‘subjectivity’ refers to the aspect of an individual’s psyche through which the person identifies himself or herself and his/her place in the world. Self-identification entails the person ‘inserting’ herself into a particular ‘subject position’ within a chosen ‘discourse’. Therefore, she considers subjectivity is liable to change and to change radically in the event a new discourse becomes available. Such changes in power relations between rival discourses, or by different subject positions, may also become available within the same discourse.
Giampapa (2004) further discusses how marginalized individuals manage, adapt, and negotiate multiple identities within the public and private spaces of their diverse worlds. Giampapa argues that “the act of claiming identities and claiming the spaces of identity is a political act” (p. 193). Using Giddens’ (1984) terminology of the ‘centre’ and ‘periphery’, she notes that “being and becoming” means both movement from the periphery, and a reconfiguration of the centre. For her, people at the centre are those who have the power to define linguistic, cultural and social norms, and reproduce those norms, such as through controlling the symbolic and material capital or resources (e.g., languages) of an individual or group. Individuals or groups at the periphery are regarded as potential linguistic and cultural consumers who negotiate or challenge their social positioning based on the ways in which their identities are managed, contested, and negotiated (Giampapa, 2004).

Basically, the notion of ‘being and becoming’ involves the complex power relations inherent in language and identity. As Giampapa elaborates,

The discourses of identity, language, and the representations of Italianita play a defining role with regard to who is at the ‘centre’ and who is at the ‘periphery’ of these [multiple] worlds. The participants’ ability to move within and across them is dependent on the valued symbolic capital at play within the worlds, on the negotiability of their identities, and on their decisions to lean on different aspects of their identities in order to facilitate a shift in positioning. (p. 215; italics as in the original)

From this perspective, an individuals’ identity is connected to his or her past, present and future. As noted earlier, language plays an essential role in this connection. In my pilot study of six young plurilingual learners in China (Ehlert & Moore, 2014), multiple self-identifications were common among teenagers. A good example is the case of Chunhee, a 17-year-old Korean-Chinese-English-Japanese plurilingual speaker/learner from the ethnic Korean community in Beijing. Born as a 4th generation of overseas Korean in China, Chunhee received her education through a K-C bilingual elementary school, a Han Chinese public junior high school, as well as from a China-Canada international high school in Beijing. As an individual with various experiences with learning and using

---

19 In the case of the three Italian youths in Giampapa’s study (2004, p. 195), through “the narratives of self-identification” that they articulate a complex discourse of resistant, these youths challenge the ‘centre’ with respect to what it means to be Italian Canadian in Toronto.
different languages and cultures, Chunhee was often facing identity choices. Sometimes she self-identified as an ethnic Korean or a Chinese, but on some occasions, she would simply assert herself as an overseas Korean living in China or even as a ‘citizen of the world’. Other studies (e.g., Byrd Clark, 2009, 2012) also show how FL/plurilingual learners self-identify differently, depending on situations and time.

In short, the notion of being and becoming reveals the possibility that power relations may motivate or stimulate individuals as active social agents, and encourage reinterpretations of their past, present and future. These individuals have the capability and skills to challenge the central discourse and constantly negotiate their identities in various situations, mainly based on (a) power relations revealed through the central and local discourses concerning language and identities, and (b) the value of symbolic capitals that they have.

**New identities: Imagined, Strategic**

Thus, as active ‘agentive beings’, individuals are constantly searching for new social and linguistic resources that allow them to construct new desirable identities while resisting undesirable ones that limit them to specific times and places (Pavlenko & Blackledge, 2004). Similarly, plurilingual speakers are making ongoing efforts to negotiate different identities as their strategy to challenge hegemonic discourses, while exploring alternative and new identities. However, the strategies each speaker employs in utilizing multiple (linguistic and cultural) repertoires in different situations for their benefit vary. They involve imagination and active decision-making.

**The Imagination and Production of New Identities**

Imagination plays an essential role in the process of producing options for new identities (Pavlenko & Blackledge, 2004). Wenger (1998) affirms the key role that imagination plays in the development of identities as a way to make sense of belonging, engagement and alignment. For her, the concept of imagination refers to “a process of expanding our self by transcending our time and space and creating new images of the

---

20 For instance, Gee (2004) uses game as a metaphor to illustrate how the outcome of a game differs for each player depending on the player’s skills and strategies.
world and ourselves” (p. 176). Imagination enables educators and learners to connect to a new world beyond “a set of relations among persons, activity, and world, over time and in relation with other tangential and overlapping communities of practice” (Lave & Wenger, 1991, p. 98). In relation to learning, engaging students/learners in imaginations is “crucial to successful learning” (Egan, 2005, p. xi) as it helps students deepen their involvement in learning activities (Egan, Madej & Takaya, 2007, preface).

In relation to the community of practices, sense of belonging in imagination, and identity negotiation in multilingual contexts, the notion of imagination is particularly useful and relevant in the context of plurilingual and pluricultural individuals/learners. This theory has helped me to see that when “struggles which occur when certain identity options [of these learners] are imposed or devalued, and others are unavailable or misunderstood” (Pavlenko & Blackledge, p. 20), learners can negotiate new or alternative identities/options to feel a sense of belonging.

**Strategic Identities**

*Decision making between “Loss” and “Gain”*

Another key aspect relevant to the identity negotiation of learners is a process by which they strategically make decisions between various identity options in their language and literacy practices in different contexts. I found that Gee’s (2004) view on identity negotiation based on the notion of “loss” and “gain” of identity is inspiring, which compliments the notion of imagination previously discussed. Specifically, “people will accept loss only if they see [or can imagine] the gain as a gain” (Gee, 2004, p.93; italics as in the original). For Gee, people evaluate loss and gain of identity based on their beliefs which strongly relate to their understanding of the imagined symbolic capital value attached to academic languages/literacies. He set forward three conditions under which individuals view academic language as a gain: (a) they recognize and understand the sort of socially situated identities and activities that recruit the specialist language; (b) they value these identities and activities, or at least understand why they are valued; and (c) they believe they (will) have real access to meaningful (perhaps simulated) versions of them (Gee, 2004, p.94). From this perspective, he argues that
academic language, and its attendant modern consciousness, once thought to be central to what counted as a “schooled” and “intelligent” person, is now at best a necessary, but not sufficient condition for success in society. (p. 95)

Accordingly, Gee stresses the significance of sociocultural studies of literacy that emphasize the importance of alternative forms of “literacy” which may engage students to learn.

In short, identities can be viewed as social, discursive, and narrative options in a specific time and place (Pavlenko & Blackledge, 2004). They become particularly salient in contexts of mobility and language and cultural contacts, considering “multiple interpretations or meanings collide, resulting in a power struggle as to whose interpretation prevails” (Pavlenko and Blackledge, 2004, p.19; see also Block, 2008). Identity is therefore a negotiated and situated experience, in and across social communities where learning occurs (Kramsch, 2009; Norton & Toohey, 2011). As Wenger (1998) states, “Because learning transforms who we are and what we can do, it is an experience of identity. It is not just an accumulation of skills and information but a process of becoming” (p. 215; c.f., Ehlert & Moore, 2014; also see Section 2.2.1). In relation to my dissertation research on ethnic Korean teenage trilingual learners at a multilingual school in China, the notion of language as a place of identity negotiation (i.e., between old and new identities) will provide an essential analytical tool that will help me to have a better analysis of (a) how the teenagers relate their sense of belonging in relation to their past, present and future; and, (b) how and to what extent these teenage plurilingual learners develop and use different strategies in making various identity choices across time and space (e.g. learning Japanese as second/foreign language instead of English as second/foreign language). Specifically, theories related to imagination and loss/gain identity choices will help in examining plurilingual and pluricultural learners’ identity and school success strategies.

2.4.3. Language (Learning) as an ‘Investment’

The idea of learning as an experience of identity is important in terms of foreign language (FL; as L2 or L3) education. In particular, Bonnie Norton’s (1995, 2000, 2013) conceptualization of ‘investment’ concerning second /additional language learners and learning is helpful for understanding how the experience of (alternative, new or imagined)
identities is closely related to FL learning. While complementing Gidden’s viewpoints on language and agency, Norton also draws upon Bourdieu’s market theory. While acknowledging the strong power relationships that exist between languages and identities, Norton (2000) pointed out the complexity involved in the social and historical construction of the learner’s unique relationships to the target language learning, and highlights two key points in these relations: (i) a language learner is an ‘active social agent’ who has the agency of making an investment decision; thus, (ii) second/additional language learning is an ‘investment’ for an L2 learner.

For Norton, language learners are active agents who have “the multiple nature of subjectivity” (2000; c.f., Norton, 1995, p.15) and agency. Norton further elaborates, as an active agent,

For her, the term identity refers to “how people understand their relationship to the world, how that relationship is constructed across (different) times and spaces, and how people understand their possibilities for the future”; therefore, “every time language learners speak, they are not only exchanging information with their interlocutors; they are also constantly organizing and reorganizing a sense of who they are and how they relate to the social world” (p. 410). More precisely, ‘discursive fields’ are themselves made up of competing discourses that produce different subject positions and forms of identity (Weedon, 2004). In addition, this is because “identity is multiple and frequently a site of struggle, investment is also complex, contradictory, and often in a state of flux” (Darvin & Norton, 2016, p.20).

In addition to her view on social identity of (FL/L3) language learners, I found that Norton’s view on L2/L3/FL learning as an investment of new social identity is inspiring and allowed me to have a better understanding of my participants. Theorizing the complex relationship between the language learner and the social world, Norton (1995; 2000; 2013) sought to examine under what conditions social interaction takes place, and to what extent
relations of power limit opportunities for language learners to speak (Bourdieu, 1991). She questioned traditional Second Language Acquisition (SLA) researchers’ perspectives, which often only focus on a learner’s motivation for learning a target language and the personality of the language learner. More specifically, ‘commitment to learning’ is understood “not just as a product of motivation, which in earlier research assumed a unitary, fixed and ahistorical ‘personality’ and relied on the dichotomies associated with traditional conceptions of the learner (good/bad, motivated/unmotivated, anxious/confident, introvert/extrovert)”; Norton argued that “the psychological construct of motivation did not suffice in explaining how a learner may be highly motivated, but may resist opportunities to speak in contexts where he or she is positioned in unequal ways” (Darvin & Norton, 2016, p.20)

In turn, drawing on Bourdieu’s notion of cultural capital (1991), Norton (2000) contends that second/additional language learning is an investment (i.e., the learner’s investment in the target language). She reasons that,

If learners invest in a second language they do so with the understanding that they will acquire a wide range of symbolic and material resources, which will in turn increase the value of their cultural capital. Learners expect or hope to have a good return on their investment – a return that will give them access to hitherto unattainable resources. (2000b, p.10)

From this perspective, Norton considers that an investment in a target language is also an investment in a language learner’s social identity. Learners invest in a language because it will help them acquire a wider range of symbolic and material resources, which will in turn increase the value of their cultural capital and social power (Norton, 2013). More specifically, as Darvin & Norton (2015, 2016) stated in their “model of investment”,

Language learners have complex, multiple identities, changing across time and space, and reproduced in social interaction (Darvin & Norton, 2016, p.20). … Learners invest in a language because it will help them acquire a wider range of symbolic and material resources, which will in turn increase the value of their cultural capital and social power (Norton, 2013). … Because identity is multiple and frequently a site of struggle, investment is also complex, contradictory, and often in a state of flux. (Darvin & Norton, 2016, p.20)
In this sense, foreign language learning is a site of struggles for complex, multiple identities, and simultaneously for the complicated act of investment. For the learners, it is a dynamic process of experiencing the complexity involved in their identities and investment. In terms of foreign language learning for instance, choosing a particular foreign language - such as English or Japanese or Spanish - is understood as an expression of a FL learner’s desire for upper level social mobility.

**Across Multiple Spaces**

As noted earlier, the idea of investment is particularly applicable to the study of a new generation of learners in today’s dynamic classrooms including the plurilingual teenagers. As the leaders of using new technology in today’s networking age, for these youths, engagement in active learning and communication especially through new, increasingly multimodal ways of meaning-making is important. As Darvin & Norton have noted:

As digital affordances continue to offer a more flexible engagement with the world, the impact of the virtual on identity is significant. Language learners move fluidly across online and offline spaces, and their capacity to identify and navigate systemic patterns of controls impact their investment in particular language and literacy practices. (2016, pp.23-24)

A number of researchers and theorists in education, sociolinguistics, and social science also affirm the essential role that identity plays in plurilingual learners’ mastery of academic language and literacy (see examples in Cope and Kalantzis, 2000; Cummins, 2000, 2006; Martin-Jones & Jones, 2000; Moore, 2010; New London Group, 1996). Building upon the link of individual literacy practices to social contexts, those scholars have introduced some important aspects of the broad field of literature on multiliteracies. Expanding upon the scholarly work in the literacy field in the 1990s, Cope and Kalantzis’s (2000) *Multiliteracies: literacy learning and the design of social futures* takes into account linguistic, cultural diversity and multimodal channels in educational settings. They extended socio-cultural and critical theorizing and advanced new approaches to literacy learning, while noting that globalization and increasingly diverse classrooms challenged the notion of a standard. In turn, Cope and Kalantzis “link approaches in multiliteracies to three aspects of emerging cultural, institutional, and global orders: [i] engagement with the multiplicity of communications channels and media; [ii] the increasing salience of cultural
and linguistic diversity; and [iii] new, increasingly multimodal ways of meaning-making wherein written-linguistic modes of meaning cannot be separated from visual, audio, and spatial patterns of meaning” (2000, p. 5; c.f., Marshall & Moore, 2013, p.479). In essence, the most important skill that a student needs is the ability to “negotiate” many forms of diversity, the ability to switch between “languages, dialects, and registers” and the knowledge needed to utilize multiple channels or modes of meaning-making (Cope & Kalantzis, 2000, p.14).

Among the advocates of the pluralist approach, Cummins (2000, 2006) also highlights the significance of multiliteracies pedagogy as an essential empowerment tool that supports learning of students with diverse linguistic and cultural backgrounds. Building upon the New London Group’s (1996) multiliteracies pedagogy framework, Cummins (2006) claimed the importance of strategic use of plurilingual students’ “identity texts” as a tool to empower their learning (e.g., through ‘dual language showcase’). Canagarajah’s (2013a) analysis of ‘translanguaging’ practice of plurilingual speakers (e.g., ESL/EFL graduate students) is another good example, as introduced earlier in Section 2.1.1. He highlights multi-/plurilingual speakers’ ability to “shuttle between languages, treating the diverse languages that form their repertoire as an integrated system” (Canagarajah, 2011, p. 401; c.f., Marshall & Moore, 2013, p.479), an essential aspect in deep learning. In this sense, the strategic use of multiple (linguistic, cultural and new media) resources is important in (foreign/additional language) learning. Thus, the (plurilingual) learners make investments in developing the ‘multi’ in their dynamic repertoires of linguistic, cultural and literacies.

In short, the “investment model” highlights the importance of considering second/additional language learning as not only a cognitive process but also as a social process (Darvin & Norton, 2015, 2016). With a highlight on the socially and historically constructed relationship between learners and the target language, the idea of language learning as ‘investment’ provides “a critical lens that allows researchers to examine the relations of power in different learning contexts, and to what extent these conditions shape how learners commit to learning a language” (Darvin & Norton, 2016, p.20).
2.5. Conclusion

As shown in the above sections, the framework of *plurilingualism, plurilingual competence and multiple identities* has strength and pertinence as an analytic model for the study of increased learner diversity in contemporary classrooms. This dynamic wholistic approach is particularly helpful for the study of plurilingual students’ dynamic linguistic and cultural repertoires and their agency, notably in minority contexts. In terms of my dissertation research, this analytic model can help me have a more wholistic examination to understand the complexity that plurilingual teenage students from a K-MNS secondary school in China face when learning foreign languages.
Chapter 3.

Research Site, the Participants and Methodology

This chapter introduces the methodology for this dissertation research, a four-year qualitative study involving a group of 22 teenage plurilingual learners of Korean heritage in northeast China. Adopting an emic perspective which “acknowledges the views and opinions of participants” (Pavlenko & Blackledge, 2004, p.25), this study employs combined methods of ethnographic and visual research approaches, in order to examine current issues and the complexity involving foreign language learners/learning at school.

As stated in the previous two chapters, my current research focus has evolved mainly from my professional and personal experience and interests. The topic of this dissertation research project and related research questions were shaped by reading scholarly literature in academia, data from the field, and in active collaboration with my participants as well as through ongoing conversation with my advisory committee members. I started with a general interest in better understanding the learner diversity especially concerning multi-/plurilingual students in today’s dynamic classrooms in west and East Asia. In one of my methodology courses, I had the opportunity to carry out a pilot study on how teachers’ and students’ perspectives on L1 (heritage language) may have affected (Chinese heritage) EFL learners’ academic performance at a school in the Great Vancouver region. During data analysis, I realized that it was not my earnest desire to investigate the cognitive or psychological aspects of this issue. During an in-depth level of reading, writing and self-reflection, especially through gaining insights from the studies on the similar topics such as Ahn (2011), Adamson & Feng (2015), Fang (2009, 2010), Feng (2007), Marshall & Moore (2013), Wang (2015), Zhou (2009, 2012), it gradually became clearer to me that my main intention for this research was to understand the socially, culturally, historically and politically constructed nature of FL/L3 learning.

This dissertation research project examines the relationship between the ethnic Korean plurilingual students’ FL/L3 learning and their historical, and social contexts. It considers ways they perceive, construct and negotiate meanings of their experiences through schooling under a multilingual educational context (i.e., K-MNS). In particular,
from an educational sociolinguistic perspective, this study aims to explore how ethnic Korean students navigate the complexity of their multiple languages and identities especially in relation to their learning. As the central question, this study is meant to better understand: How L3 (JFL/EFL) learners of ethnic Korean heritage in a multilingual education program in a MNS school in Northeast China navigate mobility and the complexity of their multiple languages and identities. In particular the study sets to further explore the following three specific sub-questions:

1) What are the ethnic Korean teenage students’ experiences and representations of their plurilingualism?
2) How do these experiences and representations affect their language learning?
3) How does foreign language and multilingual learning affect their life trajectories?

In the upcoming sections, I begin by providing the key rationale for the research design of this study – a qualitative inquiry mainly employing ethnographic methods with a visual research approach as a supplement. I then introduce the research site and the participants, data collection and data analysis methods, as well as the researcher’s biases.

3.1. Research Design

3.1.1. Qualitative Research Inquiry (QRI)

Qualitative research – whatever it might be – certainly does not represent a unified set of techniques or philosophies, and indeed has grown out of a wide range of intellectual and disciplinary traditions....[For a ‘working definition’,] qualitative research is [1] grounded in a philosophical position which is broadly ‘interpretivist’ in the sense that it is concerned with how the social world is interpreted, understood, experienced or produced; [2] based on methods of data generation which are flexible and sensitive to the social context in which data are produced; [3] based on methods of analysis and explanation building which involve understandings of complexity, detail and context....Qualitative research aims to produce rounded understandings on the basis of rich, contextual, and detailed data. There is more emphasis on ‘holistic’ forms of analysis and explanation in this sense, than on charting surface patterns, trends and correlations. Qualitative research usually does use some form of quantification, but statistical forms of analysis are not seen as central. (Mason, 1996, pp. 3-4)
Qualitative Research Inquiry (QRI) is the main feature in the design of this study. With a rich variety of strategies and techniques, QRI has strength in providing a “compelling description of human world” (Kvale & Brinkmann, 2009, p.47). Even though it was based on work from over two decades ago, I found that the seven key elements of qualitative research that Mason (1996) outlined are very helpful in understanding how qualitative research can be a strong approach for studying the complex situations involving multilingual/plurilingual youth in today’s highly globalized era:

A few key points about what qualitative research can, in my view, should be. [More specifically, it should] 1) be systematically and rigorously conducted; 2) be strategically conducted, yet flexible and contextual; 3) involve critical self-scrutiny by the researcher, or active reflexivity; 4) produce social explanations to intellectual puzzles; 5) produce social explanations which are generalizable in some way, or which have a wider resonance; 6) not be seen as a unified body of philosophy and practice, whose methods can simply be combined unproblematically; 7) be conducted as an ethical practice, and with regard to its political context. (Mason, 1996, pp. 5-6; Italics are as in the original)

Intrinsically, qualitative research inquiry follows the most detailed and strict research design and methodological procedures for the investigation and final report writing (Creswell, 2007). Its key strength is its ability to provide the richest and most descriptive data in researching the ‘lived experience of human beings’ (Manen, 2007). Qualitative inquiry is best at giving voice to the research participants in the real world, namely the focal participants’ direct experiences of the phenomenon (i.e. school/classroom policies, learning situation) under study. As Pavlenko & Blackledge (2004, p.24) noted, qualitative study highlights the importance of adopting an emic perspective which “acknowledges the views and opinion of participants”. Good research conducted through qualitative inquiry has a strength that can “let the things of the world speak for themselves” (Heidgger, 1962; c.f., Manen, 2007, p.184), in a way that is “uniquely suited to leave readers with the feelings as if they have ‘walked a mile in the shoes’ of participants” (Padgett, 2008, p.36). A good report based on qualitative research offers readers sufficient resources to allow them to reconsider their previous assumptions, while providing them with more space to obtain deeper and new understandings of the phenomenon under study.
As an essential part of the QRI, the ethnographic method is the main research methodology that this dissertation project employed. A visual research approach is also employed as supplementary to enhance the quality of data collection.

An Ethnography

Ethnography has been variously defined as the ‘study of people in naturally occurring settings or “fields” by means of methods which capture their social meanings and ordinary activities’ (Brewer, 2000, p.10), as a ‘descriptive account of a community or culture’ (Atkinson & Hammersley, 2007, p.1), as the ‘systematic approach to learning about the social and cultural life of communities, institutions and other settings’ (LeCompte and Schensul, 2010. P.1), and as a ‘qualitative social science practice that seeks to understand human groups (or societies, or cultures, or institutions). (Madden, 2010, P.16; c.f., Lawson, 2014, p.198)

As an essential QRI,

Ethnography as a method. ... generally speaking, ethnographic research has most of the following features: 1) People’s behaviour is studied in everyday contexts; 2) Data are gathered from a range of resources; 3) the approach to data collection is ‘unstructured’; 4) the focus is usually a small number of cases, perhaps a single setting or group of people, of relatively small scale; 5) the analysis of the data involves interpretation of the meanings and functions of human actions and mainly takes the form of verbal descriptions and explanations, with quantification and statistical analysis playing a subordinate role at most. (Hammersley, 1998, p.2)

With a particular emphasis on individuals,

ethnography seeks to discover locally relevant, culturally salient and socially important ‘ways of being’. Since ethnography does not assume what the relevant social categories are (Eckert 2000, p. xiv), these ways of being emerge from the bottom up rather than being imposed from the top down. This emic (inside) perspective is an important distinction to the etic (outside) based perspective adopted in traditional quantitative sociolinguistic research. (Lawson, 2014, p.201)
In this sense, ethnographic methods have special strength in the study of the social and cultural elements of people in a community. In particular, ethnography is central to understanding issues of language and social meaning.  

Given the goal of this study, I consider that ethnographic methods are best for investigating the complex case of the new generation plurilingual learners like my participants in northeast China. More specifically, the ethnographic approach is a key approach that allows this study to provide “thick-descriptions” (Geertz, 1973) about my participants. This method enables me to have a more nuanced understanding of their lived reality, as the researcher and research participants are seen as affiliates in the co-construction of meaning; accordingly, “the ethnographer is the ultimate instrument of field work” (Heath & Street, 2008, p.57).

What I also found very interesting in the process of designing this research project is that the ethnographic method also encourages the use of other approaches to enhance the data generation: “qualitative researchers [i.e., ethnographers] need to be able to think and act strategically in ways which combine intellectual, philosophical, technical and practical concerns rather than compartmentalizing these into separate boxes” (Mason, 1996, p. 2). For instance,

Ethnographers often tend to distrust general formulations, whether about human social life or about how to do research, in favour of a concern with particulars. In some ways, this is healthy: methodology cannot tell us what to do, it can only provide guidelines and cautions. But, however much one distrusts methodology, one cannot escape it. As we shall see, the practice of ethnography is surrounded by a host of methodological and philosophical ideas. (Hammersley, 1998, p.1)

In this regard, I consider that it is necessary to employ an additional approach to support the data generation of the ethnographic method.

---

21 This is despite some criticisms toward ethnography as a research method, as shown in the two main methodological debates about ethnography in the past few decades: (i) the ‘criticism of ethnography for not being scientific’ - “those centring on criticisms of ethnography for not meeting the criteria assumed to be characteristic of science”; and (ii) the ‘criticism of ethnography for being too scientific’ - “those concerned with arguments that ethnography has not broken sharply enough with, or moved far enough away from, qualitative research and the model of natural science” (see Hammersley, 1998, pp. 6 – 18).
With a Visual Approach

As such, this study also employed visual research methods in order to investigate the complexity and dynamics involved in the lives of participants. It is the use of various media tools and techniques to document or produce data that increases, enriches, or clarifies our knowledge of the social world. For instance,

Images can present things that words cannot and can therefore be used as evidence to develop and support, or to supplement, research findings. Nonetheless, images still need to be contextualized to some degree by words. (Rose, 2007, p.256)

In this sense, this study employed a “visual research” approach (Bank, 1995; Pink, 2007). More specifically, a focus was on an “image-based data collection” method (Moore, 2010); data collected through an image-based method is helpful “as a record and as a trigger to elicit conversations around children’s [the teenagers’] multilingual practices and multilingual literacies, and to explore their representations of languages, plurilingualism, mobility and identity” (Moore, 2010, p.326). Taking photographs is an effective and efficient method for recording the visual environment of the plurilingual youth and written material available in or out of classroom settings. In combination with the ethnographic method (e.g., participant interviews), photographs provide “incentives for children [/teenagers] to discuss their value and meaning for their family [and different learning/communication contexts], within a collaborative approach to interpreting data” (Hodge & Jones, 2000; c.f. Moore, 2010, p.327). In her study of a group of Chinese children in the Metro Vancouver area who were learning French as their L3, Moore used photos and drawings of those plurilingual learners in order to illustrate more detailed and relevant data. In his study of immigrant communities, Gold (2007) also employed photography as a key research method: using photos as the basis for interaction with his participants while exploring how the informants view the images can reveal data that interviews might not have – such as through “photo elicitation”.

Making images (as well as studying them) as part of research into the workings of visual culture could be a very productive research strategy. However, simply discovering that different sites produce different meanings may also be a rather obvious finding. And that kind of argument can easily shift into a claim that ‘everyone sees things in their own way’, a claim that
obscures the very real power relations in which visual images – and all social life – participate. (Rose, 2007, p.261)

Similarly, I employed a visual approach especially in the participant observations, for example, taking photos of my participants’ classroom interactions with their teachers and peers, as well as making screenshots of their online communication on the SNS site (see examples in Chapters 5 and 6).

In the upcoming sections, I shall introduce key rationales of why I employed a strategy of multiple samplings for the data collection methods, and related research ethics, as well as discuss my understandings and the application of two main methods: participant observation and interviewing.

### 3.1.2. A Variety of Data Sources

In order to obtain a rich description of the phenomena under study, this study purposively employed different methods for collecting and generating data. In order to “increase the likelihood that the findings reflect differences or different perspectives” (Creswell, 2007, p.126), the following main sources of data were collected:

a) **Initial Survey**, a participant self-report questionnaire for the initial participants screening during my first short visit to the PKSS in late fall 2011 was conducted with an aim to select potential focal participants who may be eligible for the study (see Appendix C). More specifically, the survey was based on participants’ self-reports about their multilingual practices, social networks and representations of the value of multilingualism and bilingual education in a minority extraterritorial language in China. The survey was done by phone or in the preliminary focus group meetings.

b) **Participant observations** were conducted. Firstly, this was with an aim to reconfirm the eligibility of the preliminary focal participants selected from the initial screening, and to finalize the focal participants for the semi-structured interviews; and secondly, this was in order to follow up with each focal participant during or after the individual semi-structured interviews. Also see Section 3.3.
c) **Semi-structured interviews** were carried out for collecting data concerning multilingualism and identity development for each focal participant. This method was employed for the interviews of the people who had a strong influence on the focal participants, including their families, school teachers and administrators, and local government officials in the ethnic education division. The goal was to examine how the tensions between micro and macro level discourses enable or constrain the identity development of these focal teenagers. All semi-structured interviews were audio-recorded and conducted in Chinese, Korean, English or Japanese (depending on participants’ preferences) with teenagers and their parents in China or in Korea where some of them had emigrated to study or work. See Section 3.3 for more details.

d) **Reflective Journals** were employed in order to have an in-depth understanding of each focal participant’s thoughts concerning the issues related to the main research questions. In the initial stage of Phase 2 (Summer 2012 to Spring 2013), each focal participant was asked to keep an ongoing self-reflective journal by recording his or her thoughts about the matters concerning multilingualism and identity development at home, school and in the community. During this stage, I followed up with each participant in person or via email on a bi-weekly or monthly basis; however, I had to make an important change to one of the data collection methods during Phase 2 while gathering samples from the focal participants' journaling practices for more details. As a result of this change, I collected some Media data, especially WeChat (see Section 3.3.3).

e) **Visual Data** (such as photographs of written artefacts, screenshots of virtual communication records) were collected in order to have an in-depth understanding of each focal participant’s thoughts regarding the main research questions.

In addition to collecting data around participants, I also assembled news reports from various local or central newspapers and other mass media in China in order to gauge the current perspectives of public discourse on bi-/multilingualism and education policies and practices likely to impact the student participants' learning situation. These sources included Mudanjiang Morning Daily [ChenBao]; Heilongjiang ethnic Korean News Daily [ChaoXianWen RiBao], and an online ethnic education network in Mudanjiang [Mudanjiang Minzu-wang]. I focused on updates on educational policy implementation at
the local level and some important local events, such as the national college entrance exam [GaoKao] and various ethnic Korean cultural festivals.

3.1.3. Validity, Reliability, Research Ethics

A qualitative researcher should engage in at least two examining procedures in any given study, in order to maintain a high level of validity and reliability pertaining to the findings of a qualitative study (Creswell, 2009, pp. 207-209). Keeping this in mind, in this research, I was able to accomplish the following three examining procedures recommended by Creswell:

- **Prolonged engagement and persistent observation in the field**: Throughout my longitudinal qualitative study, I was able to build up a satisfactory level of trust. This is particularly with people in a new community which often requires a prolonged engagement and persistent observation, for instance, as an ‘insider” as I describe in more detail in Section 3.5.

- **Triangulation**: In order to increase the validity of the findings, the study was triangulated using different data sources, including interviews, ongoing follow ups and member-checking, as noted in Section 3.1.2.

- **Researcher bias**: During the process of choosing this topic and designing this study, as a novice plurilingual researcher, I struggled with the puzzle of whether my ‘insider’ status would bias the interview process, the analysis and interpretation of the data. More specifically, even though I was an experienced plurilingual learner/speaker and educational practitioner in various multilingual contexts, my main dilemma was concerning my positionality as a member of the target community (the ChaoXianZu community and the PKSS) who has been actively communicating with the student participants in their home language (Korean and Mandarin Chinese) and Japanese/English. Given the amount of new information that the focal participants provided, however, I soon realized that I was involved in a writing process that was a case of “learning to unlearn” (Kleinsasser, 2000) where it was found to be quite easy to transcend past experiences and focus on the fresh experiences of the participants. For more, see Section 3.5.
This study follows the protocols and guidelines described by the Office of Research Ethics at Simon Fraser University. See Appendices C for the details of participants information package, which was submitted to the ORE office.

3.2. Research Site, the Participants

This study draws on the “purposive sampling” strategy described by Creswell (2007, p.125), a technique that allows a qualitative researcher to select research participants and sites for a study, so they can purposefully inform an understanding of the research problem and central phenomenon in the study. In this section, I shall introduce my rationale for selecting the research site and the participants.

3.2.1. Research Site

Heilongjiang is one of the three north-eastern provinces of China [东北三省, Dōngběi sānshěng; Dong-bei]22 where the majority of ethnic Koreans have been living for over two centuries (Jin Z., 2007, p.137). Located in the southeast part of the province, the Mudanjiang region hosts the second largest ChaoXianZu [ethnic Korean Chinese] community in Heilongjiang. With a total number over 260,000 making up 10% of the regional population, 33 different minority nationality groups are currently living in Mudanjiang. Among the ethnic groups in the region, the Koreans are the only minority group to have a formal Min-Han [heritage-Chinese] bilingual education system generally under the system of a formal minority nationality school in the community (K-MNS). The K-MNS in the region is comprised of 34 ethnic Korean elementary schools and five public secondary schools sponsored by the Chinese state government as the ChaoXianZu ethnic Korean minority nationality school. The secondary schools deliver junior to senior level classes that are equivalent to the grades 7-12 in the province of British Columbia, Canada.

22 The fame of Dong-bei is related to Manchuria [满州], a modern name given to a large geographic region in Northeast Asia. “Northeast China” (simplified Chinese: 中国东北; traditional Chinese: 中國東北; pinyin: Zhōngguó Dōngběi) is a geographical region of China; it consists specifically of the three provinces of Liaoning, Jilin and Heilongjiang, but broadly also encompasses the eastern part of Inner Mongolia. *For more info, please see https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Northeast_China (Oct 1, 2015)
The Peace Ethnic Korean Secondary School (PKSS) is one of the five public secondary K-MNS in Mudanjiang, which is the main research site for my dissertation project. I carried out my main fieldwork there as part of this almost 4-year longitudinal qualitative study. The PKSS is located in Peace city, a small town approximately 45 minutes away by a local train from Mudanjiang, and less than 2~3 hours away by a local train from the borders of Russia and North Korea.

Choosing the PKSS as the main research site is mainly due to two considerations: professional and personal concerns and interests. As an educator and researcher of plurilingualism and multilingual education, I have been focusing on the studies of how learner diversity (i.e., multilingual repertoire, language awareness, dynamic linguistic landscape of the learners) is related to the foreign language or L3 learner’s motivation and agency in better learning their target language. In this regard, I paid close attention to the changes and practices in the bi-/tri-/multilingual education at the PKSS (1946~) since its establishment right after World War II. As a FL language instructor as well as a plurilingual individual who was raised and completed my primary and secondary education in the minority nationality school system in the ChaoXianZu community in Mudanjiang, it was also important for me to know more about the new generation of foreign language learners there today (students who mostly belong to the 4th generation of the ChaoXianZu in China)\textsuperscript{23}.

In Chapter 4 I will present more details about the tri-/multilingual education program at the PKSS, as well as the JFL and EFL curriculum.

\subsection*{The Participants}

The focal participants for this study consisted of 22 foreign language learners of Korean heritage from the PKSS, a K-MNS school in Mudanjiang. Of these student participants, 14 of them chose to learn Japanese (JFL) while 8 of them chose to learn English (EFL) as their third language or primary foreign language (FL1) under the K-MNS education system. They participated in this study for almost four years, since Fall 2011.

\textsuperscript{23} As introduced in Section 1.6.3 in Chapter 1, I have a special tie with the school as well as the surrounding community in Mudanjiang.
when they started their Senior Year 2 (equivalent of grade 11 in the education system of British Columbia, Canada) studies at the PKSS. Most of them were in their second year of study at universities or other postsecondary institutions in different cities in China and Korea (two in Seoul) and Japan (one in Tokyo), when I started writing the first draft of my dissertation in the Fall of 2014.

To gain a better understanding of these teenagers, I also interviewed some parents and teachers as well as some government officials (e.g., in the local government office for minority nationalities). In the section below, I shall explain the selection criteria that I used.

The selection criteria

All potential participants are volunteer participants from the 57 students in grade 11 at the PKSS, who joined two workshops that I delivered during my second visit (the initial longer visit) there between May and July 2012. Compared to the participant selection method used in my pilot study (of six multilingual ethnic Korean teenagers in Beijing; see Ehlert & Moore, 2014), which was through word-of-mouth referrals of my family and friends in China, the key method employed in the participant selection for this doctoral study at the PKSS was on a volunteer basis.

The main purpose of the selection criteria of the student participants was to observe (i) their complex sociolinguistic behavior as they are from different socio-cultural backgrounds, and (ii) their adjustment to the trilingual education program during their schooling. More specifically, key elements for the selection of participants included five main areas:

1) Self-identifies as ChaoXianZu, as discussed with more details in Chapter 1 about the auto-identification of ChaoXianZu;
2) A high school student at a K-MNS in Mudanjiang24, Heilongjiang province, Northeast China at the time of the initial study. My main goal was to focus on the study of the Neidi ChaoXianZu (vs. YanBian ChaoXianZu);
3) Youth currently attending senior high school (equivalent to the 10th grade to 12th grade in B.C., Canada) at the Peace senior high school.

24 The Mudanjiang region, where the second largest ChaoXianZu community is located in the Province of Heilongjiang, is one of the three northeast provinces where ethnic Koreans have traditionally been residing in China.
My chief aim was to explore how their language and literacy education is related to their future educational or career path, by paying close attention to observe their transition (e.g., from high school to university/society);

4) Enrolled in the Min-Han-Wai trilingual program which allows them to learn Korean, Chinese (HanYu Putonghua), and Japanese or English as their third language (L3) and their foreign language (FL) under the formal school curriculum. This is in order to understand how their dynamic repertoire of multiple linguistic and literacy resources are related to their aspirations;

5) Whose family is from the Heilongjiang, at least one of the parents is ethnic Korean, in order to see varieties in their family language policy and practices and how this is related to their language and identity development.

After all appropriate approvals were given by my advisory committee regarding the topic, research questions and interview protocols, the potential participants of this study who met the main criteria were approached and asked to participate in a Preliminary Participants survey. When I conducted my initial survey in early fall 2011, there were a total of 57 students in the Senior level 2 class who graduated in 2013 (the Class of 2013 from here on). Of them, 40 students chose to learn Japanese and only 17 chose to study English as their FL or L3. The majority of the class of 2013 showed interest in participating in the study. Originally, I planned to recruit them mainly through word-of-mouth referrals by the school teachers or administrators or the participants. Later on, after my first visit (in early fall 2011) to the research site, I decided to recruit potential student participants from the Senior level 2 FL language classes. Before my second visit (during summer 2012) to the research site, I sent out a set of Information packages about my Research Project (see Appendix B. Study Info) that was prepared in English (with Chinese translation) to the potential informants. In the information sessions that the school prepared upon my initial arrival in the early summer, I had 22 student participants who voluntarily agreed to participate in my study. They included 14 Japanese as primary foreign language (Japanese as FL1) learners, and 8 English as primary foreign language (English as FL1) learners.

My primary focus, for the potential participants for this study, was on the senior year 2 (or grade 11) students. I chose this group of students for two main reasons: Grade 11 is the year these teenagers (a) take the Huikao (the standard high school graduation
exam) which is required to receive an official high school diploma; (b) Divided into a LiKe [理科 science subjects] or a WenKe [文科; Arts and social science subjects] class based on their choices for future academic advancement – based on this major, most of them were taking the Gaokao [National university entrance examination in China]. In addition, I was planning to study this group of participants during their school years, with follow-up interviews after they completed both the Huikao and the Gaokao, as well as after their graduation from high school.

All twenty-two student participants belong to the generation 1990s (“90 Hou” or “G90s”), mostly born between 1994 and 1996. They were studying Korean, Chinese and a Foreign language in the trilingual education for minority (TEM) program from the Chinese state government sponsored minority nationality school (MNS) system in the ChaoXianZu community, namely K-MNS, in northeast China. See Chapter 1 for more background info about the TEM and K-MNS education system.

Profiles of 22 Student Participants

Overall, the twenty-two student participants had diverse sociolinguistic and cultural backgrounds even though they are all from a homogenous community. Amongst them, they spoke four languages (Korean, Chinese, Japanese and English); some reported that they spoke five languages, those who consider HanGuoYu [Korean dialect spoken by the people in HanGuo] as a different language from the Korean dialect spoken by the ethnic Korean people in China. Table 3.1 below summarizes the rich linguistic backgrounds the focal teenage students have. They are fluent Korean-Chinese bilinguals, with low or high intermediate level JFL or EFL; see Chapter 4 for more details. In terms of the social economic status of their family, they ranged from lower-income (i.e., farmer or blue-collar workers) to middle-income (i.e., teachers or white-collar workers).

What I found intriguing about this group of teenage plurilingual learners is (i) the fact that all of them were from the arts and social sciences classes. Of them, only three were male students. Perhaps this is because most of the male students in the Sr. 3 classes (out of a total 57 students) were in the science and technology program, even though the Li Ke class was a small class with a total of 17 students compared to the Wen Ke class that had two classes. What I also found intriguing is (ii) the uniqueness of their experience
in learning a foreign language(s). Almost none of the eight EFL learners had experience of learning JFL, while most of the 14 JFL learners reported that they learned EFL during their elementary school years through privately funded afterschool EFL education centres.

Table 3.1. Student Participant Profiles

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Participants</th>
<th>Gender</th>
<th>Age</th>
<th>Languages</th>
<th>Education</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>J1. Ying</td>
<td>F</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>KCJE</td>
<td>Kindergarten (Han), K-MNS (G1-12)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>J2. Ryuen</td>
<td>F</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>KCJ</td>
<td>Kindergarten (K), K-MNS (G1-12)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>J3. Yeon</td>
<td>F</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>KCJE</td>
<td>Kindergarten (K), K-MNS (G1-12)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>J4. Moon</td>
<td>M</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>KCJE</td>
<td>Kindergarten (K), K-MNS (G1-12)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>J5. Jin H</td>
<td>F</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>KCJE</td>
<td>Kindergarten (K), K-MNS (G1-12)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>J6. Zheng</td>
<td>F</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>KCJ</td>
<td>Kindergarten (K), K-MNS (G1-12)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>J7. Yuan</td>
<td>M</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>KCJ</td>
<td>Kindergarten (K), K-MNS (G1-12)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>J9. Tian</td>
<td>F</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>KCJE</td>
<td>Kindergarten (n/a), K-MNS (G1-12)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>J0. Jinok</td>
<td>F</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>KCJE</td>
<td>Kindergarten (K), K-MNS (G1-12)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>J11. m.Yeon</td>
<td>F</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>KCJ</td>
<td>Kindergarten (K), K-MNS (G1-12)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>J12. JiLing</td>
<td>F</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>KCJ</td>
<td>Kindergarten (K), K-MNS (G1-12)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>J13. Bada</td>
<td>F</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>KCJE</td>
<td>Kindergarten (K), K-MNS (G1-12)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>J14. Jung</td>
<td>F</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>KCJE</td>
<td>Kindergarten (K), K-MNS (G1-12)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>E1. Min</td>
<td>F</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>KCE</td>
<td>Kindergarten (Han), K-MNS (G1-12)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>E2. Rim</td>
<td>M</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>CKE</td>
<td>Kindergarten (Han), K-MNS (G1-12)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>E3. Ahn</td>
<td>F</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>KCE</td>
<td>Kindergarten (K), K-MNS (G1-12)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>E4. Ran</td>
<td>F</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>KCE</td>
<td>Kindergarten (K), K-MNS (G1-12)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>E5. Qing</td>
<td>F</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>CKE</td>
<td>Kindergarten (Han), K-MNS (G1-12)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>E6. Young</td>
<td>F</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>KCE(J)</td>
<td>Kindergarten (K), K-MNS (G1-12)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>E7. Wei</td>
<td>F</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>CKE</td>
<td>Kindergarten (Han), K-MNS (G1-12)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>E8. Hong</td>
<td>F</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>CKE</td>
<td>Kindergarten (Han), K-MNS (G1-12)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Notes: This table is created based on the information gathered through the participants' self-reports on the Background Info collected in May 2012 at the PKSS. All names are pseudonyms.

On the description of the "languages" spoken by participants, the sequences of the languages are placed according to the reported proficiency of each language, from the most to less familiar ones. (1) ‘C’ stands for Chinese (Mandarin); ‘E’ stands for English; ‘K’ stands for Korean; ‘J’ stands for Japanese; (2) ‘Primary’ stands for primary school; ‘Jr. High’ stands for junior high school; ‘Sr. High’ stands for senior high school.
3.3. Data Collection

Data presented in this dissertation were collected in three phases that took place for almost four years starting in the fall of 2011. As noted in the earlier sections, data were collected through the *multiple* and *purposful sampling* strategies; which includes participant/classroom observation (e.g., multilingual notes), field notes, photographs of written artefacts (e.g., students’ notes on textbooks and learning materials), screenshots of virtual communication records (e.g., students’ virtual multilingual diaries) on the SNS sites (e.g., Twitter, WeChat), and recorded semi-structured audio interviews. This section begins with a brief introduction of the three phases in data collection, followed by the key rationale for my choice of particular data collection methods with a focus on the semi-structured interview. Then it introduces another essential data collection method that I employed in this study, as part of my strategies of participant observation and follow ups: using new media tools such as a smartphone to observe young plurilingual students’ communicative activities and networking patterns, especially on WeChat [WeiXin] (a popular SNS site in China).

3.3.1. Three Phases

Over an almost four-year period since the fall of 2011, this dissertation research project involved three main phases with five trips to northeast China. *In Phase #1* (Sept. 2011 – April 2012), the main objective was to prepare to enter the field and collect the initial set of data through an ethnographic field study. Thus, I first prepared the initial research proposal, which I built on the key findings from my literature review and my pilot study of multilingual ethnic Korean youth in Beijing (Ehlert, 2008; Ehlert & Moore, 2014). To check the feasibility of this research project, I also made a two-week visit to Mudanjiang in early fall 2011 (Trip 1). The trip allowed me to develop a better understanding of the potential research site (PKSS in Mudanjiang) and student participants; it included class observation, collaboration with school administrators and teachers, as well as interaction with potential student participants who started their Senior 2 (grade 11) study at that time. This visit helped me in many ways especially in the preparation of my research proposal. In the summer of 2012, I made a second trip to Mudanjiang for a two-month field study (Trip 2) and collected the first set of data for this study.
In Phase #2 (May 2012 – June 2014), my main goal was to continue on with the data collection and begin the initial data analysis based on the first set of data collected in Phase 1. As discussed in Section 3.1, a main focus of the data collection in this phase was to look at student participants’ experience of their transition from high school to university – including both before and after graduating high school (/entering university). As another focus in this process, and to keep my ‘reflexive stance’ as a researcher, I also conducted ‘Member-check’ and a related follow-ups. It was in order to obtain the most natural, original and comprehensive data that reflects their current situations and challenges. This phase also involved two visits to East Asia. The first one was a two-week short visit to PKSS (G12) from the end of April 2013, and a three-day visit to Seoul Korea in early May on my way back to Canada (Trip 3). During this visit, I wanted to observe student participants getting ready for the GaoKao and the transition from high school to university. To do a Member-check was the second main objective in this visit. In order to check the validity of my data analysis – my interpretation of what they said and what they were/are doing, I printed out the transcription of the first interview and had each student participant read it before the follow up interviews. And then, I asked their opinion about whether there were any changes in their ideas or perceptions. During this visit, I also had a chance to interview half of the student participants’ parents: 6 were interviewed in Peace city including those who returned to their hometown to support their children’s Gaokao, 1 was by phone, and 5 were interviewed in Seoul Korea during my three-day visit to Hanguo as they were working there. As for the second visit to China in this phase, it was a one-month visit in the fall of 2013 to Beijing and Yanbian Korean autonomous district (Jilin province) (Trip 4). The two main objectives for the trip were to update the literature review and include Chinese scholar’s perspectives, and to continue following the development of the focal teenage students at a time of transition, as most them were in the first semester of study at university at that time.

Phase #3 (July 2014 – June 2015) was focused on the final follow-ups along with active data analysis. My last fieldtrip to China was a four-month long visit in the fall of 2014 (Trip 5, 2014. 09 ~12). This trip had three purposes: (i) to continue working with some of the focal participants who were in the second year of studies at universities in northeast China, Beijing and Shanghai; (ii) to consult with Chinese experts on minority education and foreign language education, such as educators, researchers and government officers;
and (iii) to observe new trends in relevant academic research activities in China, through conferences and symposiums in the field of (English or Japanese as) second/foreign language teaching and learning.

### 3.3.2. Semi-structured Interviews

Language and knowledge do not copy reality but are means of coping with a changing world. (Kvale & Brinkmann, 2009, p. 51)

As such, qualitative interview methods help the researcher to have well-founded knowledge about the social reality; “Research interviewing is a knowledge-producing activity” (Kvale & Brinkmann, 2009, p.47). In this sense, this study employed semi-structured interviews as one of the main data collection (DC) methods. As Kvale & Brinkmann highlighted, it is important to address the epistemological issues of ‘research interviewing’ - an approach in exploring how to characterize the form of knowledge that qualitative research interviewing can offer. Whilst considering “epistemology is the philosophy of knowledge and involves long-standing debates about what knowledge is and how it is obtained”, Kvale & Brinkmann claim that “epistemological presumptions of qualitative interview knowledge concretely bear upon conceiving and practicing research interviewing” (2009, p.47; Italics are as in the original). What I found particularly helpful in the design of this dissertation research project is their main view of the role of a qualitative researcher, that is, “the interviewer as a miner or as a traveler”:

The interviewer as a miner or as a traveler. These two contrasting metaphors of the interviewer – as a miner or a traveler – illustrate the different epistemological conceptions of interviewing as a process of knowledge collection or as a process of knowledge construction, respectively. By metaphor, we refer to understanding one kind of thing by means of another; thereby highlighting possible new aspects of a kind. … In a miner metaphor, knowledge is understood as buried metal and the interviewer is a miner who unearths the valuable metal. The knowledge is waiting in the subject’s interior to be uncovered, uncontaminated by the miner. … As an alternative, in the traveler metaphor, the interviewer is a traveler on a journey to a distant country that leads to a tale to be told upon returning home. The interviewer-traveller wanders through the landscape and enters into conversations with the people he or she encounters. … The journey may not only lead to new knowledge; the traveler might change as well. … These two metaphors for the interviewer represents contrasting idea types of interview knowledge as respectively given or constructed. (Kvale & Brinkmann, 2009, p. 48-49; Italics are as in the original)
In this sense, the perspective of ‘the interviewer as a miner or traveller’ reveals the significance of maintaining a reflective stance as a researcher (see Section 3.5.1). The interview, if we keep this reflective posture, can then be an important research tool to capture the participants’ perspectives: it is a tool, “that not only brings out the voices of participants but also represents them as accurately as possible through sharing and shaping interpretations with participants prior to writing up analyses … and/or disseminating findings to participants, formally or informally, prior to publication” (Marshall et al. 2014, p.16).

The semi-structured interview was the main method in this study, which was mainly conducted in-person during my field visits to East Asia. Some follow-up interviews were also carried out by phone or by different current SNS media. While focus group discussions were carried out mostly in the school classrooms, all individual or small group interviews were carried out in an office provided by the school during lunch break. For the participants who were only available during afterschool hours, the interviews were conducted in my hotel room. Interviews with parents were conducted after dinner in my hotel room or a coffee shop chosen by the parents in the Peace city Mudanjiang or in Seoul Korea. To build up a better rapport, I occasionally invited some focal participants (especially the ones who showed interest in learning more about Western or Canadian culture) to my hotel room and shared some DVDs during their weekend breaks. I also had opportunities to speak with them while joining their weekend activities (e.g., playing Table Tennis, having tea or ice-cream parties) in the surrounding communities.

The semi-structured in-depth interviews with each of the student participants in this study lasted approximately 45-60 minutes for each student. All interviews were conducted by strictly following an Interview Protocol (see Appendix A), and were audio-recorded and transcribed verbatim. Background information on the participants was obtained through a paper-and-pencil questionnaire, which the participants completed right before each interview prior to the audio-recorded semi-structured interview. Prior to the interviews, each participant received a package of participant guidelines that explained the information regarding research procedures, including Information on the Intended Study, Consent to Participate Form, and the Interview Protocol. Examples of questions that the participants were asked to answer in the semi-structured interviews included
(1) What is your perspective of plurilingualism (i.e., individual multilingualism)?

(2) What are your experiences of using (speaking and writing) different languages at school, at home and in the community?
   a. What has your experience been in using your home language (mother tongue or first language) in your classroom?
   b. How do/did your teachers react when you use your home language in their classrooms?
   c. How did you feel or what has been your experience when you were facing conflicts with your teachers about using your home language in their classes?

(3) What is your feeling when you write in different languages on social network sites, such as Twitter, Facebook and WeChat?

Besides the twenty-two student participants, I also interviewed some secondary informants who have a strong influence in the lives of these teenagers. This includes six administrators (i.e., principals, the vice-principal of education, two head teachers in the education division, and two head teachers of the class of 2013), four language teachers (each of whom were teaching HanYu, Korean, Japanese or English to the senior level classes at the time of the initial two interviews), as well as 12 parents (five were in China, five were in South Korea, and two were travelling between China and Korea).

3.3.3. WeChat as a Research Tool

One important aspect that needs to be discussed here is the process of collecting samples from the focal participants’ journaling practices, as part of my data collection method. This is especially in order to keep active and ongoing (i) communication with the participants and (ii) the follow-up of their language and literacy practices through peer networking.

In the earlier stages of this study, upon completion of the initial semi-structured interviews during the summer of 2012, I planned to collect a set of periodic Reflective Journals from the teenage participants (see Section 3.1.2). In doing so, the study aimed to explore the focal participants’ perspectives on current issues concerning their language
and literacy practices in and out of the classroom. Based on a set of general guiding questions (as in the examples shown above), each participant was asked to write a 1-2 page reflective journal and send it to the researcher via email on a bi-weekly or monthly basis. After eight months of trying this out, I realized the ineffectiveness of this method. Even though I sent out reminders 1-2 weeks prior to the due date of each journal, only 2-3 participants replied periodically. I could not figure out the Whys, until I directly spoke to the participants during my second short-term field visit to the PKSS in late spring of 2013. It was approximately one month before they took the national college entrance exam [Gao Kao]; they were in the critical year of their high school lives. I learned that two main reasons were causing the failure of this approach: One was the teenagers’ busy schedule at school, and the other was the difficulties in accessing the internet at school. They barely had anytime for themselves. Preparing a structured written journal was not a realistic ‘assignment’ for them at that time, considering their exceedingly busy school schedule. They spent an average of 8~10 hours every day, including most of the weekend, attending classes and supervised homework or academic review sessions and afterschool extracurricular activities.

On the other hand, the lack of the right resources was another main reason that made it challenging to respond to my initial assignment. There was very limited internet access in the school; the only place they could access the Internet was in the computer lab which was open to students during scheduled listening or reading classes, generally for 40 minutes per session, 2-3 times per week. As a result, instead of using e-mails, they preferred to use smartphones, which allowed them to utilize the virtual social network sites (V-SNS) (e.g., WeChat, KakaoTalk and Line) for their daily communications with peers and families. This was possible perhaps in this particular context, considering all of the focal participants had a smartphone, and most of their parents were working in developed industrialized cities in China or working abroad.²⁵ In addition, I also observed that most of them were reluctant to write long messages; instead, they preferred to send out and exchange instant short but fun messages as their main daily communication strategies.

²⁵ At the time of initial interview in the summer of 2012, all of them reported that they owned a smartphone, which allowed them to access the V-SNS.
Upon confirmation of full consents from these youths (as in the Figure 3.1)\textsuperscript{26}, I decided to utilize the key features of WeChat (e.g., voicemails, image/video exchanges, and the Diary (virtual journaling) function) to carry out the follow up with the focal teenage participants. This included observation of Multilingual Virtual Diaries (or journals) that were posted by the teenagers, which will be discussed more in Chapter 5 (Section 5.3.3) and Chapter 6 (Section 6.4) with some detailed examples.

\begin{center}
\textbf{Figure 3.1. Setting up the WeChat}
\end{center}

\begin{quote}
(Ehlert: April 29, 2013, Peace Town, Heilongjiang, China)
\end{quote}

Overall the shift in the data collection method for their journaling practice was very successful. Thus, I employed this method in Phase 2 and 3. Now I shall briefly introduce why WeChat has become a ‘life style’ for my student participants, and how I utilized this new media resource as a research tool in this study.

\textit{WeChat [WeiXin]}

\begin{itemize}
\item “微信，是一个生活方式”
\item [WeChat is a Lifestyle]\textsuperscript{27}
\end{itemize}

\textsuperscript{26} In Figure 3.1, two JFL learners (the pair on the left) from the senior 3 class at PKSS were inviting the researcher to their WeChat peer group during a lunch meal with the group (Ehlert: April 29, 2013, Peace Town, Heilongjiang, China)

\textsuperscript{27} www.weixin.com, July 10, 2014.
As a relatively new V-SNS platform, WeChat (Wēixin; literally "micro message") is considered a modern communication tool that enables individuals to participate in “the new way to connect with friends across platforms” (http://www.wechat.com/en/, July 10, 2014). Such individuals include twenty-two student participants in this study, a group of teenage Japanese (JFL) or English (EFL) L3 learners from the ChaoXianZu community in Mudanjiang, northeast China. For these plurilingual youth, active use of high tech communication devices such as smartphones is a way of life today. Considering that the PKSS (a public high school) is in a small township in Mudanjiang, I was surprised to see the popularity of smartphones among the students at the school and in the ChaoXianZu community. They all confirmed their active engagement in various communicative activities through new media tools. In particular, a main reason for the increased popularity of using new media tools such as smartphones among these youths was because it was a key method for them to maintain close connections with their parents, family and friends. As will be discussed more in Chapter 5, they were constantly navigating different transnational and intraterritorial contexts (Ehlert & Moore, 2014) along with most of their parents and family who were transnational labour immigrants, either working overseas (mainly South Korea) or in the bigger and more industrialized coastal cities of China such as Beijing, Shanghai and Qingdao.

Key findings from the interviews suggest that the focal teenagers’ high regard for WeChat is mainly due to the influence of “PengYouQuan” [朋友圈 (peer network or friends’ circle)], in terms of sharing resources in and out of their school/university contexts. The participants also believed it was a valuable resource for influencing people and the

---

28 WeChat (Chinese: 微信; pinyin: Wēixin; literally: "micro message") is a mobile text and voice messaging communication service developed by Tencent in China, first released in January 2011. The app is available on Android, iPhone, BlackBerry, Windows Phone and Symbian phones, and there are also Web-based and OS X clients but these require the user to have the app installed on a supported mobile phone for authentication. As of 2013, WeChat has 300 million users; with 70 million outside of China. (http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/WeChat, July 10, 2014)

29 Key features and functions of WeChat (http://www.wechat.com/en/, July 10, 2014) being used popularly by users (e.g., student participants in this study) include 1) Voice Chat, for sending and receiving short voice messages; 2) Group Chat, for creating a new group with friends and chatting within the group; 3) Moments, for posting messages, images, and sharing Moments to Facebook and Twitter accounts; 4) Free Call, for longer conversation through "Free Call" (Voice Call) services; 5) Video Call, for talking to friends face to face; 6) Sticker Gallery, mainly for using “Tap ‘Me’ in the menu tab then select ‘Sticker Gallery’” (Sticker Shop).
business culture in the communities that they are living in. Min’s responses in Figure 3.2 identify three key reasons why young people use WeChat:

1. For its convenience and efficiency in reaching people, because WeChat is *Bang-Ding* [connected] to cellular numbers, whereas accessing QQ instant messaging requires remembering the account number separately;

2. For cost-effectiveness: e.g., “to save up the phone bills, which can be done by using only one App” [节省话费 可用一个软件搞定];

3. For its capability of allowing “Gong Xiang Zi Yuan” [共 享 资 源 sharing resources] with friends in her peer network [朋友圈 Peng You Quan] and for keeping each other updated.

(Min, Jan 8, 2014; also see Figure 6.1 {a} in Chapter 6)

In addition to these basic functions, the teenagers informed me that key features in this app accounted for their frequent use of WeChat. Figure 3.2 is an example of my communication with Min on WeChat, a screenshot of my follow up interview with her in early January 2014. The image demonstrates her responses to my question about her thoughts on using WeChat.
What I also found interesting is her choices and strategies of using different languages in this interaction with me; more specifically, how she appreciates the ‘multi’ in her dynamic repertoire. As a highly motivated multilingual learner and user, Min is regularly utilizing her knowledge in three different languages and different emoticons in her daily interaction with her peers and people in her online network. In the image above, her answer to my question of why she was using WeChat, Min answered mostly in Chinese with an English word (“Bingo”) and an emoticon (big smile), even though my questions were mainly in Korean with a few Chinese words (in the short voice messages). In short, like Min, student participants reported that having easier access to the V-SNS site is important for them. The majority of them also reported that one main reason why they use WeChat is the fact that this site motivates their creative use of multilingual, multicultural and multiliteracies (i.e., new media) tools, which in turn, allows them to interact with their friends in a more
fun and interactive ways. See more examples presented in Chapters 5 (see Section 5.3.3) and 6 (see Section 6.4).

In summary, I employed WeChat as a research tool for two main reasons: first, to observe their practice of ‘multi’ in order to have a better grasp of how student participants utilize some popular social network platforms (WeChat) through the interactions among these youths; and second, to follow up with them to have a better understanding of why they use their ‘multi’ in certain ways. Having close observations and in-depth examination enabled me to have a better understanding of the focal plurilingual youths, especially (i) their practice of the multi (i.e., use of multilingual, multicultural and multiliteracies resources) and (ii) how they interact with each other in the virtual space. Thus, I collected related data on WeChat for almost 2 years from early April 2013. As will be discussed more in Section 6.4.1 in Chapter 6, some related examples presented in this dissertation were drawn from a comprehensive set of samples that I collected during this period. The samples were collected mainly through observing student participants’ daily communications (e.g., looking at the postings on their ‘moments’), as well as by maintaining regular interactions with the focal participants as part of the follow up process. Initially (until Spring 2014) all student participants maintained a close connection with me, as I invited them over to a PKSS class 2013 group chatroom where we kept ongoing communication with each other. However, only half of them maintained contact until the spring of 2015 (when they entered 2nd year university study).

3.4. Data Analysis

As mentioned previously, this study employed a qualitative research inquiry in order to gain in-depth insights into or “thick descriptions” (Geertz, 1973) of student participants’ experiences and stories (Clandinin & Connelly, 2000) of their social, cultural and linguistic practices.

In the data analysis in this study, I followed the main guidelines for qualitative data analysis that I understand alongside qualitative authors as a process of “Noticing, Collecting, and Thinking about interesting things”. This model consists of three parts: (i)
Noticing things and coding them; (ii) Collecting & sorting instances of things; and, (iii) Thinking about things (Seidel, 1998, p.1).

A Process of Noticing, Collecting, and Thinking

Following Seidel, I consider the qualitative data analysis process to be nonlinear; it is not a process of simply noticing, collecting, and then thinking about things, and then writing a report. Rather, the process is “iterative and progressive”, “recursive”, and “holographic” (Seidel, 1998, p.2). In other words, analysis is part of a cycle that keeps repeating; for example, when I was thinking about things, I also started noticing new things in the data. And then, I collected and thought about these new things. In principle, I too consider that the process was an infinite spiral. In terms of the qualitative data analysis as a recursive process, I too consider that it is because the process as one part can call me back to a previous part; while I was busy collecting things, I simultaneously started noticing new things to collect. The holographic metaphor also helps to illuminate that each step in the process contains the entire process. Thus, when I first noticed some interesting things, I was already mentally collecting and thinking about those things.

Many researchers who focus on educational and sociolinguistic studies also highlight the idea of qualitative data analysis as a non-linear process (see examples in Creswell, 2007, 2009; Heller, 2007; Han, 2007; Marshall & Moore, 2013). Creswell (2007) is one of the leaders whose main guidelines for qualitative research inquiry also helped me in various ways with my data analysis, especially while I was “moving in analytical circles rather than using a fixed linear approach”, as if “one [the researcher] entered with data of text or images (e.g., photographs, videotapes) and exits with an account or a narrative. In between, the researcher touches on several facets of analysis and circles around and around” (Creswell, 2007, p.150).

For Creswell, the data analysis process of a qualitative study adapts to a general contour which is best represented as a “data analysis spiral” (2007, p.151). As shown in Figure 3.2., the data analysis spiral indicates four main steps in the qualitative data analysis procedures: data managing (e.g., files/units/organizing), reading and memoing (e.g., reflecting, writing notes and across questions), describing/classifying/interpreting (e.g.,
context, categories and comparisons), as well as representing and visualizing (e.g., matrix, trees and propositions).

![The Data Analysis Spiral](Original Source: Creswell, 2007, p.151)

**Figure 3.2. The Data Analysis Spiral**

More specifically, qualitative data analysis is a complex but integrated process. In Creswell’s words, “the process of data collection, data analysis, and report writing are not distinct steps in the process – they are interrelated and often go on simultaneously in a research project” (2007, p.150). Based on the above understanding, I carried out a three-step data analysis in this study. First, I focused on noticing and coding some interesting data. This involved the transcriptions of all the interview data while reading all field observation notes and other related data. All interviews were transcribed based on the original language(s) used by each individual participant. I then analyzed the transcribed multilingual narratives directly, and only translated significant statements into English for presentation and reporting purposes (see some examples in Chapters 4 through 6). Upon completion of transcribing all the interview data, I simultaneously annotated and analyzed the data in the margins while reading them through. For instance, I engaged in a process of interpreting the participants’ conscious experience and perceptions of a phenomenon (e.g., plurilingualism). In the second step, my focus was on collecting and sorting instances of things relevant to the main research questions of this study. This includes collecting the main descriptions (e.g., textual descriptions of what the participants’ experiences with the
phenomenon), and then sorting out main data through *thematizations* (i.e., structural description of ‘how’ the experience happened). I first carefully read and re-read the transcripts and developed a list of significant statements from the participants’ accounts. Upon completion of the “horizonization of the data” (Cresswell, 2007, p.159), I then took significant statements and grouped them into meaning units or themes, while looking for code segments. After that I assigned names to the categories or codes, names which are the exact words used by participants, and the names that I thought to best describe the information. Finally, in the third step, my focus was on *thinking about things* while I was continually describing and classifying the data. My emphasis was on the *interpretations* (a composite description of the essence of the phenomenon, incorporating both the textual and structural descriptions) (Creswell, 2017). This was with my consideration that critical interpretation might be an asset for ‘representing and visualizing’ the main phenomenon under study (i.e., plurilingualism, mobility and learner diversity), as well as the propositions of student participants.

### 3.5. A Plurilingual Researcher: Biases?

#### 3.5.1. Reflexivity

In my consideration of critical interpretation of student participants’ perspectives and experiences in this study, reflexivity is an important aspect. More specifically, as has been highlighted by an increasing number of qualitative researchers (see examples Byrd Clark, 2010, 2014; Han, 2007, 2009; Marshall, et al., 2014), I consider that ‘reflexivity’ is essential “to look at one’s own position and investment in the research [process]” (Byrd Clark, 2014, p.41). As noted in Section 3.3.2, this is with a consideration that “the journey [of a research] might instigate a process of reflection that leads the traveler [the researcher/interviewer] to new ways of self-understanding, as well as uncovering previously taken-for-granted values and customs in the traveler’s home country” (Kvale &

---

30 “Reflexivity in qualitative research – where researchers engage in explicit selfaware meta-analysis – has a long history spanning at least a century. It has moved from introspection towards critical realist and subjectivist accounts, and more recently towards highlighting the socio-political, post-modern context through deconstructing the research encounter.” (Finlay, 2002, pp. 209-210)
Brinkmann, 2009, p.48). In this regard, a qualitative researcher’s ‘reflective stance’ can evolve at different stages of her/his research, such as before/during/after the fieldwork. Keeping a reflective stance all along the various steps of the research is then central for “looking at and coming clean with one’s own biases, uncertainties, and multiple identities” (Byrd Clark, 2014; c.f., Marshall et al. 2014, p.18). In this study, I attempted to focus on looking at emic perspectives (the perspectives of students) because my main interest is in what learners think and their own understandings of their language learning experiences. In this effort, I carried out ongoing ‘member-checks’ to ensure my interpretations reflected participants’ own understandings and challenges (see Section 3.3.1).

**Privilege**

“All the privileged can travel, see different worlds; not everyone can. I think it is important for people to have an interesting locale nearby.” (Zaha Hadid)

As the award-winning Iraqi-British architect Zaha Hadid noted, not everyone can have the privilege to see different worlds. Likewise, as a plurilingual speaker, I feel truly privileged to be one who could travel through multiple linguistic and cultural spaces in the East and the West. At the same time, as a novice researcher, I have also been constantly struggling with dilemmas as an ‘insider’ and an ‘outsider’ in different places. Experiences throughout this study helped and inspired me to (re)think of and be aware of some important issues both as a researcher and educator. For instance, further to my earlier notes on ‘reflexivity’ as a researcher, I have an in-depth and new understanding of ‘privilege’. Being a plurilingual who was born and raised in a multilingual environment, I only thought about the positive side of plurilingualism and related practices. Through this study, however, I have begun to have a deeper awareness of the complex underlying assumptions of privilege, which is often highly contingent and contextual; and it is closely related to one’s positionality. In my case, I felt privileged when my knowledge of multiple languages and cultures was considered an asset throughout the field study, especially in a multilingual context like in the PKSS. On the other hand, I felt a dilemma when I found out that this is not necessarily always true in other contexts. Sometimes I was unmotivated when I felt the loss of or weakened ‘privilege’ which I had been so proud of, particularly in the out of field context such as during the reporting stage. I began to become aware that
my plurilingual ability might hinder the effectiveness of my communication, especially considering the main language required for the report is not my heritage language (Korean) but my fourth language (English).

In the following sections, I shall share my dilemmas as an insider and outsider, as well as how I attempted to maximize my assets as a plurilingual researcher.

3.5.2. “Insider” and “Outsider”

I am truly grateful to the people who helped me to establish the multiple linguistic repertoire that I have today, especially my parents, who made decisions for me during my early youth. While enjoying all the privilege of being a plurilingual, I have been struggling with a dilemma due to my positionality and the tension related to my position as an “insider” or “outsider” in my original/old community (i.e., ChaoXianZu) and current/new community (i.e., Canadian). As an individual born and raised in the ChaoXianZu community during my early youth, I was seen as an ‘insider’ from the eyes of the participants. At the same time, I was also seen as an ‘outsider’, due to my absence from the community for a long period.

To establish a closer rapport with the student participants, learning more about my old community became a priority. As such, I devoted a large amount of time and effort in communicating with them and the people in the community. I was able to build a good rapport with the participants. The membership in my old community helped me in many ways. During the fieldwork, I visited the school (PKSS) almost every day and kept observation notes, especially from the observations of classes and extra-curricular activities. As for the class observation that I carried out 3~4 times per week, my focus was to observe the JFL and EFL class rooms while occasionally visiting other subject classes such as Math, Korean, Hanyu and political sciences. I joined or observed various after-class activities, including the Flag Raising [升旗仪式; every Monday morning, 2012], various Athletic Day events [运动会; five school/regional level event in 2012~2013], ethnic Korean music and dance club activities [民族歌舞乐队排练, 2012~2013], GaoKao pre-departure ceremony [高考出征式 2012], as well as the peer-group entertainment activities
in the community (e.g., pull-table play or evening snack-time) etc. See chapter 4 and 5 for more details, as well as Appendix 3.1 for some images from these activities.

On the other hand, I was often seen as an “outsider” (a familiar stranger) in the eyes of my participants and the people in my old community, which was beyond my control. Perhaps this is because they perceived me as a new member of a Western society. This is partly true since I have lived in Canada for over fifteen years and I am a student in a Canadian university. This dual positioning helped me become a more critical researcher, and enabled me to look at the situations of the student participants and my old community with some distance, while I could also be very close to them. Maintaining a strong tie with my old community is important to me; however, I felt lost for a while during the initial year of this study. Perhaps, it was due to almost two decades of absence from the community. I felt inevitable alien-like feelings when I was entering my old community where I had spent almost three quarters of my schooling since grade 3.

What shocked me most is when I was seen as an outsider in the eyes of people in my heritage community, as illustrated in an excerpt from my field notes in the summer 2012:

Again, it seems that I am a familiar “stranger” to people in this community. I am a ChaoXianZu and I lived and studied here for almost three quarters of my schooling years. I thought I was very close to people here, but why I did not realized about this until now?! Humm, why Mrs. Li, the head of Teacher Training and a senior level class teacher at the PKSS, was addressing me as a “Canada”? Should I be happy with this nick name? There were a few days of absence from my regular visit to the school because of my hectic schedule of the interviewing some parents who were living out of the Peace town. When I resumed my regular visit to the school, I found it was very surprising to hear what Mrs. Li told me with a big grin on her face:

“Hi Canada! Where have you been? We were wondering why you were not visiting us these days”.

“Canada”?! Looking at my puzzled face, Mrs. Li kindly explained to me why I was gotten that nick name. In fact, I was “honored” with this nickname from the staff in the school since the third week of my arrival here for a two months fieldwork. A key reason was my dress-code, which was “problematic”. During my visit, I was often wearing semi-casual outfit as I did not have any teaching duties over there. I observed that all female (and
most of the male) staff in the school were regularly dressed in a very formal style with high heeled fashionable shoes.... Later on, I purchased a few set of formal clothing matching the local fashion style recommended by Mrs. Li and other teachers. ... During the visits to China, I encountered various interesting and surprising incidents like this. For instance, there was a junior teacher who was upset with me for a few days because I paid a meal on behalf of a small group of people he invited to a dinner gathering along with myself. He said that I was not giving him a “face” (a man who was supposed to take care of the whole bill). Later one, I had to apologize to him for ignoring his hospitality and let him to buy a meal for me. (My fieldnotes, July 1, 2012)

Despite some challenges, my knowledge and experiences of the languages and cultures of people in the target community was an important asset in this research. In the following section, I shall introduce some examples of the strategies that I employed in my final reporting.

3.5.3. Using Plurilingual Resources

In the field, data management was a key challenge in addition to dealing with issues concerning my subjectivity. The challenges in data management were mainly due to the complexity involving the dynamics concerning large amounts of data collected from various semi-structured interviews that were generally conducted in Korean and Chinese with some Japanese or English. Overall, it worked well. My knowledge and experience of learning/using different linguistic resources and literacy tools was very helpful. It was valuable not only in a) building up a better rapport with the participants, but also in b) having a higher quality observation of the participants' at-school activities (e.g., multilingual and multiliteracies practices in classroom), as well as their afterschool peer-group communication (e.g., through online SNS site like WeChat that often requires utilizing new media tools such as Smartphones). To collect more natural data, I gave the preference of using different language (generally in Korean or Chinese) to the participants. At the same time, because this is natural practice with these youth, I intentionally switched languages in order to have a better understanding of how individual students use multiple languages simultaneously. This also allowed me to test out individual participant’s proficiency in different language. Except for one (Rim), all participants freely switched languages between Korean and Chinese in their responses. Rim showed his consistent preference to respond in Chinese, as discussed in Section 5.2.1 in Chapter 5. When I
asked some simple questions in Japanese or English, only a few participants showed their confidence speaking in their foreign language. Overall, this method helped me to gain a better grasp of student participants’ competence in different languages, even though an analysis of crosslinguistic influence is not the key objective of the current research. The experience made me aware of the limitation of this method, as it requires the researcher’s knowledge of the participants’ languages. The experience also made me think of an important direction for my future study (see Chapter 7), to explore the feasibility of continually employing this method such as with whom, when and where and how.

**Out of the field:** The complexity involving managing data out of the field was also related to the dynamics of large amounts of data collected from the multilingual interviews, fieldnotes, and students’ written artifacts. This can be revealed by factors concerning the transcribing, translating and coding processes the large dynamic data collected from the lengthy field study: (a) Transcribing interview data: The transcribing task was required done mainly in Korean-Chinese, with some words and expression in Japanese or English. For Korean in particular, I had to hire some research assistants who were familiar with the local dialects spoken by the ChaoXianZu people in Mudanjiang; the dialect that is spoken mainly in Yanban, which originated from HamGyung Buck-do (the northeast part of the Korean peninsular); (b) Translation & coding: The coding process was carried out by myself, based on the transcribed multilingual data. Only key data from the coding were translated to English for further interpretation and final reporting to my advisory committee and dissertation writing; (c) Final reporting: Final reporting was mainly in English, so all the main data had to be translated to English considering this was the main language required in writing my dissertation at SFU. In this regard, the politics concerning the translation added more complexity in the writing process; see the section following for some examples of the challenges and coping strategies that I used.

In short, my understanding of taking up a doctoral level of study has changed since my involvement in this dissertation research project. This has been an exciting and inspiring journey of learning new scientific concepts and research tools, as well as engaging in a challenging and a complicated journey that is full of wander-ness and loss. Despite the ups and downs, the ‘privilege’ that I felt has shaped me - a ‘novice’ researcher. I am glad that the experiences of carrying out this longitudinal study ultimately made me
become a stronger person and a better researcher, as my journey from East Asia to Canada and back. Most importantly, I believe this will lead me to become a better researcher even though there might be more changes for me to make in the future.

3.6. Conclusion

Employing a visual ethnographic approach, this dissertation research is an almost 4-year longitudinal qualitative study of a group of twenty-two plurilingual youths of ethnic Korean heritage from a multilingual school (K-MNS) in northeast China. With an ‘emic’ emphasis on looking at student participants’ perspectives, the study aimed to gain in-depth insights into, or thick descriptions of, their experiences and stories (Clandinin & Connelly, 2000) of their social, cultural and linguistic practices, their understandings of the value of plurilingualism and tri-/multilingual education in a world of change, and their self-perceptions of (learners’) identity. Data collection methods mainly focused on the semi-structured interviews with the focal teenage student participants along with other data such as written artifacts (i.e., traditional and new literacies) that they shared and commented on. As my aim was to support a ‘holistic’ educational (and research) approach, I actively used multilingual and multiliteracy tools before, in and after the fieldwork.
Chapter 4.

Learning a Foreign Language (L3) at School

4.1. Introduction

It is paradoxical that the construction of plurilingual and pluricultural competence is in danger of being considered an ambitious, and even unrealistic or dangerous, objective, when in practically all contemporary communities experience of the pluralism of languages and cultures occurs very early and very widely. (Coste, Moore & Zarate, 2009, p.14)

The case of trilingual/multilingual education for minority nationalities in China is a good reflection of such a paradox. Despite the complex discourses concerning pluralism and the construction of the plurilingual and pluricultural competence, many multilingual ethnic minority students in China today are entering and studying at a government sponsored minority nationality school (MNS). This includes the 22 teenage plurilingual learners of ethnic Korean heritage in this study. Along with the rapid industrialization in China since the early 1990s, the complexity involving language education of students - like these plurilingual learners - challenges policies and practices at the MNS in the ethnic Korean community (K-MNS) historically grounded in two languages (i.e., Korean as heritage language and Hanyu Putonghua as national language) and a local context (i.e., northeast China). In particular, this involves how they and their school (the PKSS) construct their academic aspirations as an essential part of building a better future. A good example is to prepare for the GaoKao [national college entrance examination] through schooling at the K-MNS like the PKSS.

The K-MNS has been functioning as a key institution which reinforces the Preferential Policy in the ChaoXianZu community at large. As discussed in Chapter 1 (see Section 1.6), the K-MNS education system lays a basic but essential foundation for people in the Korean education community. As stated previously, China’s Preferential Policy for minority nationalities brought various benefits to the ChaoXianZu community. A key

31 Hanyu Putonghua (Hanyu) is the modern Chinese based on standard Beijing dialect.
influence is on preservation and continuity of its heritage culture, which is mainly through attracting more youngsters to complete their schooling under the K-MNS system. A visible benefit from the Preference Policy can be reflected in a high-stakes examination like the GaoKao which offers an additional ten or more (10+) points to the graduates of a K-MNS school. 32 This is important for families in the Korean autonomous townships and districts in northeast China, the main source of students for the K-MNS schools. Accordingly, the PKSS has been promoting its strength as a K-MNS in supporting students from the local community, such as benefits of enrolling in the Min-han-wai [heritage-Chinese-foreign language] trilingual education program including the additional points available in the Gaokao.

More specifically, schooling under the K-MNS education system is a complex process. This can be illustrated through various issues and related matters involving multilingual education such as from the following three main areas:

1) Bilingualism and Multilingual Education: Bilingualism and bilingual education: For over a half century since the early 1950s33, MinHan JianTong [mastery of both heritage and Han Chinese languages and culture] bilingualism became a main principle in the education for the minority nationality in the PRC (see Section 1.6.2 in Chapter 1). In particular, there have been some gaps in educational goals between the two main education systems in China: the Han majority schools and the minority nationality schools. For instance, by ‘bilingualism’ at school, the former aims to train talents with GuoJiHua [global minded] but for the latter it is about training talents with MinHan JianTong. By ‘second language education’, the former indicates teaching of a (powerful) foreign language such as English, Japanese or Russian, but for the latter it is actually about teaching Hanyu Putonghua (Mandarin Chinese).

2) A new shift (bilingualism to trilingualism): Since China re-opened its doors in the early 1980s, there has been a new shift from bilingualism to trilingualism in

---

32 Various points are added on to the applicants who graduated from a minority nationality school, which is generally based upon the situation of a minority nationality group (e.g., number of students enrolled in postsecondary institutions).

33 Except during the Cultural Revolution period (1966-1976). See Section 1.6 in Chapter 1.
education for the minority nationalities, which is another reflection of the complexity
involving multilingual education at the K-MNS. As stated previously, it is related to
various social political and economic changes in China especially in the past three
decades, along with China’s rapid economic development since the early 1990s,
with the establishment of the formal diplomatic relationship between China and
South Korea in 1993, as well as with an increased level of worldwide globalization.

3) Transition - aspiring through trilingual education, preparing for the GaoKao: Similar
to other schools under China’s public education system, the K-MNS has been
making constant efforts in looking for various ways to better support students’
successful transition to the larger world. This includes helping their transition from
high school to university, an essential route for their ‘better survival’, such as by
supporting their mastery of essential skills to ‘win’ in the educational and job
markets. Thus, the PKSS has set up an exam-centred curriculum and related
pedagogical strategies to support students’ better preparation for the GaoKao
especially since the early 1980s along with the active development of China’s open
policy.

This chapter aims to look at what were the focal ethnic Korean teenagers’
experiences and representations of plurilingualism through schooling in a trilingual
program under the K-MNS educational system. In particular, I focus on examining how
their experiences affect their learning, through looking at how they become plurilinguals
while engaging in multiple language and literacy practices at school. More specifically, I
look at how they are being plurilingual learners behind the complex discourse about the
trilingual education for minorities program in the K-MNS. A special focus is on looking at
how these students develop and value the ‘multi’ in their languages, cultures and literacy
practices at school, in the light of their dedication and “investment” (Norton, 1995, 2013;
also see Bourdieu, 1991) in multiple languages at a K-MNS school for over a decade of
their time and passion. Intrinsically, this is through an in-depth documentation about a
case of ‘plurilingual pedagogy in action’ (Marshall & Moore, 2016; also see Coste, et al.,
1999, 2009, and Council of Europe, 2001) at PKSS.

In the upcoming sections, I will present my data analysis with a focus on how the
plurilingual pedagogy – which highlights plurilingualism and plurilingual competence as
tools in learning – was considered the strategy for success at PKSS. I shall first introduce the overall educational approach of the school (Section 4.2). I then move on to how plurilingual competence is considered an asset for active learning, such as from the curriculum design, pedagogical strategies and students’ practices (Section 4.3). Finally, I shall look at how appropriation of plurilingualism is considered a strategic tool for supporting students’ better transition to the larger world (Section 4.4).

4.2. Plurality as a School Culture

“[T]he emergence and nature of a plurilingual asset as a potential learning facilitator is highly dependent on the educative culture in which the child is immersed, and on whether (a) interrelations between languages are encouraged through curricular planning; (b) reflectivity is developed in language learning; and (c) they are consciously embedded in classroom routines. (Moore & Gajo, 2009, p. 148)

I witnessed how PKSS considered plurilingual assets as potential learning facilitators in and out of the classroom settings. Plurality was considered a key empowerment tool.

Since the liberation of the PRC government in 1949, the PKSS has been implementing Korean-Chinese bilingual education as a main program, even though there were approximately ten years of interruption during the Cultural Revolution period (1966-1976). The educational policy in the school strongly highlights plurality as a key strategy for success, and as an essential empowerment tool for active learning in and out of classrooms. Plurality is visibly encouraged, activated and capitalized on in and out of classroom activities, such as through the curriculum, staff arrangement, hallway culture and extra-curricular activities.

4.2.1. Hallway Culture

What I found interesting with every visit to the PKSS was how plurality and plurilingualism were reflected in the promontional posters, media exhibitions and news announcement boards. For instance, all the main signage in the school was written in both Korean and Chinese, from the ones in the main campus gate to the main administration and classroom building, multi-purpose activity halls and the school
dormitory. Active practice of plurilingualism can be seen in the hallway culture of the four-story main school building.

Figure 4.1 illustrates the PKSS’s main entrance hall. Reception is on the righthand side of the main entrance door, where the Principal’s bilingual messages are displayed. An electronic announcement board was displayed on the main wall facing the entrance door, and classrooms for junior level classes were located on both sides of the main entrance hall. On the wall on the left-hand side of the main entrance door, a statue of three young ethnic Korean teenagers and the school song were displayed. On the wall between the two main entrance doors, there was a large poster with a list of recent graduates who had successfully entered universities.

All classrooms for the senior level 1 and 2 were located on the 2nd floor where there is also the vice principal’s office, the main education office, as well as the junior level class teachers’ offices. The 3rd floor was allocated to all senior level 3 classrooms and senior level class teachers’ offices. The 4th floor was allocated to language labs, a large lecture hall, media and printing centre, as well as the principal’s office and guest room.
The first-floor main hallway was decorated with information boards (e.g., with general information about the school such as the Student’s Code of Conduct) for students and guests, and some posters in Korean or in Chinese (e.g., a list of famous ethnic Korean people; inspirational words from some internationally famous people such as Albert Einstein and Bill Gates) for students. The language used on the main announcement board was Chinese. The second-floor main hallway was decorated with various media boards and promotional posters for students in general. One side wall from the staircase displayed three traditional media boards; each board presented to students related information, including names and images of the “10 best students of the year” (including the winners of multilingual speech contests), images from extra-curricular activities (e.g., folk dance, athletic days), as well as the names and images of the PKSS alumni who entered Peking or Qinghua university (the two most prestigious Chinese universities). Another side wall on the second-floor main hallway was decorated with three more media boards that present texts and images explaining the historical development of the school. What I found interesting is Chinese was the only language used in all six media boards on this floor. I asked principal Zheng why these are not bilingual both in Korean and Chinese. He said the display boards are mainly for visitors from outside including the administrators from the local and provincial government offices, as well as parents of new potential students. However, languages used in the promotional posters were varied. Figures 5.2 and 5.3 are examples of multilingual promotional posters that I found in the second-floor hallway. The first poster is written in Korean about the heart of virtuous etiquette based on traditional Korean cultural values, a Confucian ideal. The second poster is in Chinese and English about the importance of being tolerant, another Confucian ideal. The third-floor main hallway was decorated with various media boards for presenting images of teachers and administrative staff, as well as the school’s recent educational achievements. Various colorful Korean and/or Chinese posters with inspirational words for teachers were displayed in the hallway.
4.2.2. Extra-curricular activities

The practice of ‘multi’ (especially Korean and Chinese bilingualism) is also a norm in all extra-curricular activities at the PKSS. Both traditional Korean music and sports are...
the main part of these activities. As a K-MNS, the school has been investing a large amount of time and funds in these multicultural education programs, which is a good showcase of its contribution and role as a gatekeeper not only for preserving traditional Korean cultural heritage but also for accessing trilingual education under China’s public-school system. In an interview, Principal Zheng told me these activities are an important part of the school’s curriculum, as they provide good opportunities for students to learn and feel by doing.

Besides taking regular music classes, students are encouraged to participate in different traditional Korean music and dance club activities. When I visited the PKSS in late fall of 2014, the school allocated a large activity room in the newly built multi-purpose activity centre building for music classes. As shown in Figure 4.4, with various Korean musical instruments, this room had become a home for the youngsters in the PKSS where they learn about their heritage culture, and tradition.

Athletic activities are another main part of the extra-curricular program that connects students with their heritage culture. Every year the PKSS organizes or hosts an average of 4–6 (internal or cross-school) athletic events including soccer and skating competitions. During my short two months of fieldwork in the PKSS in summer 2012, I
was very fortunate to witness three athletic events hosted by the school: a cross-school soccer game between K-MNS schools in the region (late May), an internal school athletic day (early June), as well as a large scale athletic event in Mudanjiang (early July). Except for the Senior 3 students who were busy preparing for the Gaokao, all students in the school are required to be involved in the sports activities. When the PKSS is a main host for an event, such as the one in early July 2012, student participants of this study (who were in grade 11) and their peers were very busy supporting the event. They were using afterschool hours and weekends to participate in dancing or cheer leading practices, such as for the parade on the opening day of the event.

Figure 4.5. The PKSS: Opening ceremony for an Athletic Day

Figure 4.5 illustrates a scene which I captured from an opening ceremony for the event, a major regional athletic event organized and hosted by the office of minority nationalities and religion [MinZongJu] in Mudanjiang regional government and Peace city. It was for cerebrating LiuTouJie [流头节; flowing festival], a traditional Korean cultural event to worship ancestors while seeking a healthy harvest. As an observer, what I found interesting and intriguing about this event was the complex politics involved in these events. In particular, how the event often serves as a reflection of China’s Preferential

---

34 LiuTouJie [流头节; flowing festival or head day] is a traditional Korean festival that is popular in the northeast China. Held on June 15th in Korean lunar calendar which is same as Chinese lunar Calendar, the festival is a very strong collective, agriculture-based, offering agricultural gods, ancestors worship, seeking a healthy harvest, respect for the traditional festival custom. On the day of the festival, people carry food and wine to the river shore, bathing in the water, known as the “head”. (Source: www.baidu.com, August 20, 2016)
Policy in practice. First, an imbalanced bilingualism on the day of the event: Almost 70% of announcements and written records in the main event were in Chinese, while only 30% were done in Korean. I was surprised to see that Korean was not the main language used in most of the athletic events in PKSS. Later on, I was told that this was for two reasons: one, it was because of the non-Korean local government officers and guests who were invited to this event; two, it was due to the decreased proficiency of an increasing number of new students enrolled in the junior level grades at PKSS. Second, intentional presentation of Min-Han bi-cultural images: This can be seen in the preparation of these events. For approximately one month prior to the event day, a high-ranking officer from the regional MinZongJu office in Mudanjiang city visited the PKSS and offered strict guidance for the event preparation process. One week before the event, he visited the school almost every day to monitor the rehearsal for the opening day and other related activities for the event. On the day of the event, I finally understood why he and his office were working so hard for this event: many important guests attended the opening ceremony, such as over 15 high officials from the provincial and regional government offices including the Mayor of Mudanjiang. In Figure 4.5, for another example, four female senior level students at PKSS who were in ChiMa ChoGoRi [traditional Korean costume] were holding China’s national flag, and all younger female junior level students (who were holding small display boards for different teams) were also wearing ChiMa ChoGoRi. However, the four male students behind these girls were in the formal school uniforms that are similar to the ones for students in some Han Chinese schools; indeed, they were the PKSS students who were taking over the national flag from those four girls for the flag-raising ceremony as part of the event opening. In particular, the symbolism in this transfer from Korean heritage culture to Chinese nationalism reveals the complex politics involved in the development of these students’ identities.

4.3. Plurilingual Competence as an Asset for Active Learning

As noted previously, the PKSS implemented a pluralistic educational policy that highlights the practice of plurilingualism as a strategy for more effective learning. Capitalization of the plurality is considered a main strategic policy in PKSS for empowering
all students; active and ongoing appropriation of plurilingualism and multiple literacies is highly encouraged in and out of classrooms. More specifically, in the context of PKSS, plurilingual pedagogies were reflected mainly in the following three areas: (i) to raise language awareness among students, as they were learning, exploring and producing a range of new knowledge in different subject matters; (ii) to motivate students’ active development of their voices and identities, as they were developing and exercising their agency by learning different languages and cultures; (iii) to open up spaces for active development of the ‘multi’ in their dynamic plurilingual repertoire as tools for learning, while encouraging their active use of different linguistic and cultural knowledge. This also can be seen from its curriculum design and pedagogical strategies, such as from the arrangement of teaching subjects and class hours, textbooks and learning materials, and medium of instruction. While focusing on looking at these facets, this section also pays attention to general perspectives of student participants and staff in the school especially their attitudes toward trilingual education through a K-MNS.

4.3.1. Curriculum & Pedagogical Strategies

An Exam-centered Curriculum

PKSS developed an exam-centered curriculum with plurality as the powerhouse, along with pedagogical strategies that foster the strategies of ‘multi’. Similar to the majority of secondary schools in China, PKSS has been carrying out YingShi JiaoYu which is an exam-oriented education since China re-started the university entrance exam in the late 1970s. In recent years, students in the school have generally faced three main examinations: ZhongKao [中考; middle school graduation exam], HuiKao [会考; high school graduation exam], and GaoKao [高考; national college entrance exam]. The first exam is held upon completion of all required junior level studies usually in the end of Junior level 3 (grade 9), and the second one is taken after they finished all required senior level studies usually at the end of Senior level 2 (grade 11). They take the Gaokao during the last year of their studies in high school, an important exam especially for students who are looking for further academic advancement. Many schools are constantly searching for strategies to help students prepare for the GaoKao. As a consequence, schools compete with each other in order to send more students to higher ranking universities, especially
ZhongBen [重本 prestigious university] rather than PuBen [普本 regular university]. In turn, in the school's curriculum class hours devoted to teaching subjects are often based on the key requirements of these exams.

Table 4.1. PKSS 2011/2012 class schedule (Term 1, 2011.09 ~)

Table 4.1 illustrates the class schedule for the first term of the 2011/2012 school year in PKSS. With a goal of preparing for the middle school graduation exam [ZhongKao], during the three years of junior level studies, students in PKSS study a total of 13 main subjects. During the first two years of senior level studies, they study a total of 12 subjects to prepare for the high school graduation exam [HuiKao]. From senior year 1, students are divided into classes either with a focus on WenZong [文综; comprehensive knowledge in the arts and social sciences] (i.e., history, geography, politics and philosophy) or LiZong [理综; comprehensive knowledge in the sciences] (i.e., physics, chemistry and biology). Students in both classes learn math, language arts (Hanyu and Korean) and a foreign language (Japanese or English). During the last year of their senior level studies, they focus on only 8 subjects required for preparing for the GaoKao: Math, language arts (Korean and Hanyu), a foreign language, and three subjects in either WenZong or LiZong.
What is very noticeable from Table 4.1 is the key role that language subjects play in the PKSS’s main programs. Take the following three grades for an example,

- **Junior level 3** (Grade 9), preparing for the ZhongKao: Over 30% (13 out of 40) of the main sessions in a week are given to language programs, including 5 sessions to a foreign language (FL). The same as with math, the FL is taught as a core subject which is delivered every day - 5 sessions per week. *Number of sessions allocated to each of the 13 subjects taught in this level: 数学 Math (5), 外语 FL (J/E 5), 朝文 Korean (4), 汉语 Hanyu (4), 政治 Political Science (3) 历史 History (3) 地理 Geography (3) 化学 Chemistry (4) 物理 Physics (3) 生物 Biology (2) 体育 Physical Education (1) 音乐 Music (1) 美术 Visual Arts (1)*

- **Senior level 2** (grade 11), preparing for the HuiKao: 25% (10 out of 40) of the main sessions in a week are given to language programs, including 4 sessions to a FL. *Number of sessions allocated to each of the 9 subjects taught in this level: 数学 Math (5), 外语 FL (4), 朝文 Korean (3), Hanyu (3), WenZong (12; politics, history, geography) or LiZong (12; politics, history, geography), 物理 Science (2), 计算机科学 Computer science (2)*

- **Senior level 3** (grade 12), preparing for GaoKao: 33% (12 out of 40) of the main sessions in a week are given to language programs, including 5 sessions to a FL. *Number of sessions allocated to each of the 7 subjects taught in this level: 数学 Math (8), 外语 FL (5), 朝文 Korean (3), 汉语 Hanyu (4), WenZong (15; politics, history, geography) or LiZong (15; biology, chemistry, physics),

All sessions in the PKSS are offered from 7:40 in the morning until 4:45 in the afternoon during the weekdays. Each regular session consists of 45 minutes, there is a 10-minute break between sessions and a two-hour lunch break. Some sessions including supervised self-studies are offered during the evenings (between 6 - 8:45pm Monday through Thursday) and weekends (between 9:00am and 4:00pm all Saturdays and two Sundays every month), especially for students in Jr. year 3 and all students in the senior level studies. Every Monday morning before first class starts, there is a ShengQi YiShi [National flag raising ceremony].

**Pedagogical Strategies: ‘Multi’ as a Strategic Tool**

Along with the exam-centred curriculum, the PKSS has been actively developing various pedagogical approaches. In particular, practices of the ‘multi’ were highly valued as a strategy for students’ empowerment, which can be seen from the selection of textbooks and learning material, as well as the setup of instructional media such as in the classroom language policies.
The main textbooks used for the main program at the PKSS were mostly either in Korean or Chinese. Math and all science books were in Chinese, the same books that are used in the Han Chinese public schools. Textbooks for comprehensive arts and social sciences (i.e., political science, geography and history) are in Korean, but they are translated versions from the original textbooks used in the Han Chinese public schools; these books are generally published by the YanBian ChaoXianZu publishing house (YCPC). Both ChoSeon Euhmun [Korean language arts] and HanYu [Modern Chinese language arts] textbooks are also from the YCPC. As for the foreign language program, English-Chinese bilingual textbooks were used in the EFL classes, while trilingual textbooks and learning materials are used in the JFL classes. For instance, both Japanese-Korean (as main textbooks) and Japanese-Chinese (e.g., as additional workbooks) books were used in Japanese classes. Figure 4.6 shows examples of some of the main textbooks and learning materials for senior 2 (grade 11) students: from the left, 1) SiXiang ZhengZhi [思想政治; Politics and philosophy] (in Chinese); 2) HanYu [汉语; Modern Chinese Language Arts] (in both Chinese and Korean); 3) ChoSeon Euhmun [朝鲜语文; Korean language arts] (in Korean).
Media of Instruction

Active practices of plurilingualism in the school are also reflected in the strategic arrangement of the instructional medium, which can be divided into three main patterns:

*Mono- to bilingualism* (in language arts, math and science classes): As a strategy to support students’ better transition to postsecondary institutions where Chinese is the medium of instruction, the PKSS employed Chinese as a main instructional media in math and science classes; only a small number of instructors were using Korean as a secondary language to help students’ understanding of particular terminology. As for language arts, Korean language arts classes were ‘purely’ taught in Korean, and over 90% of HanYu Putonghua [Mandarin Chinese] classes were taught in Chinese. In my final visit to the PKSS in December 2014, however, Principal Zheng told me about a new change in the Korean classes: “Korean language art classes for the junior level classes in my school these years is no longer ‘purely’ in Korean”. For him, one key contributing factor was the increased number of young ethnic Korean students who grew up in the urban areas and often lacked proficiency in Korean.

*Korean-Chinese Bilingualism*: Korean and Chinese bilingualism in teaching the subjects of arts & social sciences (politics, geography and history) has a relatively long history at the PKSS. It is also a strategy for the school to help students’ success. The ratio of using each of the two languages depends on the teachers. Most of the teachers in the Arts and Social Sciences division generally choose to use a textbook written in Korean and also deliver their classes in Korean. To do so, they were intentionally creating a learning context for students to have more opportunity to use their heritage language while learning comprehensive social science knowledge. Ms. Park, the head of teaching and learning at the PKSS and a veteran political science teacher, told me that it was to better support students’ preparation for the GaoKao. While showing some examples of Korean-Chinese bilingual mock exam papers for the WenZong, she emphasized that helping students to take bilingual exams like the GaoKao would allow each student to maximize their linguistic competence and perform well on the Gaokao. Even though they mainly use textbooks written in Korean, the majority of additional learning materials available on the market are written in Chinese. Thus, Ms. Park said that her team of WenZong teachers intentionally use Korean as the main instructional medium, as they consider it is the best
way to help students to be familiar with academic language in Korean. She considers this approach would ultimately help students to ‘win’ in their battle in the Gaokao.

*Bi-/Trilingualism* (in foreign language classes): This was particularly evident in the foreign language classes. In the case of Japanese as a FL (JFL) program, all Japanese teachers were fluent Korean and Chinese bilinguals. Perhaps for this reason, Korean-Chinese-Japanese trilingualism was a norm in the JFL classes, which can be seen from the example of Mr. Song’s class which I shall introduce below. In the English as a FL classes, except for one sessional teacher (Korean-Chinese-English speaker), all four full-time EFL teachers were of the Han Chinese heritage and barely had any knowledge of Korean. In the class, they were actively using both Chinese and English as instructional medium; but students’ agency in the use of their heritage language (Korean) was limited, as shown in Min’s statement in Interview 4.1 in the upcoming section.

**Trilingualism in a JFL Class**

Plurilingualism is the norm in the Japanese classes at the PKSS. This can be seen in the class of Mr. Song who has been teaching JFL class for almost 25 years at the PKSS. As the Vice-principal of Education, he was also in charge of the general set up of the foreign language programs in the school. During my various visits to the PKSS, I was fortunate to visit his classes multiple times. As a Korean-Chinese-Japanese speaking trilingual, Mr. Song was constantly exploring several ways of utilizing multiple linguistic, media and cultural resources in his teaching. This can be seen from the two images in Figure 4.8, which illustrate how Mr. Song utilizes the ‘multi’ in his own and students’ dynamic repertoires for students’ deeper learning of the target language (Japanese).
Figure 4.7. (A) Trilingualism in a Sr. level 2 JFL class; (B) Teaching materials used in the JFL class

I captured these images from one of his sessions in late spring 2013 when he was teaching Sr. level 2 students. Figure 4.7 (a) illustrates a scene from his vocabulary lesson in a JFL class. Figure 4.7 (b) illustrates some learning materials that he used in the session: one
was an additional study book titled “Intensive Japanese winter training” (in Korean and Japanese) and the other is a set of custom made worksheets for grammar practice.

Mr. Song was actively using all three languages throughout his session. During the session, he used Japanese for around 50% of the time while alternating between Korean and Chinese as supporting instructional media. In the vocabulary practice, for instance, he started with (i) dictation – a group of students were invited to write down the words they hear on the black board, then (ii) self-marking – students were asked to self-grade their own work based on the answer keys displayed on PPT slides, finally (iii) commenting – Mr. Song asked students to comment on their peers’ work on the blackboard and made further comments on that work. What I found interesting in his class was that, while all the power point slides used in Japanese and Chinese (e.g., new vocabulary in Japanese but with Chinese translations), his comments for further explanation were mostly in Korean. He employed similar strategies for introducing new or complicated grammar points and reviewing difficult phrases.

**Learning EFL from non-Korean Teachers**

As mentioned earlier, all the main EFL teachers at PKSS were Chinese-English bilingual speakers. They were supportive of the active practice of plurilingualism in class. Concurrently, they demonstrated their struggles in utilizing students’ heritage linguistic knowledge - Korean - which they are not familiar with. Tina, the leading EFL teacher of the class of 2013 during their Senior years 1 to 3, also affirmed this. In an interview\(^{35}\), she commented on my question of “can you describe the multilingualism in your English class”:

**Interview Excerpt 4.0-a** (Tina)

对我来说，一个在朝中工作的英语教师，汉族，无法用朝语沟通，不算是“多语使用者”；而学生相对来说，掌握至少3种语言，是“多语使用者”。... 我在讲解英语知识点时，大多数用汉语，偶尔带几个英语专业术语；在进行阅读教学时，更多是针对文章，用英语提问。很多学生英语水平有限，会用汉语表达，私下里用朝语。我会帮助，鼓励他们用英语。... 平时呢一些什么简单的...嗯..可能能表达的我尽量用英语让他们说。但是在像解释一些知识点啊，嗯..更多的时候用

\(^{35}\) In the interview, questions to teacher participants were mainly about their perceptions concerning multilingualism, multilingual literacies, and identities. See Appendix A-2 for some sample interview questions asked the Teacher Participants.
During her interview, Tina mentioned that the combined use of Chinese and English is a conscientious strategy in her classroom teaching. I observed such practice during my weekly classroom observations of Tina’s EFL classes during my two months fieldwork over the summer of 2012. She was keen in trying to use mainly English as a medium of instruction, but many students experienced difficulties in understanding instructions. During the class, she would often remind her students to use English; only a few high-performing students would participate in the classroom discussions, however. I observed that most students were taking their class notes in either Korean or a Korean-Chinese combination. Tina did not make any comments to encourage or discourage these students’ practices of multiliteracies. Later on, in a follow up interview, I asked why she preferred her students to use English in class. Tina explained that this was mainly for two reasons: (i) her own insecurity in classroom management, due to her lack of knowledge of Korean; and, (ii) her belief in supporting English as the main language of communication during the class, as a way to empower students’ learning of target language.

On the one hand, she said that, as a non-Korean speaking EFL teacher, she was initially reluctant to support her students’ use of Korean in class. Because she was not a Korean speaker herself, Tina shared that she used to be nervous and biased toward her students’ use of Korean in class:

*Interview Excerpt 4.0-b* (Tina)

以前吧，由于我不懂朝语嘛，我怕学生在说一些跟英语没关的事情，就怕这影响课程进行啊。因为不知道他们在说什么，就担心他们在唠些没用的怎么办啊，我就说...
让他们不要说朝语。有的时候呢，其实他们是在用英语，就是在交流有关课本内容，但是我去阻止他们或者说他们扰乱课堂。其实，那实际上有一些误解的。后来我发现这些学生还是挺可爱的，他们好像很多的时候还是在谈英语。[Because I do not understand Korean, I was concerned about the students doing things irrelevant to English. As I do not speak Korean, I didn’t allow them to speak Korean in my class; I worried about them talking behind my back about non-classroom topics. Sometimes, I stopped their talking or even ‘accused’ them of being disruptive in class. Actually they were talking about textbook related matters, and this was my misunderstanding. Later on, I found that these students were actually really cute, in most occasions they seemed to talk about English.] (Ms. Tina Y, June 20, 2012)

As she noted in the above statement, sometimes Tina was consciously or unconsciously constraining her students’ agency in utilizing their heritage language (L1) as a resource for learning. She found that, in most of the cases, students using Korean in her class were actually engaged in activities related to English. When I asked her how she knew about this, Tina shared a story of how she determined this from her students’ interaction with peers: “... I remember one student asked ‘what does this mean?’ At that time, there was a student in the class who answered in Korean, then, the first student nodded. I guess it was an explanation” [...我记得有一个学生问, 那个这什么意思啊? 当时好像有个学生用朝语说了一句, 然后他啊点头, 我就想应该是对他解释].

On the other hand, Tina’s strong preference for students’ active use of English in her classroom is mainly due to her belief in the benefit of using the target language:

*Interview Excerpt 4.0-c* (Tina)

以前读了一些报纸关于教学方面的论文。就是说，在英语课堂上尽量用英语，这样对学生的一些学习有利啊..有助于听力呀，还有..表达能力能提高一些，我想为他们创造这个环境，因为这里毕竟没有这个英语环境，还是在课堂上挺关键的，所以我现在也在试图改变一下，这样对我也有促进作用。 [I read some pedagogy and curriculum related research articles from newspapers. Basically, I learned that the advantages of the maximized use of English in classroom would help students’ learning, such as listening and improving communication skills. It is my hope, to create a better learning environment for them. Because we do not have a good English environment at school, I think that this classroom learning is essential for them. So I am trying to make a difference, which should also help me grow [as a teacher].] (Ms. Tina Y, June 20, 2012)
Like Tina, the EFL teachers at PKSS were trying to create more English-speaking spaces. At the same time, they were trying to utilize students’ prior linguistic knowledge that they brought into the class.

**Students’ Views about Plurilingualism in Classroom**

What are students’ views about their agency of practicing plurilingualism in the classroom? Interviews of student participants showed that their use of Korean during the EFL classroom was mostly related to language learning and, in fact, reflected their high engagement in trying to make sense of the lessons and activities in the foreign language. This can be reflected in Interview Excerpt 4.1 (Min) from the statement of a focal teenage participant in this study. As introduced earlier, Min learned English as her third language from grade 3 and chose to continually learn it when she entered the PKSS. In a semi-structured interview, I asked her experience of learning from a non-Korean EFL teacher.

**Interview Excerpt 4.1 (Min)**

Interpreter: Min은 영어 class에서 어떤 말 쓰요? [Which language do you use in your English class?]

Min: 저는 주로 한어 많이 쓰요, 선생님이 한족분이어서, 영어는 40%정도 쓰요. [Mainly use Chinese, as the teacher is Han Chinese. I use English for around 40%]

I: 한족선생이 영어를 가르치니 좋은가 같아요? [How do you feel learning English from a teacher with Han Chinese heritage?]

M: 어..제가 보기에는 좀..그러니까 조선어에서는 이렇게 조선말로 하면 제가 더 알아듣기 쉽고, 표달하기도 더 쉬워지는데, 한어로 강의하다가 필정 우리는 한족사람들보다 이렇게 한어를 잘 못하니까 가끔은 이렇게 이해하는데도 지장이 될 때도 있긴 deleo. 그 선생님은 이렇게 극력히 우리를 알아듣기 쉬워주기 쉽게 얘기해주시기 전해, 가끔, 아주 가끔씩은 좀 힘들 때가 있다, 좀 그렇게 있어요. [Humm.. I think, there are some expressions which are often easier to understand and express in Korean than in Mandarin Chinese. Because my class was taught in Mandarin Chinese, this sometimes hinders my understanding because we don't speak Chinese as good as the native Han Chinese speakers. Even though the teacher is trying her best, once in a while, we still experience difficulties...]

I: 예를 들면? [Such as?]

M: 예를 들면, 지금 영어 교재가 다 한어로 되있으니까, 선생님이 한어로 하는데, 한족말에서 일반 성구, 우리가 한어 성구에 대해서 요해가 그렇게 많지 않으니까,
Min consider that some English expressions are easier to explain in Korean, as sometimes they have a hard time finding matching words in Chinese to express the same meaning. For instance, “there are some expressions which are often easier to understand and express in Korean than in Chinese. Because my [English] class is taught by a teacher with Han Chinese heritage, this sometimes hinders my understanding” [조선어에서는 이렇게 조선말로 하면 제가 더 알아듣기 쉽고, 표달하기도 더 쉬워지구 그림데, 한어로 강의하니까 절대로 우리는 한족사람들보다 이렇게 한어를 잘 못하니까 가끔은 이렇게 이해하는데도 지장이 될 때도 있군대요]. “Even though the teacher is trying her best, once in a while, we still experience difficulties as we don’t speak Chinese as good as the native Han Chinese speakers...” [그 선생님은 이렇게 극力求 우리를 알아듣기 쉬워라구 쉽게 얘기해주시기는 힘들지 않아, 아주 가끔씩은 좀 힘들 때가 있다, 좀 그렇게 있어요].

Like Min, most teenage students in this study affirmed multiple benefits of learning from foreign language teachers with diverse linguistic and cultural backgrounds, especially from those who are familiar with their heritage languages. In short, as shown in the tensions around the matters concerning the medium of instruction between JFL and EFL classes, the politics pertaining to the language policy at PKSS was complex.
4.3.2. Schooling through a K-MNS: Plurality for ‘Win’?

Nonetheless, in such a ‘wholistic’ educative culture at the PKSS, the focal plurilingual learners were aspiring through trilingual education in this K-MNS to build a better future. For them, plurilingualism is the norm in their daily lives. They were actively developing their dynamic multilingual repertoires in and out of classroom contexts. In order to have an enhanced understanding of their representation of plurilingualism, I invited each participant to share their self-definition of ‘multilingual’(ism) and experiences of mobility, as introduced in Chapter 4. In this section, I shall focus on exploring their attitudes toward trilingual education, as part of my effort to have a better understanding of how they develop plurilingual and intercultural competence. A particular emphasis will be on looking at their responses to questions such as what is your view on schooling through a K-MNS like the PKSS, or how do you feel about learning in a trilingual program at the PKSS? How do you value learning different languages, and use different languages in and out of the classroom?

Plurilingualism as a Norm

Plurilingualism was the norm at PKSS and in student participants’ daily lives. I witnessed this through several visits to PKSS, especially based on my fieldnotes from the class observations, as well as interviews with students and teachers. All 22 student participants reported that they were regularly using different languages and multiple literacy tools in class, as well as for out of school assignments and in various extracurricular activities. Code-switching between Korean and Chinese, “code-meshing” and “translanguaging” (Canagarajah, 2013a) between different linguistic and literacy codes, while they were traveling across multiple spaces (see Section 2.4.3 in Chapter 2) was a main characteristic of student participants’ language use at school and in their daily lives. They were constantly shuttling between different languages or semiotic codes, and “treating the diverse languages that form their repertoire as an integrated system” (Canagarajah, 2011, p. 401). This can be seen from examples of interview excerpts, class notes, and screenshots of their communication records on SNS sites (see Figure 4.12 in Section 4.4 and Section 6.4 in Chapter 6) throughout this dissertation.
Figure 4.8 is a good example of such practice, a multilingual classnote distributed by a student participant. It illustrates a code-switching practice of Ahn, a focal participant who is utilizing her knowledge in Korean and Chinese to keep her class-notes in a senior level political science class. She wrote down all key terms in Chinese, but made related reflection notes in Korean. In my class visits at the PKSS and observation of their interaction on WeChat (a popular peer-networking SNS site among these teenagers), I noticed that practices of ‘multi’ was part of the daily lives of all 22 student participants in this study.

For another example, the teenagers’ active practice of plurilingualism can be seen from their responses in Table 4.2, which presents a summary of their language use in and out of classroom contexts. The table illustrates key findings based on the teenage students’ responses to a questionnaire that they completed before they participated in the
initial semi-structured interview, asking for basic background information which was the basis for the initial set of my open-ended questions in the interviews. For instance, which language(s) do you usually use at school such as with your teachers and friends, which language(s) do you use after school such as with your family and friends.

Table 4.2. Students’ Language Use in & out of Classrooms

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>At School</th>
<th>In class</th>
<th>In class</th>
<th>During the recess</th>
<th>During the recess</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(with teachers) %</td>
<td>(with peers)%</td>
<td>(with teachers)%</td>
<td>(with peers) %</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Korean (L1)</td>
<td>&gt;60</td>
<td>&gt;45</td>
<td>50&lt;</td>
<td>&gt;45</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chinese (L2)</td>
<td>30&lt;</td>
<td>50&lt;</td>
<td>&gt;50</td>
<td>50&lt;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Japanese or English (L3; FL)</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>5</td>
<td></td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>After School</th>
<th>with parents %</th>
<th>with friends %</th>
<th>writing /chat online (with parent) %</th>
<th>Writing /chat online (with peers) %</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Korean (L1)</td>
<td>&gt;80</td>
<td>70&lt;</td>
<td>75&lt;</td>
<td>&gt;25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chinese (L2)</td>
<td>18&lt;</td>
<td>&gt;25</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>70&lt;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Japanese or English (L3; FL)</td>
<td>&gt;2</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Students’ responses indicate four main patterns under each of the two main categories. As for their language use At school: (a) in class: With their teachers, they mainly speak Korean (L1) and 30% Chinese but around 10% Japanese or English (J/E); with their peers, they use Chinese more than they use Korean and still use around 5% J/E. (b) During the recess: With their teachers, they use both Korean and Chinese but never use J/E; with their peers, they use more Chinese than Korean but use around 10% J/E. The second pattern is their language use After school: (a) with parents/family: With their parents/family, they mostly use Korean (over 80%) and some Chinese (around 18%) but never use J/E.

Table 4.2 is created based on student participants’ self-reports to the following two main questions in the initial questionnaire about their language use in and out of classroom contexts: (1) How do you use different languages at school? E.g., which language do you use in class with teachers and classmates? How about during the class break? (2) How do you use different languages after school? E.g., which language do you speak with friends, and at home with your parents? Each participant was asked to answer by percentages (%). In the table, the symbol “>” indicates ‘more’, and the symbol “<” indicates ‘less’; for instance, “>60” means 60% or more, and “30<” means 30% or less.

---

36 Table 4.2 is created based on student participants’ self-reports to the following two main questions in the initial questionnaire about their language use in and out of classroom contexts: (1) How do you use different languages at school? E.g., which language do you use in class with teachers and classmates? How about during the class break? (2) How do you use different languages after school? E.g., which language do you speak with friends, and at home with your parents? Each participant was asked to answer by percentages (%). In the table, the symbol “>” indicates ‘more’, and the symbol “<” indicates ‘less’; for instance, “>60” means 60% or more, and “30<” means 30% or less.
(under 2%); daily communication with their friends, they use more Korean (70%) than Chinese (25%) and do not often use J/E (under 5%). (b) in writing or online chat/diary: With their parents/family, they mostly use Chinese (over 70%) and do not often use Korean (under 25%) but sometimes use J/E (5%).

In short, plurilingualism is a norm in the participants’ daily lives. Korean and Chinese are two main languages that these students use at school, as it seems they have a very limited use of foreign language at school except in the target language classes. In terms of their preference in using Korean and Chinese at school, they can be divided into two main groups. On the one hand, the majority of students consider Korean as the main language in their daily communication in and out of the classroom context. Interview Excerpt 4.2 (a) illustrates an example of participants’ language preference within the classroom; it presents an excerpt of the interview with Yeon, a Korean, Chinese and Japanese trilingual.  

**Interview Excerpt 4.2 (a) Yeon**

I: yeon 이는 课堂에서 어떤 언어를 쓴요? [Which language do you use in class?]

Yeon (Y): 거의 조선말. [Mostly Korean.]

I: 오~ 그럼... 퍼센트로 하면요? [Okay. So.. if you say it by percentage?]

Y: 음.. 课堂에서 한 90 퍼센트는 조선말하다. 그리고.. 한어는 아주 적습니다. [hum.. in class, I use around 90% in Korean, and rarely speak in Hanyu.]

I: 课堂에서 그 선생님하구 이야기 할때 두요? [That includes when you talk to your teachers?]

Y: 예. 거의 다 조선말 한다. [Yes, I mainly use Korean]

I: 어느 과목이나 다요? [In all classes?]

Y: 예. [Yes.]

(Yeon, June 15, 2012)

---

37 As will be introduced more in Chapters 5 (Section 5.1.1) and Chapter 6 (Section 6.2.1), Yeon demonstrated unique perceptions about each of her languages (e.g., Interview Excerpt 6.2).
On the other hand, some participants especially the ones who were born and grew up mainly in the urban environment (e.g., Qing, Rim) showed a strong preference in the use of HanYu instead of Korean at school. Qing’s descriptions in Interview Excerpt 4.2 (b) illustrates an example of the language preferences of teenagers in this group.

**Interview Excerpt 4.2 (b) (Qing)**

I: 在学校，你用哪一种语言？ [Which language do you use at school?] 
Q: 用汉语。 [Using Chinese.]

I: 100 分之 100 用汉语吗？ [100% in Chinese?]
Q: 嗯..汉语用百分之 80，语文用百分之 20。 [humm.. 80% in Chinese, 20% in Language Arts]

I: 语文？是指朝鲜语文吧？[语文？ Do you mean Korean?]
Q: 嗯。 [Yes]

I: 那你 作业的时候也是用汉语吗？[Do you also use Chinese when you are working on school assignments?]
Q: 嗯..除语文以外的科目都用汉语。 [Yes, except for the Korean classes.]

I: 就是你写信最方便，是吧？[Basically, writing in Chinese is most convenient for you?]
Q: 嗯。 [Yes]

I: 那给你父母写信的时候呢？[How about when you write to your parents?]
Q: 语文。 [In Korean.]

I: 你写信也喜欢用朝鲜语吗？[I see. Do you mean that you prefer to use Korean when you write to your parents?]
Q: 嗯。 [Yes.]

I: 那，你们在 QQ 聊天的时候呢？[How about when you chat with your friends on QQ?]
Q: 用汉语。 [In Chinese]
I: Okay. 那你也用汉语 QQ 写日志吗? [Okay. Do you write QQ diary in Chinese as well?]

Q: 嗯，用汉语 [Yes, I do]

(Qing, June 15, 2012)

In contrast with Yeon’s experience, Qing confided that Chinese (Hanyu) was her favourite language to use during the class. Out of school, Hanyu was her language of preference, but she used Korean when she was communicating with her parents who were working in Seoul, Korea.

What surprised me about her response was the fact that she attended a K-MNS elementary school and grew up in a family where Korean was the main language of communication. In the beginning of this interview, Qing said that she had been living with her grandparents since grade 1 because her parents went to Korea for work. She told me that Korean was the main language used in her communication with her grandparents; her grandmother spoke to her in Korean as she barely speaks Chinese and her grandfather also used Korean at home. Thus, I assumed that she would use more Korean at school than what she informed me here: a strong preference in using Chinese at school. Her preference of using Chinese is not a very surprising behavior of students in the PKSS today, especially for students like Qing who grew up in the urban areas where Chinese is a common language in their daily lives. But, I thought, the case of Qing would be different considering she had a home language environment speaking Korean. In a follow up interview, she told me that her preference for using Chinese at school is because some of her classmates often laughed at her Korean accent, while they were envious about her “authentic” Chinese accent. In short, Qing has complex representations of plurilingualism and showed an interesting but solid rationale for her plurilingual and multiliteracy practices, which will be discussed more in Chapter 6 (See Section 6.2.1).

Aspiring through Trilingual Learning

Overall the majority of teenagers reported that they were satisfied with their commitment in schooling through a K-MNS. Despite their ongoing struggles, they seemed happy about learning in a trilingual program at the PKSS, which can be seen in Interview Excerpt 4.3 from the statements by Gao who chose to learn Japanese as his L3 and FL1.
Interview Excerpt 4.3 (Gao)

I: 你在 PKSS 三语教育课程学外语 感觉怎么样？[How do you feel learning FL through the trilingual education program at the PKSS?]

Gao (G): 感觉？跟汉族学生比吗？[My feeling？Compared with the Han Chinese students？]

I: 恩 [Yes]

G: 에.. 比他们压力大, 毕竟他们比我们少学一种语言。가네 두개 배우는데 우리 그만한 시간에 배우자면 가네보다 좀 더 노력해서 배우니까 압력이 좀 더 큽니다. [Yeah.., I feel more pressure. After all, they learn one language less than us. It takes a lot more effort and pressure, as we are learning an extra language on top of two languages [i.e., Chinese and English/FL] that they usually learn {at the Han Chinese school}.]

I: 你觉得不公平吗？[So, do you feel that is unfair？]

G: ..也不算不公平了吧。毕竟朝语是母语하니까에 학得还是可以，比较方便一些。汉语平时交流략하니까 也是学的。[Not exactly. It is okay to study Korean; and this is because it’s my mother tongue and more convenient for me to learn. In my daily communication, I learn Hanyu [Mandarin-Chinese] as well.]

Like Gao, the majority of student participants reported their feelings of pressure in learning extra languages. A key reason given was mostly about extra time and energy that they have to dedicate to learning three languages (Korean, Hanyu, and Japanese or English), compared to students in the Han Chinese school who only learned two languages (Hanyu and English). Nonetheless, they consider their choice to study at the PKSS was a good choice. Some participants told me that, indeed students attending the Han Chinese school have to learn classic Chinese [WenYanWen 文言文] under the language arts, while the ones at a MNS only need to learn modern Chinese. In this sense, they said that learning both Korean and Chinese is manageable.
School administrators and their teachers consider trilingualism as a key strategy for their success. In particular, they consider it helpful for students to better transition from high school to university, such as by supporting their preparation for the high-stake examinations such as the GaoKao [national college entrance exam]. This includes Ms. Jin, a BanZhuRen [班主任; head class teacher] of senior level 2 students in the Science classes (the class of 2013). The same as many teachers at the PKSS, Ms. Jin is always wishing for the best for her students. She was very positive about her students’ learning in the trilingual program, which can be seen from Interview Excerpt 4.4 from a two-hour long interview with her in the summer 2012.

**Interview Excerpt 4.4** (teacher Ms. Jin)

I: 您觉得，从哪几方面，您觉得这些学生应该上朝中的三语教育课程，& 学习外语？[To what extent, do you think that your students should learn in the trilingual program at PKSS, and learn a foreign language?]

J: 我非常支持这个。本身我可能也是教汉语的，现在可能也是带理科班，我一直在强调他们这个学三语的重要。在这个朝中，尤其是这对学习日语、朝文、汉语的学生。[I strongly support this. Perhaps it’s because of my position as a Hanyu, and now as the head teacher for students in the Science class. I have always been mentioning to them about the importance of trilingual learning, at this Korean high school, especially for students who study Japanese, Korean and Mandarin-Chinese.]

I: 嗯。[Okay.]

J: 在高考当中，这个，占的这个分数要比汉族人要多，多的时候得多四、五十分。[In the Gao-Kao exam, the...percentage is much higher than that of Han Chinese (students), about 40 ~ 50 marks at most.]

I: 嗯嗯。[I see.]

J: 那么这四五十分对一个学生来说得意味着什么，应该是很重要的。但理科学生不太愿意学这个三语。本身不愿意学这个文科嘛。[The 40 ~ 50 marks are crucially important for students (in Gaokao). But science students are often reluctant to study 3 languages, because they originally don’t want to study the Arts subjects.]

I: 嗯。[Okay]

J: 然后我就说，你们想上好大学的根基，数理化，你打不过人家汉族学生。那么你只能拿这三语这块来跟他们补这个差距。所以说，你一定不能放弃。你别的科目作业做不完，你必须得把三语作业给我做好它。不仅仅是因为我是汉语老师，因为我是班主任。老师因为你，从你的总分的角度上，必须得学好这个。这样呢，就占优势。[Then I told them that, an essential foundation for entering a
good university is {doing well /high performance in} math, physics and chemistry, but you can’t beat the Han Chinese students on these subjects. Alternatively, trilingual learning would be the only way to help you guys to cover the gap. So I told them, you should not to give up {in doing well in GaoKao}, and if there is no time to complete your homework for the other subjects, you should squeeze time to finish the assignments from the trilingual classes. It’s not only because I am a Hanyu teacher but also a head teacher of your class. From the overall consideration of your total score in Gaokao, I suggest that you should learn these {the 3 languages} well; so you may have the advantages {in GaoKao and for your academic advancement}.]

(Jin, June 2012)

Jin’s view summarizes the general view of administrators and teachers in the PKSS. They affirmed the plurality as an essential asset for ‘better survival’; trilingual learning is considered a strategic tool for a ‘win’, such as for the best outcome on the GaoKao. In this sense, they consider maximized development of plurilingual and intercultural competence (PIC) is important for their students’ successful transition to a larger social world.

4.4. Transition: Learning a Foreign Language

As mentioned in earlier sections, maintaining good student intake is an ongoing challenge for the PKSS especially during the last few years. The school has been looking for different strategies to accommodate the changing student demography from time to time. This includes developing enhanced curriculum and pedagogical strategies in order to maximize students’ strengths in experiences of learning different languages, for instance, by taking advantage of language subjects weighing a lot on the GaoKao. Due to various domestic and international factors, however, the school has been struggling in order to ‘survive’ not only with the other K-MNS schools but also with the Han Chinese schools. A good example is its ongoing battles in maintaining a good level of student intake, in order to assure good funding from government agencies. This is particularly challenging for the school these years, along with a rapid population decrease in the

38 PKSS administrators informed me that, as a main gatekeeper of Korean-Chinese bilingual education program for the ethnic Korean educational community in China, the school did not have issues to maintaining good student intake until mid 2000s. Since the school offered English as another subject in foreign language program, more parents were willing to send their children to the school.
ChaoXianZu community since the late 1990s (dropped almost 0.8% between 1990 and 2010; see Section 1.6.1 in Chapter 1), especially due to an increased level of domestic and international im-/migration in northeast China (see Ehlert 2011). Another challenge is an increased level of pressure from parents who expect their children to be attending a better school which would help them enter more prestigious universities. As such, the school has been making a constant effort to attract more “high-quality” students; they can help the school to keep its reputation as an institution having the ability to train more students for higher ranked universities.

Thus, similar to other schools under China’s public education system, the PKSS has been making constant efforts in looking for various ways to better support their students to successfully transition to the larger world. This includes supporting their transition to university, an essential route for their transition (from high school to university), for ‘better survival’ in today’s competitive world. In other words, to support their mastery of essential skills to ‘win’ educationally and in the job market. As part of these initiatives, the school set up an exam-centred curriculum and related pedagogical strategies; the plurality is considered a power house, especially for students’ better preparation of the high-stake’s examinations such as the GaoKao [高考; national college entrance examination]. As introduced in earlier sections, the school has been creating a school-wide ‘multi’-lingual, ‘multi’-cultural and ‘multi’-literacies culture for more effective learning. In this process, foreign language (as L3) learning is considered a key strategy to support their transition.
It was evident that the PKSS staff was passionate and dedicated to help their students succeed through the trilingual education program. I was curious, however, about the students’ perspectives on making this transition. So I decided to explore this matter through a semi-structured interview that I carried out during my short visit to the school in late spring 2013, when student participants were in the midst of GaoKao preparation (see Figure 4.9). Questions asked at that time include what does the GaoKao mean to you? What does it mean to be preparing for the GaoKao by studying in the TEM program in the PKSS (a K-MNS)? In this section, I shall share some examples of responses from student participants in this study.

A Battle for GaoKao 高考

The GaoKao [高考; national college entrance examination] is a significant stepping stone for the youngsters with full aspirations for a better education and a better future career development. Since the high-stake’s exam system re-opened to the public in the late 1970s, its popularity has never decreased especially among students who are looking for “upward social mobility” (Gao, 2008, 2009). Every year in early June, millions of youths in China enter the Gao Kao centres located in various cities and townships across the
nation; they included over 9.12 million in 2013 and 9.39 million students in 2014 who applied for and challenged this high-stakes exam (YGGK, 2013, 2014).39

Even though there have been some changes in the new curriculum for students in senior high school (Zhong, Cui & Wu, 2003) since 2014, an applicant’s performance in the two to three-day exam plays a critical role in the post-secondary choice of students. As a result, the preparation for the GaoKao has become a “war” – a battle to enter good universities; it is not only for the individual students and their teachers, but also for their parents. How to better prepare their children for the GaoKao was also important for the parents, such as by making the decision to send them to a particular school and letting them learn a particular language. With the hope that their children would have a better chance on the GaoKao, some parents send their children to the Han majority Chinese schools, while the others send their children to different schools including minority nationality schools (MNS) or international schools. This is the same for the parents of student participants in this study. For them, their children’s schooling at the PKSS is essential.

Most high school students in China must take the GaoKao to go to a Chinese university.40 Students generally take the tests which are written over two days in early June, but the graduates from the minority nationality schools take three days of exams. Subjects tested on the GaoKao vary depending on the type and location of the school that an applicant is attending. As a pilot examination system used in order to promote

39 In recent years, there has been a decline in test applicants as more students are opting to study abroad. As an outcome, competition for entering a university is not as high as in the past. In 2012, for instance, 75 percent of students who took the Gaokao were admitted into China’s universities. The figure was 5 percent when the test resumed in 1977 following the Cultural Revolution. (Source 1) Another noticeable change is that, migrant students can now take gaokao away from their hometown. (Source 2) *Sources: (1) Retrieved from http://english.caixin.com/2012-06-11/100399272.html on Oct 12, 2016; (2) Retrieved from http://www.chinadaily.com.cn/china/2013-06/07/content_16585304.htm on Oct 12, 2016

40 Students who could not fulfil the required score for a university can enter in YuKeBan [a conditional enrollment] in some universities. For instance, Ying was accepted as a full-time student for one year in the YuKeBan, before obtaining her official status as the regular student at the department of Korean language and culture at a university in Jilin province. In addition, there are two main groups of students who chose not to take GaoKao: students who are attending an international school with a general objective of studying abroad, and students who want to enroll in a ZhiYe GaoZhong [career-focused senior high] with a goal of entering the work force upon their graduation of high school.
education system reform, the "3+X" examination system has been implemented in most parts of the country including Beijing and Heilongjiang province. The "3" refers to compulsory subjects, including Yuwen [language arts], mathematics and foreign languages. For students in the K-MNS, ‘language arts’ means Chinese and Korean, foreign language means English or Japanese. The "X" means that students can choose, according to their own interests, one or two subjects from either ‘arts comprehensive’ subjects (WenZong: politics, history and geography), or science subjects (Li Zong: biology, physics and chemistry). In the case of students in the PKSS who took the GaoKao in 2013, they took a three-day exam from June 7th to June 9th. They were tested on a total of 7 subjects: Day 1 - math and Hanyu (language art 1); Day 2 – Japanese/English (foreign language) and WenZong (or LiZong); Day 3 – Korean (language art 2).

What is worth pointing out here is the significance of language education at school. There is good evidence showing that, 40% of the total points in the Gaokao are language related subjects in the “3 + X” exam system. In the case of Heilongjiang province, of the total mark of 750 points in 2013, Korean and Hanyu were tested under the subject of language arts which weighed a total of 150 points, 75 points each. Three subjects under the WenZong or the LiZong were tested, weighed for a total of 300 points. A foreign language is one of the most important subjects on this exam. Foreign language weighed 150 points which was 20% of the total mark which is equivalent to math. Perhaps due to this, foreign language education has been gaining increased popularity in the past two decades at schools in China.

**In the PKSS: “奋斗过程中很有趣的挑战”**

It’s the first day of GaoKao. From early in the morning, students and teachers in the PKSS organized ChuZheng YiShi, a special ethnic Korean style ceremony of departure for the ‘battle’ (GaoKao). Let’s pray for the ones challenging the exam. This exam will take three days for graduates from a minority nationality school like the PKSS; they will take heritage language (Language arts 2) exam on the 3rd day. (Fieldnote, June 7 2012)

Entering the campus early in the morning on June 7, 2012, I saw the campus was decorated with thousands of colorful *Origami* [paper sculpture] peace birds and some large banners. The *Origami* birds were hung on the hedges along both sides of the main
pathway from the campus gate to the main school building. Some students were still hanging up their peace birds on the branches after I arrived (see the first image in the second line of three small pictures in Figure 4.10). Teachers told me that those Origami were voluntarily created and distributed by students in different classes mainly by the senior level students, including some student participants of this study from the Class of 2013 who were at senior 2 at that time. While praying for the senior 3 students’ good luck on the exam, some of them attached their messages on the origami birds for their own success.

Before all senior 3 students were invited to the ChuZheng ceremony, the school prepared a full breakfast for them in their classrooms. Besides some fresh vegetables and fruit, they had “Chaehl Deuck” [Korean cake made of sticky rice]. Like many occasions in the events in the Korean community, their teachers prepared the sticky rice cake for their students wishing them the best of luck on the exam. Because the cake was made of sticky rice, it easily gets stuck to everything (e.g., university entrance door). Indeed, this has a superstitious meaning of ‘to stick together’ (for a belief in passing an important exam), which is based on a play on words such as an action verb “butta” ['stuck to' (something) or ‘enter in’ (a university)]. It is similar to DaoPu in Chinese during the Chinese New Year custom, which often means luck has arrived. At 8:00am, all the students and teachers in the school gather in front of the main school building for the ChuZheng ceremony, a ceremony of the departure for a battle (GaoKao). During the approximately 20-minute ceremony, first three staff (a female head teacher of the senior 3 classes, Principal Zheng and the chairman of the school administration) stuck three large Korean sticky rice cakes on to the entrance door. Then, a student council representative and Mrs. Park (the head of education) gave encouraging comments to the senior 3 students, followed by Principal Zheng’s short speech which ended with repeated “hwaiting” [fighting] (for the ‘win’ on the GaoKao).
Figure 4.10. “Chu-zheng” [Departure for the Battle]  
(June 7, 2012 at the PKSS)

Figure 4.10 illustrates some scenes from the Chuzheng ceremony. The image in the centre of the second line shows the researcher was testing if the rice cake was sticky enough to stay on the entrance door for the three days of the exam. The large picture below illustrates when a group of the senior 3 students were leaving the PKSS to the GaoKao exam centre; the red banner along their pathway has an encouraging message in Chinese: “十年磨剑为一搏，六月试锋现真我” [Decade of grinding sword is for a battle (GaoKao), I shall show my true power in June].
A Turning Point: “Challenge, 재미, 쥐다”

All participants in this study indicated their strong ties with the PKSS. It seems that preparing for the GaoKao in a K-MNS has special meaning for them, as can be seen from Min’s statements in Interview Excerpt 4.5. Like Min, most of the student participants informed me that GaoKao was an important challenge and “a turning point” in their lives. They were in the middle of the ‘battle’ (a war of the GaoKao); it was 38 days before the test on the day that Min was interviewed. As Min described, they were right in the midst of “a race which began 12 years ago. ... After all, we are in senior year 3, the last critical stage in this race. Right now, we are in a point, just like a position that is only 50 meters away to the finish line.”

Interview Excerpt 4.5 (a) (Min)

Min (M): 高考라면은.. 인생을 바꿀수 있는 그런 시험인거 같습니다. 그러니까 우리가 이렇게 중국의 교육제도는 소학교, 중학교, 고등, 이렇게 다녀왔는데 그.. 음.. 그니까나 高考 한번을 통해서 그 예전에 이 12 년 학창시절을 다 마무리 하구, 그러구 다시 그, 원래 살던 도시를 떠나서 대학을 간다는거는 사회로 진입한다는 가람 마친거니까, 좀 거기에서 이렇게, 특히 高三一年동안 분투 하면 인생이 전짜 바뀌어 질수 있을거 같애요. [I think Gaokao is a test that can change one’s life. I mean, we went through schooling from elementary to high school under the Chinese education system. Hum.., we can conclude our 12 year of school life so through one Gaokao. And, we will leave our hometown and go to university, which means we will be step into society. So, I think we can change our lives, especially through one year of hard work during the senior year 3.]

I: 오~그래서 高考가 그걸 결정하는 ..? [Okay. So, GaoKao is ____ deciding?]

M: 전환점? 高考라면은.. 좀.. 어, 달리기, 달리기 정기같은 그런거. 그.. 12 년전부터 경기는 시작됐는데. 그래서, 이렇게 쪽죽 달리 오면서 맡 남한테 머 사람들이 데기 많이 같이 뛰고 있는데, 이렇게 남한테 밀어질때도 있고, 남을 앞설 경우도 많은데毕竟 지금 나중에, 이렇게 高三.. 지금은 슬해하는 재일 마지막 그런가 할.. 50 메터 남겨두구 종점이 보이는 그런 위치인데, 근데 지금, 그런 마지막 종점을 향해서 전짜 협차게 맡 달려가는거 같은 그런 느낌. [A turning point? GaoKao is .. like a race. Hum.. it’s a race which began 12 years ago. Many people are in the race, so sometimes I am behind the others or ahead of them. After all, we are in senior year 3, the last critical stage in this race. Right now, we are in a point, just like a position that is only 50 meters away to the finish line. So I feel that I am doing my best to continue on this race.]

(Min, April 30, 2012)
As shown in her statements below, what I found interesting was the way Min responded to describing her feelings about Gaokao with 3 adjectives. She chose one adjective in each of her three languages, Korean, Chinese and English: 재미 [Jaemi](fun), 奋斗[fendou] (endeavor), Challenge.

**Interview Excerpt 4.5 (b) (Min)**

I: Min, you’ve just said that “高考라면은..인생을 바꿀수 있는 그런 시험인거 같다”. Min의感觉를 지금 생각나는 형용사를 3 개를 골라서 표현한다면? [Min, you’ve just said that Gaokao is a test which can change your life. Okay,.. would you please describe your feelings with three adjectives?]

M: 恩..高考? 그무 영어, 한어, 조선어 이렇게... 언어 한개씩 할게요. 그리고 영어는 challenge, 그리구 조선어에서는 재미; 그리고 한어로 하면 음.. 冒险, 刺激, 머, 그런데. 아예, 한어로 하면 그리고 합시다, 그..奋斗。[Hum.. Gaokao? Okay, then I will pick one word from each language: ‘challenge’ in English, ‘fun’ in Korean, and, as for Chinese, hum.. perhaps ‘adventure’ or ‘stimulation’. Oh no,.. let’s say is ‘endeavor’ in Chinese]

I: 哎～奋斗? [Endeavor?]

M: 嗯, 재미. 그니까,高考를 치면은 이렇게 꼭, 면 꼭을 실현 하기 위해서 시험을 치는데, 그, 아예. 내 꾸를 양한 도전이라고 할수 있죠. [I mean, .. I am taking GaoKao for pursuing my dream.. So it’s a challenge toward my dream]

I: 哎～,그런데 조선어로 “재미”는? [Okay. Then why “fun” in Korean]

M: 예, 재미. 그니까高考를 치자구 이렇게 어.. 우리 학급 친구들이 다 대기 열심히 하구. 그리구 막, 그.. 예전에 안하던 그, 빛까, 밤 늦게 까지 공부 하구, 우리 고 3이나 보니까, 이렇게 모든게 거의 다 마지막이 되는데 감추아요. [Yes, ‘fun’. I mean we are all working very hard, in order to take GaoKao. And ... we are studying until late at night. Because we are in Sr.3, we feel it is the last stage]

I: 哎～ [Okay]

M: 그래서 막 모임하는게 특별히 눈물 점구 재밌구... 고 3 생활이 참 재밌습니다. [So, our gathering is especially fun... Sr.3 life is really fun]
M: 아, 원래, 막 벌벌 올구 그리지는 않았는데, 속으로 좀 고고 고고 때 모임 하, 하는거 보다 좀 용력할 기분이 많거든요...고 3 모임은 좀 틀린 거 같아요. [Really? I usually don’t cry a lot, but I often feel sad recently, compared to the Sr.1 or Sr.2 gatherings... I think the Sr.3 gathering is different]


M: 씨앗은, 그러나가 일단 그 고고 를 치자구 다들 맛 이렇게 정신없이 노력하고, 예, 자기 성적, 리상적인 성적을 이렇게 실험하기 위해서 전력 열심히 분투하고 있습니다... 예, 씨앗하는게 힘들어두 재밌구. [By 'endeavor', I mean we have been working very hard in order to take the GaoKao... We are trying very hard to get ideal marks ... So, it is a hard process but fun. ]

I: 그래서 한마디로 정리해보면 고고라면..? [So, to summarize “GaoKao” is ..]

M: 고고는, 응.. 씨앗 과정중이 있는 재밌은 도전. [GaoKao is.. hum., a challenge in a hard but fun process]

(Min, April 30, 2012)

She then concluded that GaoKao was as [奋斗過程中很有趣的挑战 [a challenge /endeavor in a hard but fun process].

As Min described here, student participants and their peers in the class of 2013 were working hard to prepare for their GaoKao. Overall, students went through the following three main steps:

- **In GaoKao**: June 7-9, 2013. As illustrated in Gao’s statements in Figure 4.11(a), they took a test of 7 subjects during these three days: math and Hanyu on the first day, foreign language and three subjects either in WenZong or LiZong on the second day, and Korean on the last day.

- **GuFen** [grade estimation]: One week after the exam, as illustrated in Ying’s statements in Figure 4.11(b), students estimated their performance based on answer keys provided by their teachers.

- **TianZhiYuan** [application]: Approximately two weeks after exam, as illustrated in Min’s statements in Figure 4.11 (c & d), students apply for universities. This was a challenging process as they only have a few days after the official announcement of their grades to carefully look at the requirements of different universities

Figure 4.11 shows screenshots of communication records between three student participants and me during this process, GaoKao in the year 2013. Min was one of the two
most successful students in GaoKao in the Class of 2013 at the PKSS. One of her classmates, who is also a JFL learner, achieved a total of 628 marks which was only two marks less than the highest mark in the Arts and Social Sciences among the graduates from the K-MNS in Mudanjiang region. As illustrated in the image (c) and (d), Min achieved a total of 616 marks (out of 750), with Language arts 127, English 130, and WenZong 220. She was so proud of herself with her achievement in earning the highest mark in English, while struggling with which university to apply for.
Figure 4.11. *GaoKao 2013: On the Spot-lights*

*Notes:* (a) “It’s the day 2” (Gao, June 8th); (b) “It’s time for the application” (Ying, June 15th); (c & d) “I got the highest mark in English” (Min, June 21st – 22nd, 2013)
4.4.1. Learning Foreign Language (as L3)

The popularity of foreign language learning is an essential outcome of a new shift from bilingualism to trilingualism since China re-opened its doors in the early 1980s. As introduced in Chapter 2, this shift is related to various social political and economic changes in China especially in the past three decades. The impact of such changes can be seen from the development of its foreign language program at the PKSS, which went through four main changes since its establishment in the year after the end of WWII (1946):41

(i) 1946-1965: English was offered as a foreign language in the first two years of its establishment, then moved to Russian after the liberation of the PRC in 1949 and taught during the first few years;

(ii) 1966-1976: No foreign language offered during this brutal period of cultural revolution;

(iii) 1977-1994: Re-opened foreign language programs as soon as the cultural revolution ended; Japanese was the only subject taught for 17 years;

(iv) 1995 -: Began to offer English along with Japanese. Initially English was only offered to the junior level students as a second foreign language (FL2); not until 2006 did it become a primary foreign language (FL1) for the senior level students.

In brief, the foreign language program is not new to PKSS. Currently, the school offers both Japanese and English as foreign language subjects; it is one of two key subjects along with math. All students enrolled in the first year junior (Jr.) program are given an option to choose either Japanese or English as the primary foreign language (FL1) to learn.

The school has been focusing on ways to utilize the students’ rich experiences in contact with, and learning of, multiple languages and cultures. In particular, foreign language (as L3) learning is considered a key strategy to better support their students to make a transition from high school to a larger world. As mentioned earlier, I was curious as to what are the students’ perspectives about this, making this transition through their schooling under the K-MNS. Thus, through a semi-structured interview, I asked questions

41 Based on a review of the PKSS’s historical record (1946 – 2011) for its 65th anniversary.
such as why do you learn a foreign language? How do you feel about learning a foreign language as L3 in the PKSS? Why did you choose to learn Japanese or English? In this section, I shall focus on looking at the complexity involving foreign language learning, mainly based on the students’ perspectives.

**Learning Foreign Language at PKSS**

Most student participants acknowledged the importance of a trilingual education. Key benefits that they listed for studying at the PKSS include: (i) a supportive learning environment, where all teachers were always ready to help them out, to learn and prepare for the GaoKao just like students attending the Han Chinese schools; (ii) a good opportunity to learn the language and culture of their parents and community; (iii) a more enjoyable learning environment which is beyond simple academic activities, where they can utilize all their linguistic and cultural assets in learning. In particular, schooling at a K-MNS like the PKSS allowed them to learn and explore different ways to utilize their skills and knowledge in multiple languages. They said that the pluralistic educational approach in the school, such as employing bi-/trilingual textbooks and learning materials as well as the multiple instructional media, helped them to have a more dynamic array of comparative and critical analytic skills. So, this made them often think about differences between languages used by other communities and countries.

On the other hand, more than half of them admitted some challenges that they had to deal with as they studied at the PKSS. Often comparing experiences with their relatives or friends who were attending a Han Chinese school, they listed some disadvantages due to the schooling in the PKSS such as (i) extra pressure due to learning multiple languages; (ii) not enough highly experienced instructors, especially in the EFL program. Besides Min’s points on matters concerning the instructional medium (in Section 4.3.1), the majority of EFL learners expressed their concerns about the lack of experience of the EFL instructional team in the PKSS, whose average age was in their late 20s at the time of the interviews in 2012-2013.

An important aspect in FL learning relates to, how students learn, an essential process which requires them to develop their own strategies for a more effective outcome. This includes what to learn (e.g., Japanese or English as L3 or primary foreign language.
More specifically, this involves the complex politics concerning languages at school, and their relevance to students’ transition to a larger world. In the case of PKSS, this involves an increasing tension between the Japanese and English programs in PKSS. In this sense, selecting the ‘right’ L3 or FL1 to learn is a major decision for students, especially for those who desire to continue on with their educational and career aspirations (see Section 5.2.2 in Chapter 5 for more related examples and discussions). According to Mr. Song, the vice-principal of education and a senior JFL program coordinator, PKSS once offered a double foreign language program with the intention of offering the opportunities for the students to master both Japanese and English during their junior level studies. However, this attempt was not successful after less than a three-year trial, mainly due to strong protests from some students who wanted to focus more on the subjects relevant to the main exams. He expressed his concern about the future of the JFL program at K-MNS schools including PKSS.

**Japanese as Foreign Language**

The Japanese as foreign language (JFL) program in PKSS has a long history. It has been offered since the late 1970s after China re-opened its doors to the world. The JFL program has been more popular compared to the EFL program in the school, which is different from the situations of the majority of MNS schools in China that generally offer EFL (Yang, 2005; Feng, 2007; Zhou and Hill, 2009). As mentioned in Chapter 1 (Section 1.6), the popularity of this program at the K-MNS school in northeast China is also due to some historical connections between the ethnic Korean community and Japan. Perhaps for this reason, similar to the other four K-MNS schools in Mudanjiang, the PKSS was well-known for its competitiveness in delivering the JFL program.
The success of the JFL program has often been shown by the students’ performance on the GaoKao, as shown in Figure 4.12, this includes the number of its graduates enrolled into top-ranked universities, as well as their performance on the tests for different subjects. The table shown in the image above is from a display board which was hung on the main wall of the Office of Education in the school. It illustrates the overall student achievements on the GaoKao from 2009 to 2011. It shows the highest mark from JFL classes was 137 in 2009, 131 in 2010 and 138 in 2011, from a total mark of 150. It also shows there were no students who took the exam in English during these years, as the first group of EFL learners who took the English test on the GaoKao were from the class of 2012. Two other aspects that can be observed from these data are: (i) the WenKe [Arts and social science] program in this school is stronger than the LiKe [general Sciences] program: 85 vs. 28 students in 2009, 60 vs. 24 students in 2010, and 58 vs. 24 students in 2011. In 2013, it was 40 vs. 17 students; (ii) ZhongBen [higher-rank university] vs. PuBen [regular university]: 17 vs. 49 in 2009, 9 vs. 34 in 2010, 12 vs. 34 in 2011.
However, the situation has changed in recent years, especially since the latter part of 2012, due to low economic growth and some natural disasters in Japan such as earthquakes and tsunamis. Other factors include an uncertainty in Sino-Japanese relations, due to ongoing tensions concerning some sensitive political issues such as the ownership of the Senkaku islands. Thus, the status of the JFL program in the past decade has changed, as introduced in Chapter 1 and Chapter 3.

Despite these challenges, Principal Zheng and Vice-principal Mr. Song informed me that the school is still continuing on with its main policy of promoting JFL as its main foreign language program. They consider, the Japanese program as a main strength of the school.

**English as Foreign Language (EFL)**

As mentioned in Chapter 1 (Section 1.6.3), English is a relatively new subject in PKSS as it was not offered until 1995 mainly due to the impact of the 'south Korean wind'. It was also offered in response to the demand of parents, especially the ones working in large cities like Beijing and Shanghai or in South Korea; these parents saw the power of English, and wanted their children to study it instead of Japanese. The EFL program is much smaller than the JFL program at the school. In 2012, there were 12 EFL learners compared to 33 students in the JFL program. Of the students who graduated in 2013, only 17 students were EFL learners compared to the 40 JFL learners; indeed these 17 EFL learners were the second group of students that took the GaoKao in English as a foreign language, including the 8 EFL learners in this study (also see Section 3.2.2 in Chapter 3). Despite concerns about the lack of experience of the teaching team (see Section 4.3.1), the EFL program in the school has been growing in recent years. It is mainly because more learners and their parents are aware of the power of English.

In short, despite their struggles from time to time, student participants in this study reported that learning in the trilingual educational program at PKSS was helpful in many ways. In particular, most of them considered learning a 'right' foreign language (L3) would be an “investment” (Norton, 1995, 2013) which would enable them to have more cultural and social “capitals” (Bourdieu, 1991), and ultimately may connect them to academic success and career advancement; see Section 5.2.2 in Chapter 5 for more related
discussions and examples). They demonstrated their fondness for their experience at a K-MNS school and a strong awareness about the significant role that the school played in their preparation for an important exam in their lives like the GaoKao. This can be seen in Figure 4.13, which illustrates statements by Ying.

![Image of a message from Ying](image)

The colorful, cheerful and encouraging statement by Ying on WeChat [Wei Xin] was to her junior schoolmates at PKSS who were about to take the GaoKao. Most importantly, the excerpt illustrates Ying’s capability of using multiple linguistic and literacy tools in her dynamic-repertoire to carry out an effective and fun communication with her peers. Ying is strategically and creatively utilizing multiple resources - such as by combining traditional text forms and new forms of multi-literacy tools - as part of her effort for passing her message on to her fellow schoolmates in a more accurate and fun way.

As will be discussed more in Chapter 5 (Section 5.2) and Chapter 6 (Section 6.4) with

---

42 In the initial 1-3.5 lines of her original notes in the Figure, Ying repeatedly affirms the significant role that the GaoKao plays in fulfilling the educational aspirations of students at the K-MNS: “Dear Sr. 3ers: now it’s time for your GaoKao (a happy face). Don’t be nervous, get yourself ready (giggles), You’ll know what to do in the exam room (embarrassed); you’ve been working hard for three years, but it all depends on the next three days (surprised)”. As in lines 4-6, the excerpt shows her fondness, obligation and gratefulness for the K-MNS as part of her aspirations for a better education and future: “I hope you work harder for yourself and our dearest PKSS!!! Our PKSS will always be the best (a wink). Now it’s all up to you guys (various emoticons)”. In lines 7-8, she is using a group of twenty-two emoticons that show the excitement, encouragement, love, thumbs up, good luck wishes and a happy face.
various examples, multilingual and multiliteracy practices like Ying presented here were common among all the focal ethnic Korean plurilingual teenagers in northeast China.

4.5. Summary

The above sections illustrate how a pluralistic educational model (i.e., wholistic dynamic approach) – tri-/multilingual education program - was implemented in a local context, PKSS, a K-MNS school in northeast China. As introduced in Chapter 1 (Section 1.6), various complex and dynamic discourses concerning plurilingualism and plurilingual competence steered student participants towards this program. In particular, this chapter revealed how plurilingualism and plurilingual pedagogy were considered as an important resource and an initiative for fostering increased learner diversity in PKSS, rather than a distraction to language and content teaching (Lin, 2013). More specifically, at PKSS, the plurilingual pedagogy of relevance was reflected mainly in the following three areas:

1) To raise language awareness among students, as they were learning, exploring and producing a range of new knowledge in different subject matters.

As introduced in Section 4.2, the idea of ‘plurilingualism as a strategy for academic success’ (and for better ‘survival’ in today’s competitive world) was an essential motive for the school administrators and teachers to support learner diversity in classrooms. In general, the educational policy in the PKSS strongly highlighted the plurality as a key strategy for supporting students’ success. As a K-MNS school, PKSS has been investing a large amount of time and funds in promoting and developing plurilingual and intercultural education programs. Plurality was visibly encouraged, activated and capitalized on at school, through the staff arrangement, the main program set ups, as well as the curriculum and related pedagogical strategies. For example, promotion of plurality and plurilingualism were reflected in the presentation of the hallway culture; as presented in Section 4.2.1, this includes the promotional posters, media exhibition and news announcement boards. As introduced in Section 4.2.2, it is also through the arrangement of extra-curricular activities such as traditional Korean music clubs and cultural activities and athletic events. Student participants were learning and (re)configuring their awareness of the importance of maintaining their heritage Korean languages and culture. Concurrently, participation in
these activities also allowed them to have opportunities to raise their awareness of the politics involved in these activities – which often involves hegemonic discourse that adheres to the mainstream Chinese nationalism (i.e., importance of learning Chinese language and culture), such as the Chinese flag raising ceremony that is often carried out in major ethnic minority athletic events (and on a weekly basis at PKSS in the early morning every Monday). Other examples include regularly organizing (school-wide, regional and provincial level) multilingual composition and speech contests in Korean, Chinese, Japanese and English.

2) To motivate students’ active development of their voices and identities, as they were developing and exercising their agency in learning different languages and cultures.

As introduced in Section 4.3, the perceptions of ‘plurilingual competence as an asset for active learning’ allowed students (and teachers) to actively engage in the use of multiple linguistic, cultural and literacy tools at school.

3) To open up spaces for the active development of the ‘multi’ in their dynamic plurilingual repertoire as tools for learning, while encouraging their active use of different linguistic knowledge.

At PKSS, this was revealed from the set up of its main educational programs and related pedagogical approaches. As introduced in Sections 4.2 and 4.3, plurilingual competence was considered an asset, such as in the strategic implementation of instructional media. In addition, as introduced in Section 4.4, the idea of bi-/trilingualism and learning a (‘right’) foreign language was considered a strategy for better transition to the large social world. Along with student participants’ aspiration for better education and career advancement, for instance, this includes their dilemma in the selection of learning Japanese or English as their primary foreign language (FL 1). Most student participants highlighted ‘practicality’ as a key factor impacting their choices of learning a foreign language at school. Students weighted immediate benefit (e.g., learning JFL for a higher mark on the GaoKao and entering a more prestige university) and long-term benefit (e.g., learning EFL for wider choices in choosing a university major and better access to employment opportunities).
4.6. Conclusion

For student participants, their experiences of plurilingualism through schooling under the K-MNS educational system is an important process of *becoming a plurilingual (learner)*; this prepared them to be more competitive citizens of the world, along with their active development of competence in multiple languages and intercultural communication. Learning a foreign language (as L3) at school today is essential for the new generation learners. For the focal plurilingual youths, this was because learning a foreign language under the K-MNS school system is an important route for their academic success and career advancement. In this sense, well-organized PIC education supports them in developing key strategies for better academic (and career) success. More specifically, this process helped the teenagers to maintain a good balance between their ‘roots’ and ‘routes’ (see Chapter 5), as they actively develop and re-configure multiple learner identities in different times and spaces (see Chapter 6).
Chapter 5.

Experiences of Plurilingualism, ‘Mobility’ and Learning: Betwixt Multiple Spaces

5.1. Introduction

In Chapter 4, I focused on looking at the student participants’ dynamic experiences and complex representations of plurilingualism. Key findings in the chapter suggested that, at PKSS, plurilingualism and plurilingual pedagogy were considered a valuable resource for learning, as well as a key strategy for academic success and career advancement. This chapter aims to explore how these teenage plurilingual students’ experiences and representations affect their (foreign) language learning. A focus is on looking at what being a plurilingual speaker means to these youths. This is achieved through (i) in-depth documentation of the teenage students’ experiences and understandings of plurilingualism, and mobility; and (ii) an exploration of how and why they value (or not) their dynamic multilingual repertoires (i.e., Korean, Chinese, and Japanese/English) as an asset within the larger context of being a ChaoXianZu in China; as well as (iii) an examination of their perspectives on trilingual education especially through learning Japanese or English as a foreign language which is their L3 at a K-MNS school (PKSS).

In the upcoming sections, I shall first focus on describing the diversity and complexity involving the teenagers’ dynamic profiles which include a brief biography of the focal participants. Then, I introduce and discuss the student participants’ perceptions pertaining to each of their languages, as well as their view on the politics concerning learning a foreign language (L3) at PKSS. Finally, I look at how they relate their repertoires to their experiences of plurilingualism and (physical and virtual) mobility.

5.1.1. Diversity & Complexity: 22 Student Participants

As stated previously, the focal student participants self-identify as ChaoXianZu. As shown in Table 5.1., they have diverse and dynamic sociocultural, linguistic and educational backgrounds that have direct and indirect impacts on their learning.
### Table 5.1. Student Participant Profile: Complexity & Mobility

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>ID</th>
<th>name</th>
<th>age</th>
<th>gender</th>
<th>linguistic background</th>
<th>living in / with</th>
<th>siblings</th>
<th>parents(M/D) years in Hanguo</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>J1_A1</td>
<td>Ying</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>female</td>
<td>KCJE</td>
<td>GP/m</td>
<td>no</td>
<td>D (10+); M(10+); NV</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>J2_A1b</td>
<td>Ryuen</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>female</td>
<td>KCJ</td>
<td>tutor/d</td>
<td>no</td>
<td>D(9+); M(5+); NV</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>J3_A2b</td>
<td>Yeon</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>female</td>
<td>KCJ</td>
<td>dorm/m</td>
<td>no</td>
<td>D &amp; M (10+); NV</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>J4_A3b</td>
<td>Moon</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>male</td>
<td>KCJE</td>
<td>P/m</td>
<td>no</td>
<td>D&amp;M; no; NV</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>J5_B1</td>
<td>Jin H</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>female</td>
<td>KCJE</td>
<td>dorm</td>
<td>no</td>
<td>D&amp;M (10+); V(2)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>J6_C1</td>
<td>Zheng</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>female</td>
<td>KCJ</td>
<td>e. sister</td>
<td>e. sister(21)</td>
<td>D &amp; M (5+); NV</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>J7_B2</td>
<td>Gao</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>male</td>
<td>KCJ</td>
<td>dorm/rel</td>
<td>no</td>
<td>D-no; M(1+); NV</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>J8_D1</td>
<td>Yuan</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>female</td>
<td>KCJE</td>
<td>dorm</td>
<td>no</td>
<td>D-no; M (?) ; NV</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>J9_D2</td>
<td>Tian</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>female</td>
<td>KCJE</td>
<td>dorm</td>
<td>y. brother(1)</td>
<td>D(no); M (10+)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>J10_D3</td>
<td>Jinok</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>female</td>
<td>KCJE</td>
<td>dorm</td>
<td>no</td>
<td>D(3+)&amp;M (2+); V(2)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>J11_A4b</td>
<td>m.Yoen</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>female</td>
<td>KCJ</td>
<td>e. sister</td>
<td>no</td>
<td>D(10+); M (3+); V(1)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>J12_B3</td>
<td>JiLing</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>female</td>
<td>KCJ</td>
<td>dorm/f</td>
<td>no</td>
<td>D&amp;M (0+); NV</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>J13_A5b</td>
<td>Bada</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>female</td>
<td>KCJE</td>
<td>Parents/m</td>
<td>no</td>
<td>D(7); M (5); NV</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>J14_C2</td>
<td>Jung</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>female</td>
<td>KCJE</td>
<td>GP</td>
<td>no</td>
<td>D(11+); M (10+)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>E1_A2</td>
<td>Min</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>female</td>
<td>KCE</td>
<td>GP</td>
<td>no</td>
<td>D(5+); M(7+); NV</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>E2_A3</td>
<td>Rim</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>male</td>
<td>CKE</td>
<td>Parents</td>
<td>y. sister(8)</td>
<td>*NV</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>E3_A4</td>
<td>Ahn</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>female</td>
<td>KCE</td>
<td>P/d</td>
<td>no</td>
<td>D(5+); M(10+); V(2)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>E4_B4</td>
<td>Ran</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>female</td>
<td>KCE</td>
<td>GP/rel</td>
<td>no</td>
<td>M(16+); D-no; V(st)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>E5_C3</td>
<td>Qing</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>female</td>
<td>CKE</td>
<td>dorm/GP</td>
<td>no</td>
<td>D&amp;M (10+); V(2)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>E6_A6b</td>
<td>Young</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>female</td>
<td>KCE</td>
<td>mom/rel</td>
<td>y. brother(2)</td>
<td>D(10+); M(3+)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>E7_A7b</td>
<td>Wei</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>female</td>
<td>CKE</td>
<td>GP</td>
<td>no</td>
<td>D&amp;M(10+)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>E8_A5</td>
<td>Hong</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>female</td>
<td>CKE</td>
<td>GP</td>
<td>e. sister(27)</td>
<td>D&amp;M (10+)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Notes: This table is created based on the information gathered through the participants’ self-reports on the Background Info collected in May 2012 at the PKSS. All names are pseudonyms.

On the description of the ‘languages’ spoken by participants, the sequences of different languages are placed according to the reported proficiency in each language, from the most to least familiar ones: (1) ‘C’ stands for Chinese (Mandarin); ‘E’ stands for English; ‘K’ stands for Korean; ‘J’ stands for Japanese; (2) ‘Primary’ stands for primary school; ’Jr. High’ stands for junior high school; ‘Sr. High’ stands for senior high school; (3) In the “experience of visiting HanGuo”: NV – never visited (HanGuo); V – visited (HanGuo); V(2) – visited twice; V(1) – visited once; V(st) – visited several times.

In particular, the variables (age, gender, languages, living status, siblings, and parents’ work) in the table illustrate the complexity involved in the development of their multilingual repertoires and multicompetencies. All student participants were between 16 and 18 years of age at the time of the initial interview in the early summer of 2012. All these teenagers were born in either 1994 or 1995, except for one who was born in 1996; 17 of them are
from one-child families and the rest have one sibling. There were 3 male students and 19 female students, and 14 students were in the JFL program and 8 were from the EFL program. All of them were from Arts and Social Science [Wen-Ke] classes.

Languages: All the teenagers are fluent Korean-Chinese bilinguals, and are either at a low or high intermediate level of JFL or EFL. In other words, all of them are familiar with multilingualism, even though they have limited fluency in their third or fourth languages (i.e., Japanese or/and English). Most of them consider Korean to be their first language (L1), while four of them consider Mandarin Chinese as their primary language. 4 teenagers self-reported as trilingual with L3 as Japanese or English, while 8 self-reported as quadri-lingual, learning both Japanese and English. One of the key findings that struck me most was the unique and imbalanced experience in their L3/L4 learning between the JFL and the EFL learner groups. All eight EFL learners were trilinguals, and the majority of JFL learners were quadri-linguals. Almost all JFL learners reported their experiences (3 months to 7 years) of learning English, especially during their primary school years (for 6 months to 4 years) prior to learning Japanese as their primary foreign language in the PKSS. However, only two EFL learners reported that they have knowledge of Japanese, either through self-study (i.e., Min) or as a major (Young) at University. In a way, their experiences (e.g., in the selection of FL1) illustrate the complexity involved in attitudes of these teenagers (and their parents) toward language value and the politics concerning FL learning, as discussed in Chapter 4 (see Section 4.4.1).

Residence: Over half of the participants lived at home while attending school, 8 lived in the school dormitory, and 3 were home-stay students in friends’ or relatives’ places. Perhaps due to their parents’ long term or frequent absences from home, most of those living at home were living with their grandparents or relatives. As will be discussed more in Section 5.3 concerning the increased (international or intraterritorial) mobility of
these teenage plurilingual learners (see Table 5.2), almost half of them were transfer students from other schools in or out of the Mudanjiang region.\footnote{Similar to many secondary schools, especially the WanQuan ZhongXue [完全中学; a secondary school that offers both junior level and senior level studies], the PKSS has been offering supervised boarding school services. This is mainly for maintaining better student intake, considering the school program requires all students to attend classes from early in the morning to late evening, generally between 7:15am and 8:45pm including supervised self-study sessions after dinnertime. At the time of the study, the majority of students from the suburbs far away from PKSS and non-local areas were living in the school dormitory. Some students from the local areas, whose parents were working in larger cities or Korea, were also staying in the dormitory; this reflects a common trend since the late 1990s when a large number of ChaoXianZu villages in northeast China turned into KongXinCun [空心村] (a village without a heart or a place without the main workforce of mid-aged generation).

\footnote{As introduced in Chapter 1 Section 1.6, various changes in China contributed to the increased domestic and transnational migration especially since the establishment of the formal diplomatic relationship between China and HanGuo (South Korea) that made it easier for ethnic Koreans to work in South Korea. Besides some economic benefit to their families, increased mobility among ethnic Korean people also brought some negative impact to the ethnic Korean community in northeast China.}}

Parents’ work: All the parents of these teenagers have the experience of visiting or working in South Korea. Based on self-reporting by these students during the initial interviews in May 2012, the majority of their parents were away from their hometown: most of them were working in HanGuo, while some were working in large cities or developed east coastal areas in China.\footnote{Similar to many secondary schools, especially the WanQuan ZhongXue [完全中学; a secondary school that offers both junior level and senior level studies], the PKSS has been offering supervised boarding school services. This is mainly for maintaining better student intake, considering the school program requires all students to attend classes from early in the morning to late evening, generally between 7:15am and 8:45pm including supervised self-study sessions after dinnertime. At the time of the study, the majority of students from the suburbs far away from PKSS and non-local areas were living in the school dormitory. Some students from the local areas, whose parents were working in larger cities or Korea, were also staying in the dormitory; this reflects a common trend since the late 1990s when a large number of ChaoXianZu villages in northeast China turned into KongXinCun [空心村] (a village without a heart or a place without the main workforce of mid-aged generation).

\footnote{As introduced in Chapter 1 Section 1.6, various changes in China contributed to the increased domestic and transnational migration especially since the establishment of the formal diplomatic relationship between China and HanGuo (South Korea) that made it easier for ethnic Koreans to work in South Korea. Besides some economic benefit to their families, increased mobility among ethnic Korean people also brought some negative impact to the ethnic Korean community in northeast China.}} Only three students’ parents were in Mudanjiang, their hometown. As shown in Table 4.1, one or both parents of 12 of the students had been working in South Korea for over ten years, and the parents of 3 students had been working there for more than 5 years. Some parents, especially those who were teachers (e.g., Yuan’s mom and Rim’s dad), visited HanGuo only during the summer time for short-term work. It was very challenging for me to interview the parents who were working in Korea on a long-term basis, so I visited Seoul Korea (e.g., DaeRim Korean town) in early May 2013 to meet them. See Chapter 3 for more information about the local context in Mudanjiang.

Overseas Experiences: During the interviews before their high school graduation, most of the teenagers reported that they saw their parents only once or twice every 2-3 years. Almost half of them told me that they had had experiences of visiting HanGuo [Republic of Korea, or South Korea] before entering junior high and/or Senior high; each
visit was approximately 2 weeks. During the follow up interviews later on, all of them told me that they visited their parents in Korea right after their high school graduation.

**Daily communication strategies:** Despite the limitations in in-person contact, all teenagers reported that they do keep in close contact with their parents. Their main means of communication with their parents was by telephone or through (MSN or QQ) chat rooms, as well as through SNS sites such as WeChat or KakaoTalk.

In addition to the variables shown in Table 5.1, the complexity of the 22 student participants' lives can be illustrated by the increased level of their 'mobility' as shown in Table 5.2. (Section 5.3). As stated previously, based on their choices of FL1, student participants in this study were divided into two main groups: JFL learners and EFL learners. For a better understanding of general features of the teenage plurilingual learners, I chose 2-3 key participants in each group and provided a brief individual profile. As noted in Chapter 3 (Section 3.2.2), there were twice as many JFL learners compared to the number of the EFL learners (i.e., 40 students vs. 17 students) in the Class of 2013, which is reflected in the number of participants from the JFL class compared to the ones from the EFL class. With an awareness of this gap, I chose to select a similar number of focal participants from each group.

It is my hope that this information can be a bridge to the upcoming sections, where I highlight the significance of understanding this new generation of learners’ dynamic multilingual repertoires, experiences and representations of plurilingualism.

**Biography of the Focal Participants**

**The JFL Learners**

Of the 14 student participants who chose to learn Japanese as a foreign language (JFL) as their primary foreign language (FL1), as shown in Table 5.2 (“Dynamic profile of 22 teenagers' 'mobility'; see Section 5.3.1), six of them are non-transfer students who had been attending the PKSS since Junior high. They consist of one from Peace city (Local 1a; Ying), and five from nearby suburbs (Local 1b; Moon, Ryun, Yeon, M. yeon, Bada). Eight of the others are transfer students who had been attending a K-MNS located outside
of Peace city but transferred to the PKSS at different stages of their schooling. They consist of three from far-Suburbs (Local 2; Gao, Jin H., Jiling), two from a K-MNS outside of the Peace prefecture but within the Mudanjiang region (Non-local 1; Zheng, Jung), and three from a K-MNS outside of Mudanjiang but within Heilongjiang province (Non-local 2; Yuan, Tian, Jinok). Here are short Bios of eight focal teenage JFL learners:

**Ying:** Local 1a, is an only child, both parents are ChaoXianZu. She speaks fluent Korean and Chinese, with low intermediate level Japanese and introductory level English. Born and raised in her hometown - Peace city, Ying attended a local Han Chinese Kindergarten but completed her schooling through the K-MNS education system from grade 1. English was her first foreign language that she had studied in an after school tutoring centre since she was in grade 3, so for about 4 years. She chose to learn Japanese as her FL1 from junior high when she entered the PKSS. Similar to the majority of teenage participants, she is highly talented in utilizing multilingual and multiliteracy resources.

**Ryun:** Local 1b, she is also an only child, a Korean-Chinese-Japanese speaking trilingual who speaks a high intermediate level of Japanese. Her parents went to Hanguo [Republic of Korea or South Korea] for long-term work when she was in grade 6, so she lived with her grandmother in an apartment that her parents purchased in their hometown. Supported by her father who was a JFL learner and who also attended the PKSS, when she began her senior level studies from grade 10, Ryun was living with a nanny plus a private Japanese tutor who helped her develop higher competence in Japanese. Perhaps this was why she could maintain good marks in the FL subject, as one of the top three JFL learners at the school.

**Moon:** Local 1b, he is an only child, he speaks fluent Korean and Chinese, and has a low intermediate level of Japanese and an introductory level of English. Moon has never visited S.K., living with his mom since his dad passed away when he entered senior high school. Moon was born in a nearby suburb, but mostly grew up in Peace town as his parents were running a small business in the local town – a typical family of Qi Nong Cong Shang (Left behind their agricultural land and joined the small business world). As such, he completed most of his schooling in Peace city. Moon is an active supporter of multilingualism and plurilingual practice. He learned English during his elementary years; he is strongly influenced by his cousin, a university student in DaLian, who maintained regular communication with him in multiple languages.

**Gao:** Local 2, he is an only child. He is a Korean-Chinese-Japanese trilingual who speaks high beginner level Japanese. His father is a physician in a local village. Gao transferred to the PKSS when he was in Junior level 2, grade 8 in the BC school system in Canada, because of an unexpected closure of the K-MNS that he was attending. Similar to the situation of a few other K-MNS schools in Mudanjiang (mainly the ones offering junior
secondary level programs), the school was closed due to a decreased student intake. He went to a Chinese university in Heilongjiang – majoring in News and Media.

**Zheng:** Non-local 1, she is a Korean-Chinese-Japanese trilingual who speaks intermediate level Japanese. Zheng is the youngest daughter of her family. She was living with her elder sister during senior high. Her parents have been in South Korea for work since she was in grade 3. She transferred to the PKSS in grade 9. Zheng chose to learn Japanese as her FL1 when she entered secondary school. After the GaoKao, Zheng decided to visit her parents in Seoul Korea long term to prepare for studying at a Japanese university in Tokyo, Japan. Zheng was one of the participants who often raised questions about JFL learning and related matters (e.g., studying abroad).

**Jinok:** Non-Local 2, she is an only child. Jinok is Korean-Chinese-Japanese-English multilingual who speaks intermediate level Japanese and beginner level English. She learned two foreign languages, English and Japanese, when she was at primary school. She learned English as her foreign language at school for 6 years from grade 3 until grade 9. She didn’t start to learn Japanese until she was in grade 6. When Jinok transferred to PKSS, she chose to retake grade 9 (junior year 3) classes because of the large gaps between her previous and new schools. After entering a university in Harbin, Jinok chose to major in Accounting and Financial management, and to continue learning Japanese as a required foreign language subject.

**Tian:** Non-Local 2, she is a Korean-Chinese-Japanese-English speaker with a low intermediate level of Japanese and an introductory level of English. Born into a Korean and Chinese intercultural family, she was mostly brought up by her mom and maternal grandparents who are from ethnic Korean communities. Perhaps because of her unique sociolinguistic background, Tian went through the dynamic experience of school transfer between transnational and intraterritorial contexts.

**Yuan:** Non-Local 2, she is an only child. She speaks Korean, Chinese, Japanese and English. She chose to learn Japanese as her FL1 after she transferred to the PKSS in grade 9. Yuan chose to major in the Korean language and trade at a university in Qingdao. Later on, she switched to Japanese as her major in the second semester of year 1 – which was because the Korean offered at the university was mainly designed for students learning it as a foreign language. The majority of learners were true beginners in Korean as a FL. Yuan is one of the participants who kept in regular contact with the researcher and raised questions about learning English and Japanese after entering university.

**The EFL Learners**

Of the 8 teenage English as foreign language (EFL) or primary foreign language learners, six of them are *non-transfer students*. They consist of three from Peace city
(Local 1a; Min, Rim, Hong), and two from nearby suburbs (Local 1b; Young, Ahn, Wei). The other two are transfer students, consisting of one from the far-Suburbs (Local 2; Ran) and one from a K-MNS outside of the Peace prefecture but within the Mudanjiang region (Non-local 1; Qing). Here are the short biography of the six focal teenage EFL learners:

**Min:** Local 1a, she is an only child. Min is a Korean-Chinese-English speaking trilingual with low advanced level of English. Born and raised in a local ‘elite’ ChaoXianZu family, she was raised in a privileged environment where her parents and grandparents were the officers of the city government; her parents and family members have often taken her traveling in different domestic and international places since she was young. Like most of her peers who grew up in Peace town, she attended Han Chinese KinderGarten but attended a full K-MNS during her primary and secondary education. Initially, she wanted to study DuiWai HanYu [Chinese as FL] as her university major, but she decided to take an offer from a prestigious university in ShangHai and committed herself to learning the Chinese language and literature.

**Rim:** Local 1a, he has a younger sister, and is a Chinese-Korean-English trilingual who speaks intermediate level English. He was born and raised in a local ‘elite’ ChaoXianZu family; his father is a teacher at a K-MNS and his mother runs a small business in Peace city. He attended a Han Chinese Kindergarten but completed his schooling under the formal K-MNS education system. Compared to most of his peers, Rim preferred to speak Chinese rather than Korean. He started learning EFL from when he was in grade 3. Surprisingly, in the individual interviews, he told me that he wanted to learn Japanese but his parents “forced” him to learn English for a better future. Rim was one of the participants who often raised questions with the researcher about English as FL learning (e.g., Chinese-English, English-Chinese-Korean translations) after he entered university.

**Young:** Local 1b, she has a baby brother. She was a Korean-Chinese-English-Japanese quadrilingual who spoke a high intermediate level of English and advanced level Japanese at the time of first interview in the summer 2012. After graduating from PKSS, she chose to learn Japanese as her major at a university in Dalian (a beautiful coastal city in Liaoning, northeast China). Young was born in a suburb, but she was raised and completed her schooling in Peace town. Her father was working in S.K. since she was in grade 3. She was mostly living with her relatives and her mom who travelled back and forth from Korea. She was one of the teenagers who visited Korea quite often during her school years.

**Ahn:** Local 1b, she is an only child, and is a Korean-Chinese-English trilingual who speaks high intermediate level English. Her mom was a nurse, but went to South Korea for work as well a few years after her Dad worked there starting when she was in grade 2. Both her parents attended Han Chinese schools, so they mainly spoke to her in Hanyu at home; but the situation changed after they had worked in Korea for several years – now they
prefer to communicate with Ahn in Korean. She chose to study Hanyu as her major at a Normal university in Heilongjiang province. Ahn is an active practitioner of multilingual and multiliteracies in and out of school contexts, who is highly capable of utilizing current social networking tools.

**Ran:** Local 2, she is an only child, and a Korean-Chinese-English trilingual with an intermediate level of English. As a Korean, Chinese and English speaking trilingual speaker, she is constantly travelling among multiple linguistic and cultural spaces. Besides her rich linguistic background, she has a relatively complex cultural background. Similar to Tian, she was born to a Korean mother and a Chinese father. Her mom, Mrs. Lee’s, recent naturalization in Seoul S. Korea triggered her increased level of international mobility, which became a key motivation in planning her education in Korea. Initially, Ran wanted to study in Hanguo and learn English, but she ended up coming back to China to study Korean literature. In a follow up interview, Ran shared that this was because she had some difficulties in adapting to the South Korean culture. As soon as she finished her first year of study, however, Ran transferred to a Korean university.

**Qing:** Non-Local 1, she is an only child, and a Korean, Chinese and English trilingual teenager, as introduced in Section 4.2 (see Interview Excerpt 4.1). Similar to Min and Rim, she was born into an ‘elite’ ChaoXianZu family in the city of Mudanjiang. Her dad was a government official and her mother was a K-MNS elementary school teacher until they decided to go to Seoul Korea for long-term work after Qing completed grade one. Despite the fact that her mother speaks fluent Korean, Hanyu was the main language spoken at home and between her parents. She had originally planned to study in China; but decided to go to Hanguo for long-term study after they found out that they could not enroll in a satisfactory ranking university in China. She is currently attending a Korean university – majoring in international hotel management where she can utilize her multilingual skills.

### 5.2. Dynamic Multi-/Plurilingual Repertoires

As mentioned in Chapter 4, through schooling under the K-MNS educational system, student participants were making an active investment in developing the ‘multi’ in their dynamic linguistic and cultural repertoires. As Darvin & Norton (2015, 2016) highlighted in their “model of investment” (see Section 2.4.3 in Chapter 2), key findings of this study also affirm the importance of considering second/additional language learning as not only a cognitive process but also as a social process. The idea of language learning as ‘investment’ provides “a critical lens that allows researchers to examine the relations of power in different learning contexts, and to what extent these conditions shape how learners commit to learning a language” (Darvin & Norton, 2016, p.20).
All the 22 participants in this study are plurilingual speakers who have ‘dynamic multilingual repertoires. As shown in Table 5.1, these teenage students’ have dynamic linguistic profiles: they are highly familiar with Korean as a heritage Language (KHL; L1) and HanYu [Mandarin Chinese; L2] as a national language (CNL), along with good knowledge of Japanese or/and English as their third language (L3) or primary foreign language (FL1). In order to gain better insight into how participants understood their own plurilingual competence, student participants were asked to share (i) how they value different languages and multilingual education, and (ii) how they use their multiple resources in different language and literacy practices in their daily lives. The researcher invited each participant to share his/her self-definition of ‘multilingual’, perspectives about the image of his/her own languages, as well as their experiences of, and representations of, plurilingualism. Questions asked included:\(^{45}\):

1) What is your definition of multilingual?
   - Based on your definition, do you consider yourself multilingual?

2) What is your view on the image of different languages?
   - What does learning Korean or Chinese mean to you?
   - What does learning a foreign language (i.e., Japanese or English) mean to you?

3) What are your experiences and representations of plurilingualism?
   - What is your experience of transitions between multiple places (e.g., schools, cities and countries; languages and cultures)?
   - To what extent, do these relate to your (language) learning?
   - To what extent, do these relate to who you are (sense of yourself)?

**A ‘Multilingual’ (Plurilingual)?**

The teenage student participants’ representation of plurilingualism can be seen from their self-definition of ‘plurilingual(ism)’ or multilingual(ism) (see Section 1.3). Responses to the self-definition concerning a ‘multilingual’ (i.e., plurilingual) varied. Of the

\(^{45}\) See Appendix A for more examples of interview questions.
22 teenage participants, almost all of them consider that a multilingual speaker should know three or more languages while highlighting the significance of differentiating ‘bilingual’ and ‘multilingual’. Only three of them (Jinok, Wei, Hong) consider knowing two or more languages is satisfactory. Concurrently, there were also some gaps in their views on a multilingual’s competence (notably regarding the degree of proficiency in one or different languages). Three main points were reported by the majority of participants:

i) A plurilingual speaker’s language should be a “complete linguistic system”, while questioning if a local dialect should be included or excluded in this system;

ii) A plurilingual’s competence in different languages does not have to be equivalent;

iii) A plurilingual’s competence in each of his/her languages does not have to be perfect, although the issue of fluency was also raised (Ran).

Interview Excerpts 5.1 with Qing, Ran and Jinok illustrate these points. First, Qing considers a multilingual speaker should know three languages. For her, ‘completeness’ is key when defining a language that is “a complete linguistic system which excludes any dialect” [整体的语言 不带方言的那种]. She highlights Chinese [HanYu] as a whole language system which includes different dialects such as Cantonese, Mandarin, and DongBeiHua [northeastern dialect]. Similarly, someone who speaks both northern and southern Korean dialects is considered to speak only one language, Korean. For her, people who speak different English dialects should be simply categorized as English speakers. In addition, Qing considers that one’s competence in each language does not have to be perfect as long as it is ‘communicative’ [能沟通就行，不用太熟练].

**Interview Excerpt 5.1 Qing (a)**

Interviewer (I): 你觉得多种语言话者的定义是什么？[What is your definition of a Multilingual?]

Qing (Q): 会讲2种以上就算吧！[Speaking more than two languages]

I: 你是说2+1= 3种? [Do mean 2+1= 3 languages?]

Q: 嗯，3种。[Yes, 3.]

I: Okay. 那，语言的流利程度呢？ [Okay. How about the proficiency level of each language?]
Q: 能沟通就行，不用太熟练。[As long as one can communicate, it doesn’t have to be very high.]

I: 那含读&写吗？[Does it include reading and writing?]

Q: 嗯。[Yeah.]

I: 那听&说呢？[How about listening and speaking?]

Q: 嗯，听&说就可以。[Yup, knowing listening and speaking is good enough]

I: 那你说的那2种以上语言含方言吗？比如说有个人会讲东北话，北京话，广东话。这个算语言吗？[Do the two or more languages include local dialects? For instance, if someone speaks northeastern dialect, Beijing dialect, or Cantonese. Based on your definition, can such dialect count as a language?]

Q: 不是。[No.]

I: 那你所说的一个语言，指什么？[Then, what do you mean by a language?]

Q: 汉语，整体的汉语。然后英语就是整体的英语，不带方言的那种。然后，여문就是在，한국말 말구，조선말 말구，就꾸 그냥 할 줄 알면 되는거... [Hanyu, it must be a wholistic one. English should also be a wholistic one which excludes any dialects. In terms of Korean, it would be fine as long as [we] have some knowledge; and this excludes the South or the North Korean dialects.]

**Interview Excerpt 5.1 Qing (b)**

I: 根据你的定义，你觉得你是 a Multilingual 吗？[Based on your definition, are you a multilingual?]

Q: 嗯。[Yeah]

I: 那是为什么？[Why do you think so?]

Q: 啊。。在中国，能讲汉语能沟通得来，在韩国能讲조선어能沟通得来。然后，能讲英语외국사람오면差不多能沟通得来吧，然後 아직까지는 완전히流利는 하지 못한데... [Humm.., I speak Hanyu so this enables my communication in China. I can speak Korean and communicate in Korea. I can speak English, I can manage to carry on some communication with the foreigners, even though I am not very fluent at this stage...]

(Interview Date: June 7, 2012)
Based on such a definition, Qing considers herself a multilingual. For her, communicative competence means one’s capability of knowing how to speak one language or various languages in different settings. She was confident with her proficiency in Korean and Chinese. She considered herself to be a speaker of English, even though her competence in English was not very high.

Similar to Qing, Ran also considered that knowing more than two languages was a key requirement to be ‘a multilingual’; however, she shared different views on the issues of competence, believing that high proficiency in each language is important to be considered a multilingual speaker [태기 익숙하게 대기 막 줄줄 말할수 있게.. 그런 정도]. Almost one third of the teenagers reported similar perceptions as Ran’s view on this.

**Interview Excerpt 5-1. Ran (a)**

_Ran:_ 对于多种语言使用者定义呢.. 똑같게 그냥 2 개나라 이상 언어를 할 수 있는.. 그냥 2 개이상 큰 나라 언어들.. 뭐 일본이나 영어나.. 그렇게 큰 나라의 ㄹ호구고용률 할 수 있는 사람 [As for my definition of ‘Multilingual’, it’s about a person who speaks more than two languages; the one who can speak languages of more than two large [developed] countries such as Japanese or English, an official language of these large nations]

... ...

_I:_ 음~ Ran 의 정의에 따르면, Ran 는 多种语言话者예요? [Humm.. based on your definition, are you a multilingual?]

_R:_ 나두 속하지 않는거 같습다. [Perhaps I am not]

_I:_ 왜요? [Why?]

_R:_ 음.. 열어는 좀 접촉는 않아도 그래도 잘 익숙하게 말하지 못하구 그냥 잘하는거는 중국어하고 조선어밖에 없으니까요. [Humm.. because, I am only good at two languages – Chinese and Korean - but not fluent in English even though I have some knowledge of it.]

나는 沟通이라한 의미는 데기 익숙하게 데기 막 줄줄 말할수 있게.. 그런 정도까지 되어야 잘 교류한다고 말하지..내보기에는 그냥 대화는.. 좀 그렇게 沟通이라 말할수없다고 생각해요. [To me, Goutong {communication} means one can fluently speak a language... and this does not include one’s ability in carrying out some casual conversations.]

Jinok is one of the student participants who learned both Japanese and English; but her definition of a multilingual speaker shows different nuances. She considers that a
‘multilingual’ person has the knowledge of more than one language (i.e., heritage language plus an additional language) [ 자기 본국 언어 이외, 여러 언어를 아는 사람].

**Interview Excerpt 5-1. Jinok (a)**

Jinok: “multilingual 多语言使用者” 就是 자기 본국 언어 이외, 여러 언어를 아는 사람 [I think a ‘multilingual’ means a person who speaks one or more languages in addition to his/her own national language]

I: 那对你来说“本国语言”是什么？ [Really? To you, what does “national language” mean?]

J: 음.. 我 ... 대중 언어 이외, 여러 언어를 아는 사람 [Humm, as an ethnic minority in China, to me, speaking two languages is normal. And then, because I learn Japanese, so Japanese should count [as the additional language.]

I: 那么是二加一？ [So, you mean two plus one?]

J: 예. [Yes]

I: 那么这与一个语言的流利程度有没有关系？ [So, does it have any connection with the degree of your language proficiency?]

J: 원나. 我는 영어를 배웠지만, 일본어는 배우기 힘들어 [Yes, it does. In the case of me, I learned English before but I...]

Based on her definition, Jinok considered herself to be multilingual. I found that her response was interesting, especially her understanding of a multilingual person’s degree of competence in each of his/her languages, as shown in her statements in the following interview excerpts:

**Interview Excerpt 5-1. Jinok (b)**

I: 那你觉得你自己是一个多语使用者吗？ [So, do you feel that you are a multilingual?]

J: 我觉得我算是。[I think I am]

I: 那么这与一个语言的流利程度有没有关系？ [So, does it have any connection with the degree of your language proficiency?]

J: 我觉得这没关系。영어는 배웠지만, [Yes, it does. In the case of me, I learned English before but I...]

172
feel very strange now. Basically, I learned English before, but not anymore and have a very little knowledge of it. So I cannot say that I speak English.]

**Interview Excerpt 5-1. Jinok (c)**

J: 일어두 소학교 6학년때부터 배웠슴다. 여기에 전학해오기전까지那儿日语和英语 동시에 배웠습니다. [I also learned Japanese from grade 6. Before transferring to here {PKSS}, I learned both Japanese and English over there {the previous school}]

I: 거기에서는 为什么同时学两种外语呢? [Why did you learn two foreign languages over there?]

J: 그때 就是, 学校开设啦。然后 우리는 그날 학교에서 배워 주니까, 우리두 그날 배웠습니다. [well, that’s because the school offered {both JFL and EFL}. So, we learned them as the school taught us {the both}.]

Jinok considered that her degree of competence in English (that she learned during her childhood), compared to Japanese (which she learned later in her teenage years), was not high enough to claim competence as a speaker of English. Even though she had almost six years of EFL learning experiences during her childhood (see her profile in Section 5.1.1), Jinok considered she could not claim being a ‘legitimate speaker’ of English. Jinok’s understanding of the degree of language proficiency is different from Qing’s but somewhat similar to Ran’s, as shown in her above statements in the Interview Excerpt 5.1 Jinok (b). She highlights that to be a multilingual person, one should have a relatively high proficiency in each language.

In short, all student participants in this study demonstrated their complex understandings about who is ‘plurilingual’ (i.e., multilingual) and what degree of communicative competence should be required in each of his/her languages. They believed that a plurilingual speaker’s competence in different languages does not have to be equal. Moreover, key findings in this chapter also suggest that the dynamics involved in student participants’ experiences of plurilingualism is strongly related to the construction of their representations of languages.
5.2.1. Trilingualism: Images of Different Languages

As stated previously, development of the focal teenage participants’ representations toward different languages is complex. This can be seen from their view of the definition of a multilingual, which acknowledges the importance of their partial competence as a key feature of their ‘plurilingual and pluricultural competence’. To have a better understanding of their attitudes toward plurilingualism and multilingual learning, I asked each participant their view on images and experiences of using different languages in and out of a school context. Their perspectives on different languages and attitudes toward multilingual learning were diverse. However, they all affirmed the positive role that knowledge of multiple languages plays in leading them to better their economic and employment opportunities. For them, the learning of multiple languages has a strong connection to their aspirations for a better future. An example of their views is illustrated in Interview Excerpts 5.1 (Qing) and 5.2 (Min), as well as in the Narrative Sample 5.1 (Ying) in Section 4.4.1 in Chapter 4. I found their view to be very unique and inspiring, such as Min’s creative connection of the key function of foreign language with having a ‘smart phone’ as shown in the Interview Excerpt 5.2 (c), while some teenagers saw foreign language as a main tool to bring them a good profit, such as money ($$) (Miyoen, Summer 2012). I also found their attitudes toward learning multiple and foreign languages were impressive as introduced in Section 4.3.2 in Chapter 4.

Like Qing, Min is a Korean-Chinese-English trilingual. She is a participant who showed great passion in learning multiple languages as well as learning English. When I first interviewed her in early summer 2012, her level of English was at the high beginner level. Later when I met her for a follow up interview in the fall of 2014 in Shanghai, the improvement of her English was impressive. Mainly through self-study while taking general English classes during her first year studying at a top ranked university in ShangHai, Min passed College English [DaXue YingYu] level 4, which is equivalent to a high intermediate level. In a full afternoon tour of the largest city in China, Min had no trouble in carrying out a long conversation in English with a colleague of mine from Canada. As a researcher I often found her view on trilingualism unique and inspiring, as shown in the Interview Excerpts 5.2 in this chapter and other samples of her multilingual and multiliteracies practices presented in Chapters 3 and 6.
As an only child Min was born and raised in an elite ethnic Korean family in Peace town, an urban area where she had more opportunities to be exposed to regular interaction with people from the Han community. Like most of her peers who grew up in Peace town (e.g., Ying, Rim and Qing), she attended a Han Chinese Kindergarten, but completed her schooling through a 12-year full K-MNS education during her primary and secondary education. Thanks to her mother, who often visited Beijing and Seoul Korea for work, as well as her father and grandfather, who were administrators of the local Korean minority nationality affairs office, Min had the privilege of often traveling with them from a young age.

Korean as L1 (HL): “우리 글” “어머니 글”

Korean is the heritage language (HL) for all these student participants, which they use as the primary language (L1) in their daily lives. They affirmed their awareness of language as a key marker of their group identity and highlighted the role of Korean as a symbol that allows them to feel a sense of belonging to the Korean community, which can be illustrated by Min’s statement in Interview Excerpt 5.2 (a). For them, the image of the Korean language can be represented as Uri Kuel [우리 글] (our language) or MuYu [母语] Uhmerni [어머니 글] (mother tongue). They consider the learning of their own heritage language to be an obligation as a member of the ethnic Korean community.

Interview Excerpt 5.2 Min (a)

I: Min, 你学三语: 朝语，汉语，还有 英语. 是吧? [Min, you are learning three languages: Korean, Chinese and English. Right?]

M: 对。[Correct]

I: Okay then.. 每个语言对你来说有什么意义？比如说，朝语对你有什么意义? [What does each of these languages mean to you? For instance, Korean?]

M: 朝语呢.. 음.. 우리 글, 朝语하면은 우리 글이라는 세글자가 떠오르거든요. [As for Korean .., Humm.., it makes me recall three letters: “Uri-Kuel” (language of our group)]

I: 오~ 우리 글 하면? [Okay.. Uri-Keul?]

M: 어머니 글. 그니까.. 어머니 글 하면은 그 조선족, 그니까 조선족은 이민해서 중국에 왔잖아요. 근데 지금 그, 조선족, 우리 중국에 있는 조선족 수가 점점 줄어 들구 그러니깐 조선말을 한다는것은 막 동포, 머 그런 느낌이 듭다. [Mother
tongue. I mean..., it connects to ChaoXianZu. What I meant is, as you know, ethnic Korean is an ethnic group immigrated to China. But we are now struggling due to current issues such as a deceasing population. So, knowledge of the Korean language makes me feel an obligation.

I: 오~ 그러면 조선어를 배운다는거는 머예요?对你有什么意义?

M: 조선어를 배운다는거는 원가, 우리 민족의 전통을 계속 이어나갈수 있구. 이제 제가 나중에 그 결혼하구 자식한테 조선말 꼭 배워줄거거든요, 남편 이 어느 민족이든. 그래서 원가 이렇게 세세대대로 이어 나갈수 있게 노력할겁니다. (웃음)

[Learning Korean means the continuous preservation of our cultural tradition. Later on, when I am married I will make sure to teach Korean to my children, regardless of my future husband’s ethnic background. In doing so, I’d like to do my best pass this on to the next generation. (Laughing)]

(Interview Date: April 30, 2013)

On the other hand, the majority of teenagers affirmed their awareness of the complexity involving the Korean language, such as the matters involving the ‘legitimacy of Korean’. Participants showed a sharp awareness of current issues and the politics pertaining to differences between ChaoXianYu (朝鲜语; KHL) and HanGuoYu (韩国语; KFL). For them, the former is Korean as a heritage language (KHL), spoken at home and with their peers. The latter indicates Korean as a foreign language (KFL), even though it is generally spoken by people from Hanguo [Republic of Korea or South Korea]. Nowadays, KFL usually refers to Korean taught in universities in China since the early 1990s, especially after the establishment of formal diplomatic relations with HanGuo.

The complexity involving the status of the Korean language in China today is reflected in how Korean language education at the K-MNS is perceived by the participants. They showed awareness of the low status of Korean during the Cultural Revolution period along with other ethnic minority languages [少数民族语言无用论], as well as the increased status of Korean since the early 1990s, which motivated an influx of Chinese students studying in South Korea and many visitors visiting China. As a result of such changes, the focal teenage plurilingual learners discussed struggling with ways to preserve their status as members of the ChaoXianZu community. This includes their strong awareness and struggles about the legitimacy of being Korean – such as the differences between their
perceived ethnic Korean accent and HanGuoYu – through close contact with people from the Korean peninsula; See Chapter 6 (in Section 6.3.1) for more related discussions.

Overall the teenagers confirmed their belief that strong knowledge of their heritage language can be a strong tool of empowerment.

**Chinese as L2 (NL) : “国语” “工作语”**

All teenage participants affirmed their awareness of increased power of HanYu [汉语 or Putonghua; Mandarin Chinese], not only as a ‘national language’ - a lingua franca between different minority nationality groups in China, but also as an ‘international language’. While highlighting its function as a GuoYu [National Language 国家语言], some participants consider learning Chinese to be more important than learning a foreign language. For them, Chinese is a key tool for people who aspire to gain upper level social mobility in China:

汉语是必须的, 要在中国当官 发展腾达 [Learning Hanyu is a must, to secure a higher social status and be successful in China] (Rim, May 2014)

They believe images of Chinese can be represented as GuoYu [国语; national language], GongZuoYu [工作语; work language] and MuYu [母语; Mother tongue]. Min’s statements in Interview Excerpt 5.2(b) provide a good example of how the focal ethnic Korean teenagers position Hanyu [Mandarin Chinese].

**Interview Excerpt 5.2 Min (b)**

I: 한어는.. 对你来说有什么含义? [What does HanYu mean to you]

M: 음... 중국인. 그니까 민족이 뒤졌든 국적은 China 가 되는 이상, 한어는제가 중국 사람이라는걸 증명할수 있는 대기 유력한 증거, 머 그런 느낌이 든다. [Humm.. Chinese race. What I meant is.. I feel HanYu is an important evidence which prove that I am a Chinese, regardless one’s ethnic background, as long as his/her nationality is China]

I: 증거? [Evidence?]

M: 예. 中国的朝鲜族。[Yes, (of my identity as) a ChaoXianZu in China.]

I: 오~ 그러면 중국어를 배운다는 것은 对你有什么意义? [I see. What does learning Chinese mean to you?]
M: 음.. 중국어를 배운다는건 이렇게 많은 중국인들과.., 다 같은 중국 사람들과 이렇게 교류할수 있고, 그리구 중국 사회에서 인정 받을수 있다, 먹 그런거죠. [Humm.. learning HanYu enables me to communicate with Chinese people and be acknowledged in Chinese society.]

I: 그림 중국 사회에서 인정 받기 위해서는 중국어를 배워야 된다? [You mean learning HanYu is a key requirement to be acknowledged in China?]

M: 예, 중국어를 모르는 사람은 중국인이 아니죠. [Yes. A person who does not speak HanYu cannot be called a Chinese.]

I: 오~ 그러면你觉得 중국어 & 조선어는有什么区别呢? [Okay.. Then, what do you think about the differences between Chinese and Korean. ]

M: 어.. 중국어는国语, 저한테는 맋 규정된 그런 언어같은데 근데 母语는 조선어.[I see. To me, Hanyu is a national language that is already assigned to me; however, my mother tongue is Korean.]

I: 오~ 그렇구나. 그러면 혹시 시간이 없어 한가지 언어 밖에 배울수 없다면你会先选哪个? [Okay .. I see. If you do not have anytime learning more than one language, which one would you choose to learn?]

M: 음... 그러면 중국어 할꺼 같아요. 왜냐면 중국에서 아무래도 살아가야 되니까 [Humm.. Then, I think I will choose to learn HanYu, because I will have to live in China.]

(Interview Date: April 30, 2013)

In summary, like Min, most of the student participants consider that Hanyu is a language they must learn because it allows them to have better upper-level social mobility. Because of the value and practicality of the Chinese, as Min articulated, the teenagers believed that competitive performance in Hanyu can be a key for them to ensure future success in life, especially in China. Their view was supported by the fact that they have to demonstrate strong linguistic abilities in Chinese to succeed in school and score highly on the MinZu HanKao (MHK) [Chinese proficiency exam for minority nationalities in China], an exam set up with the aim of testing the Chinese language ability of minority nationalities especially the ones completing schooling under the MNS education system (Ehlert, 2014).

**MinZu HanKao (MHK)**

The Minzu Hankao sets up extra hurdles for ethnic minority students’ opportunities in education and employment. While passing the MHK may help them to access better China-wide (national wide) employment opportunities, this is also dependent on each
student’s family economic status — which can be a barrier which constrains some ethnic minority children from low-income families to access the exam. Preparing for and taking the MHK requires not only tremendous commitment in time and effort, but also immense financial expenditures for the ethnic minority students who are generally from relatively low-income families. Taking an example of students in the K-MNS education, a student in the K-12 public school system is generally required to take the Hanyu-wen (standard Mandarin Chinese language and literature) class preliminary from kindergarten and formally from grade one all the way up to grade 12. In other words, the amount of time and effort, and financial resources required for ethnic Korean students to prepare for the MHK is much more than it is for students who chose to attend a Han Chinese school.

**Time and Effort:** These students are required to take the Hanyu-wen classes for a minimum of five contact hours per week, plus another five hours for the pre-class preparations and afterschool reviews. The before and after school review hours may vary depending on the grade level, instructors and schools; however, these students regularly spend approximately 10 hours per week in the learning of Hanyu-wen in order to succeed in the Hanyu class at school. As China’s school year generally consists of approximately 10 months, this means that the students spend approximately 400-600 hours in learning Hanyu during the school year and a total of approximately 5,000 to 7,000 hours during their K-12 schooling. This is to support students to fulfill the minimum requirement for taking the third level MHK certificate, which is an essential requirement for a K-12 ethnic minority public school graduate who wishes to further their education and training at a university or a post-secondary institution. As mentioned earlier, one of the benefits for the third level MHK certificate holders is to receive exemptions from the Hanyu-wen test on the Gakao (national university entrance exam). However, the score for this subject is only half of the total of the Yuwen (language and literature) score on the Gaokao, as the ethnic minority students from the designated schools are required to also pass an ethnic minority (i.e., Korean) language for the remaining 50% of the Yuwen score. Based on

---

46 For students attending a MNS school, the main decision of taking the MHK test is generally up to their schools, as was the case of K-MNS schools in northeast China in 2012 and 2013. For instance, students in Jilin province were asked to take the test, while students in Heilongjiang province did not take it. According to Mrs. Jin, a Hanyu teacher at PKSS, students at PKSS did not take the MHK test because they were taking Hanyu-wen exam in GaoKao, as part of required subject under the Language Arts.
personal experience as a graduate from a K-12 ethnic Korean minority public school over two decades ago, I found that the situation today is very similar to what happened in the past – particularly the 50/50 system (for Hanyu and the heritage language scores) that is employed to calculate the Yuwen score on the Gaokao. It is important to point out the disadvantage created by this system: it is apparent that compared to students who are attending the Han majority schools, ethnic minority students attending designated schools are required to spend more time and effort in learning Hanyu-wen in addition to learning their own heritage languages.

Cost: The fees for each of the four scales of the MHK exam are reasonable. However, the cost for the tutorials for exam preparation is quite high so that, generally, only those students from the middle class can afford it. Many of these middle-class students attend afterschool tutoring sessions because their parents consider the class hours, curriculum and teaching materials for Hanyu-wen at the designated schools not to satisfactory for helping their children to achieve high scores on the MHK exams. According to a conversation with the principal of the PKSS, the applicants from the Korean community generally attend 1-3 months of intensive summer/winter or afterschool tutorial programs before taking the MHK. Such afterschool programs generally cost approximately 3000-5000 RMB per year, which is equivalent to one or two months’ income for the low-income families in the rural parts of ethnic minority regions. The ethnic Koreans live in ethnic Korean villages or counties where most residents are ethnic Koreans. Except for those who made their fortune through domestic or international labour im/migration, most of the residents in these communities are low-income families. Therefore, it may be a large burden for them to pay the high fees for their children’s extra tutorial sessions, including most of the families of the student participants in this study who were from rural communities. Mainly to support their children’s education, the majority of parents left their hometown and went to big cities or HanGuo for work, as mentioned by Young’s father who was working in South Korea as a construction worker for over 10 years when I first interviewed him in Seoul:

우리 소방에서 암만 열심히 일해도.. 그것도 농사수입 혹은 소상공인만 가능구서리는 자녀들 뒤파라지하기가 느림 혼들었습니다...어문작문 영어과외 같은거 우리 업두도 못 냅니다... 결국 맛에가 소학교 3학년때 큰결심하고 한국에 돈벌리 다나 오게 됐지요. [There was a very limited source of income for us who are living in a small place. We could not afford to offer good educational
support for our children; there was no way for us to send them to afterschool composition or English classes... So, I left home and came to Hanguo for making money when my daughter was in grade 3.]

(Young’s father, May 2, 2013)

**Foreign Language as L3: “스마트폰” [A smart phone]?**

As mentioned earlier, all student participants in this study are Korean-Chinese and English and/or Japanese speaking multilinguals. Japanese and English are two foreign languages that the PKSS offer for students. When they enter junior year 1, each learner had to make a decision to learn either Japanese or English as their primary foreign language (FL1). Thus, I wondered what their main views about foreign languages and learning multiple languages were, as well as their key rationale for selecting either English (EFL) or Japanese (JFL).

All participants affirmed that they were enjoying learning multiple languages during their schooling through K-MNS, as demonstrated in Chapter 4. They consider strategic practice of plurilingualism as an important asset in learning. At the same time, they were also aware of the complex power relations between different languages at school and in the social world. Most of them shared the difficulty of having to select to learn either Japanese or English at school. As will be discussed more in the upcoming section (Section 5.2.2), they were mainly hesitating between practicality, continuity of learning, and the desire to discover and learn languages.

All the teenagers also affirmed the importance of prioritizing practical and realistic factors when they chose to learn a FL1. Most participants affirmed their awareness of the status of English as a ‘world language’, which may give them more options in terms of education and employment. Of the 14 teenagers who chose to learn Japanese as their primary foreign language, some asserted that English is an ‘irrelevant’ foreign language for their future – e.g., as highlighted by the JFL learners such as Zheng who asserts “Japanese as a competitive FL1 to learn” (May 1, 2013).

The majority of JFL learners shared that their first reason to learn Japanese was to earn a better score on the Gaokao. Participants who were EFL learners, on the other
hand, said that their main reason for choosing to learn English was because of the possibility of visiting many different places. Perhaps due to these factors, in reality, I observed that the Japanese program is much stronger than the English program in the case of the PKSS. A good example of this strength is the ratio between JFL learners (40) and EFL learners (17) in this K-MNS: the total number of learners in the Japanese program in the class of 2013 was two times more than the learners in the English program.\(^{47}\) The majority of them learned English as their first foreign language from a young age in early elementary school\(^{48}\), which made me curious: why did they not continue to learn English but chose to learn Japanese as FL1 instead at a later stage? On the other hand, all JFL learners told me that they did not begin to learn Japanese until entering the PKSS. Their attitudes toward Japanese in interviews were revealed to be relatively complex. While affirming the main role that Japanese as a FL plays as a familiar and beautiful language to learn, they pointed out that Japanese is a relatively small “regional” (East Asian) language compared to English. They also pointed out their awareness of a decreased popularity of Japanese, often attached to changing politics between China and Japan over time.

Tensions between EFL and JFL in the PKSS reveal complex power struggles that ultimately impact not only language learning (as Ying’s statement in Narrative Sample 5.1) at a K-MNS school, but also educational and career aspirations for a better future. This is further illustrated in Min’s Interview Excerpt 5.2 (c) when she discusses her perspectives on the use and desirability of learning foreign languages:

**Interview Excerpt 5.2 Min (c)**

I: Min, 외국어对你有什么意义? [What does foreign language mean to you?]

M: 외국어는 .. 지금에 있어서 말하면 스마트폰. [Foreign language .. Nowadays, it is like a smartphone.]

I: 오~ (웃음) 스마트폰? [Okay (laughing) .. A smartphone?]

---

\(^{47}\) Besides comments of the focal participants who are from the class of 2013, this is also affirmed by an analysis of the data from the graduates of year 2008-2013 provided by the PKSS.

\(^{48}\) The majority of elementary schools under the K-MNS are unable to offer a good quality foreign language program, mainly due to the school being under the pressure of providing a Korean-Chinese bilingual program from grade one. As such, the majority of parents of the focal teenagers sent them to learn English from a private English tutoring centre.
Interestingly, Min compared foreign language learning to a smartphone. She considered it to be an important asset that would enable her to be “more competitive among people in this competitive society” and promote upward social mobility. Similarly, most of the teenagers in this study believed that a good mastery of a foreign language(s) would help their competitiveness in today’s increasingly globalized world.

In short, all student participants in this study affirmed their strong awareness of the imbalanced power relationships between each of their languages. Their perceptions of languages and plurilingualism greatly influenced their language learning choices, as will be discussed in the next section.

5.2.2. Learning a ‘right’ Foreign Language: Japanese or English?

Despite their struggles from time to time, student participants in this study reported that learning in the trilingual educational program at PKSS was helpful in many ways. As discussed in Section 4.3.2 in Chapter 4, they demonstrated their fondness for their experience at a K-MNS school and a strong awareness about the significant role that the school played for their preparation for an important exam like GaoKao in their lives. They believed that this ‘investment’ would ultimately connect them to academic success and
career advancement. At the same time, they also reported their dilemma when they first entered the school, as they had to make the difficult choice between Japanese and English as their foreign language (as L3).

- More than half of the student participants chose to learn a foreign language with a more detailed long-term plan in mind. They showed a great passion in learning different languages and cultures and the curiosity to visit different places. Most of them chose a language major at university.

- Almost half of the teenagers reported that they were fine with learning an extra language. A key motivation for them to learn a foreign language was to fulfil their academic requirement. This group of students chose to have non-language majors in university, such as Gao who chose media broadcasting.

- A few students reported that they learned the foreign language non-voluntarily, which was mainly to meet their parents’ expectations. Teenagers in this group tended to choose a university major that requires high competence in Chinese, like Rim who chose law.

The following section illustrates student participants’ narratives around plurilingualism, language choice and language learning in and around their schools.

“日本語と私” [Japanese and Me] (Ying)

In the fall of 2014 during Phase 3 of my visit to northeast China, I had a chance to participate in a Japanese as a FL speech contest organized and hosted by a university in northeast China that Ying was attending. Although her major was Korean language and literature, she joined the contest. Her 5-minute speech was titled “Japanese and me” [日本語と私] for the competition under the General JFL group. Ying was short-listed for the semi-final, in the campus-wide competition. Narrative 5.1 is an excerpt from her original speech, which describes Ying’s experience of being a plurilingual learner. Even though the narrative illustrates well the dilemmas and excitement in Ying’s journey of multilingual learning, it is a good example that reveals the complexity involved in the process of learning a foreign language for the majority of the student participants. This is also a good example of how the teenagers deal with different matters in their learning trajectory.
私はいろいろな国の言葉を習うのが大好きです。それで、小さい頃から朝鮮語と
中国語のほかに英語も習いました。英語は世界の共通語なので、小学校三年生の
時から塾で四年間も習いました。「英語は大変難しい。」と言われていました
が、言葉好きな私にとってはそれほどではありませんでした。中学校に入る
時、英語の基礎があったので、英語を選択しようかと考えました。でも、新しくチャレンジしてみようと思って、結局は日本語に決めました。初め
は分からないことばかりで大変でした。日本語の平仮名と片仮名は難しかったの
です。英語を初めて習う時よりももっと大きなショックを受けました。

ところで、ある日ふとテレビで日本に関するドキュメンタリー番組を見ました。東京大学で新入生のために行なわれたイベントに関する報道でし
た。伝統的な服装をした学生さんが歌ったり踊ったりする場面でした。ナレーションを聞いて、一生懸命に努力さえすれば、かならず良い結果が得られるということが分かりました。日本人も中国人も大学入試に深い関心を持ち、また将来性のある職に就くためにはみな頑張っているんだなあと実感しました。それからはなんとなく日本の文化に興味を持つようになりました。初めて外国語の勉強は単なる言葉だけを身につけるためではなく、その国の文化
と社会についての理解を深める良いプロセスであるということが分かりました。...  One day, I watched a Japanese TV documentary; it was about a
new student orientation and related ceremonal event at the University of Tokyo. In the scene, many newly enrolled university students in traditional Japanese costume were singing and dancing. While listening to the narration, I realized that hardwork always leads to a good outcome. I found that university entrance exam is a major event not only for people in China but also for people in Japan, and everyone is working hard for their aspirations for good future. Since then, I have been interested in Japanese culture. For the first time, I realized that learning a foreign language is not only simply about the mastery of linguistic codes, but also a good process of having a better understanding of the culture and society of people using the language. ...
たが、何を言っているか 全然 聞き取れなかったのです。これは私にとって 本当に いい経験になりました。もっと頑張って日本語を勉強するように 励ま してくれる力に なりました。It is true, however, I also struggled due to the confusion about differences in language use in between formal and informal settings. I remember it was an incident when I was in high school. It was when I visited a tourist attraction during my trip to South Korea, a Japanese tourist asked me "would you please take some photos for me?", but I could not understand at that time. However, it was a precious experience which triggered my motivation for working harder.

言葉と文化は 深い関わりが あります。私の印象に 残っている 日本文化は 神秘感と魅力で いっぱいです。私は日本の文化を ぜひ 自分の目で見てみた いです。今 日本語を 一生懸命 勉強しています。夢が少しずつ 現実に近づ いてきたと思います。[Language and culture are strongly related. Japanese culture is full of mysterious power. I want to see, feel and experience Japanese culture. I am working hard in learning Japanese, which helps my dream come true.]

The above interview excerpt shows Ying’s passion and determination in learning multiple languages. Even though her parents are the ones who initially sent her to an after school EFL program from when she was in grade 3, it is evident that she enjoyed learning English. Later on, Ying chose to learn Japanese as her primary foreign language when she entered the PKSS, as she wanted to challenge herself to learn a new language. In addition, Ying’s narrative also reflects on how language learning is related to a student’s experiences of mobility. Through her experience of travelling to Korea, when she visited her parents who were working there, Ying was actively in contact with Japanese travellers. The incident on the trip inspired her in many ways. It triggered her deep interest in exploring more about Japanese language and culture. Other teenage participants also pointed out the importance of such a connection between experiences of mobility and FL learning, which will be discussed more in Chapter 6.

Practicality 1: “英语范围广” (Qing, Min, Hong)

Despite concerns about the lack of experience of the teaching team, the EFL program in the school has been growing in recent years, as noted in Chapter 4 (Section 4.4.1). It is mainly because more learners and their parents are aware of the power of English, as shown in the interview excerpts of some EFL learners in this study. This includes Qing, Min and Hong, who also learned English from an early age. Contrary to Ying, they all decided to continue to learn English when they entered PKSS, even though
each of them shows differences in their motives. While Qing had mainly made up her own mind, both Min and Hong took the advice of their family and teachers.

For Qing, the main reason why she chose to learn English was for its practicality - “使用范围广” [broader popularity], as shown in the following interview excerpt.

**Interview excerpt 5.3 -a (Qing)**

Researcher (R): 你为什么选英语，但没选日语呢？[Why did you choose English instead of Japanese?]

Qing (Q): 由于英语的使用范围广，而日语只是在特定的一个地方使用。英语呢？可在全世界通打交道，而日语只是能去日本。[Well, English can be used in a wider range, while Japanese is restricted in a certain region. I chose to learn English because English is an international language, which is commonly used worldwide and helpful to study abroad.]

R: 哦，学日语可以去日本啊！[Okay, if you choose to learn Japanese, you can go to Japan!]

Q: 但是只能去一个国家，对吧？而英语呢，能去加拿大等等。[You still have only one country to visit, right? But learning English, you can go to Canada and etc...]

R: 哦，那么高考的时候呢？那你刚才说“英语范围广”，也指高考的时候吗？还是就职方面呢？[Okay, How about GaoKao? You just mentioned “English covers a wider range”, do you mean in terms of GaoKao or for your career advancement?]

Q: 是的，高考也是，就职也是。[Yes, for both GaoKao and employment.]

Qing considers that learning English can connect her with more options such as being able to visit different countries, while learning Japanese only lets her to visit one country. Both Min and Hong chose to learn English with the consideration that it would give them more choices in university majors, as illustrated in Interview Excerpt 5.3 (b).

**Interview Excerpt 5.3 -b (Min & Hong)**

Researcher (R): 你对外语的作用及影响力怎么想？[What do you think about the function and effects of foreign language learning?]
Min: 그니까...우리는 중국에서는 高考가 사람 인생을 바꾼다고, 그래 학창시절은 거의 高考를 위해서 공부하고 그러는데, 그럴 때는 일어보다는 영어가 더 범위가 넓지 않을까 그렇게 생각합니다. [Hum... In China, GaoKao is considered to be a key step in changing one’s life, and it became the main goal of our schooling. So I think, learning English should give us more options compared to learning Japanese.]

I: 所以 M 选择了英语？[It that why you chose to learn English]

M: 对。[That’s correct.]

I: 那这是你的想法吗？[Was that your own idea?]

M: 哦...我起初也想学日语，因为听说比英语简单，而且我在外面也学了很长时间英语。[Oh... Initially I wanted to learn Japanese as well, because I heard it is easier to learn and I already learned English for a long time (from a private English school)]

I: 哦~你学了几年呢？[Ok.. How long have you been learning English?]

M: 我从小学的时候开始，大概四、五年左右，从小学四年级吧。[I started it in elementary school, for approximately 4-5 years, perhaps since I was in grade 4.]

I: 哦~ [Really?]

M: 对对。那个时候，英语学那么长时间啦，我觉得学日语的话，又多会了一种语言，所以那就算了吧。但是我觉得，那样的话，英语是更简单，而且我知道，在高考的时候，选择英语，分考出来是高，但是报考大学的时候，我就没法选择自己想去的大学。所以那个时候，我就想，应该选择英语。[Oh, right. At that time, because I’d already learned English for a quite long time, I thought it would not be too bad to learn Japanese, as this means the mastery of an additional language.]

I: 那么你觉得自己学了这么多年英语，然后选择英语，对吗？[Okay, is that so?]

M: 当时我也是想，因为我知道，高考的时候，如果选日语，可能对高考的成绩没有那么好，但是选择英语的话，可能对我的大学选择有好处。[So I consulted an experienced teacher in my school about this. The teacher recommended English, and said choosing JFL would help me to get a higher mark in GaoKao but limit my options of choosing more variety in universities. If I already made up my mind to enter my favourite university, I should (continually) learn English.]
I: 오~그래서 부모는 뭐라고 했어요? [I see. So what did your parents say]

M: 부모도 우리 엄마랑 아빠 다..아빠는 영어도 할 줄 아시고 일어도 할 줄 아시는데.. [They supported me.. My dad speaks English and Japanese]

I: 그래요? [Really]

M: 네, 엄마는 영어, 엄마학교에는 일어 없으니까, 그래서 영어만 배워서.. [Yes, my mom only learned English as her school did not offer Japanese..]

I: 엄마는 중국학교 다녔어요? [Did your mom attend a Han Chinese school]

M: 네네. 그래서 엄마 아빠 다 영어 하는 편이니까 더 나을거 같아.. [Yeah. So I thought I should learn English as my parents also speak English]

I: 그랬구나. [I see]

Hong (H): 나두 영어 선택하무 시험칠 때 범위두 커지구 집사람들 두 다 영어배워라니까...나두 영어 배우기 싫어서 영어 선택했습니.. [I too chose to learn English out of my own wish, as this would give me broader choices in choosing universities. My family also supported my decision.]

I: 그랬구나. 그럼 집사람들이란게 누구? [I see. So, which family members]

H: 언니는 일어 배웠대서, 영어 더 좋다고... [My sister. She learned Japanese, so recommended me to that studying English would be better]

(Min, June 1, 2013)

As shown in the above interview excerpts, both Min and Hong took the recommendations of experienced family members and community experts (i.e., reputable school teachers) in their decision-making process for choosing the ‘right’ foreign language to learn. In the case of Min, the experiences of her parents and the advice from a reputable school teacher were influential. As both her parents studied English [엄마 아빠 다 영어 하는 편이니까], she thought it would be better to learn the same FL as her parents’. Even though she was thinking of learning a new FL (i.e., Japanese), she decided to take the advice of her teachers [학교에 좀 위망이 높으신 선생님] because she wanted to assure a higher chance of entering a more prestigious university. In the case of Hong, her elder sister’s advice was meaningful, a former JFL learner who told her learning EFL gives her more options.
Practicality 2: “그래두 일어하는게” (Rim, Young)

Like these three EFL learners, most student participants affirmed the important role that a foreign language plays as a tool that connects them to a brighter future. They also showed their awareness of the imbalanced power between different languages. While struggling to learn a foreign language (i.e., Japanese or English), they demonstrated a strong awareness of the practicality of learning a foreign language.

Even though both Rim and Young chose to learn EFL in PKSS, their cases are slightly different from the three EFL learners’ situation above. Rim and Young chose to continue to learn English; however, they wished they had chosen Japanese instead. Even though they show some differences in their attitudes toward the learning of multiple languages, both of them shared a common view about how JFL learning would bring a better short-term benefit such as for the GaoKao. This can be seen from their statements in Interview Excerpts 5.4.

As a Chinese-Korean-English speaking trilingual, Rim also started learning EFL from an early age and continued on learning it when he entered PKSS. What surprised me the most was his complicated response to my question of why he chose to learn English as his primary foreign language in the PKSS, as illustrated in Interview Excerpt 5.4 (a). He informed me that, when he began his junior level study, he really wanted to learn Japanese but his parents “forced” him to learn English. For Rim, his initial desire to learn JFL was mainly for a more practical reason. He believed learning Japanese would have helped him to be more successful on the GaoKao.

I found that Rim’s fondness for speaking Chinese was interesting. Born and raised in a local elite ChaoXianZu family, he preferred speaking Chinese in his daily life; almost all of his interview responses were in Chinese. Even though growing up in a similar urban environment to Rim, Qing responded differently. Although she informed me about her preference to speaking Chinese to her peers at school, over 80% of her responses to my questions in the two semi-structured interviews (approx. 30-45 minutes each) with her
between 2012 and 2013 were in Korean; she did the same in the follow up interviews with her on WeChat or by phone.

*Interview Excerpt 5.4 - a (Rim)*

I: 你曾提过你有点后悔没学日语，虽然你从小开始学过英语的。[I remember you mentioned that you are regretting not learn Japanese (when you enter the PKSS), even though you learned English since Childhood]

Rim (R): 恩。[Yeah]

I: 近代  지금은? [How about now]

R: 照样。学日语的话就是为了高考分。[Still the same. Indeed learning Japanese is for getting a high score in GaoKao]

I: 哦~ [I see]

R: 实际上除了中国语我啥都不想学。（笑）[In fact, other than Chinese, I am not interested in learning any other languages]

I: 是吗? 那朝语呢? [Really, how about Korean]

R: 朝语呀? 朝语我会点儿就行了。主要还是汉语吧。[Korean? It’s fine with me to have a basic knowledge. I think Chinese is the main language]

I: 哦~ Rim 은 조선 사람인데 왜? [Okay. You are a Korean, right]

R: 中国人嘛。[Because I’m Chinese]

I: 恩。[Okay]

R: 朝鲜只是一个民族而已。 所以说嘛，只是读一点朝鲜语就行了。[Korean is simply my ethnicity, so a little knowledge of Korean is good enough]

I: 그렇나? [It that right]

R: 只要记住自己是朝鲜族就行。 [The key is never to forget my own ethnicity]

Rim was the only participant, who was an explicitly (verbally spoken out) ‘reluctant’ foreign language learner.⁴⁹ He was very open to sharing his feelings toward different languages.

---

⁴⁹ Indeed Rim was a fairly dedicated EFL learner who kept in close contact with me for the majority part of this research, until his senior level university life. He often contacted me on WeChat, and asked various questions, such as about English-Chinese translations and composition assignments from the English or law classes that he took at a University in central China.
As shown in his statements above, he considers Chinese is the only language worth learning and making an investment in: "Indeed I am not interested in learning any other languages, other than Chinese" [实际上除了中国语我啥都不想学]. For Rim, practicality is more important than obligation, and the high proficiency in his heritage language is not necessarily relevant to his ethnicity. In turn, he wanted to learn Chinese as his main language, and having a basic knowledge of Korean is good enough [朝语我会点儿就行]. It was because he is Chinese, and Korean is simply his ethnicity (in China) [中国人嘛. 朝鲜只是一个民族而已].

Like Rim, Young also shared her preference in learning Japanese as her FL1.

*Interview Excerpt 5.4-b (Young)*

I: Young 은 어떻게 생각하시나요? 日语하구 영어 배우는데, 어떤 두 영어를 선택해서 잘 했다고 생각하십니까? [Young, do you still think it was a good decision to learn English]

Young (Y): 예. 나는.. 그런데, 대학 시험 성적은 그래도 영어, 아이, 일어 하는게 나은거 같습니라. [Yes. But in the case of GaoKao, I think it would be better if I chose to learn Japanese. It’s considering there is large gap in terms of final marks.]

I: 拉分? [Gaps?]

Y: 예. 영어반.. 기뻐해야 한 110 몇점 맞으니까. 일어반 아들 140 몇점두 있구 130 몇점두 있구. [Yes. Maximum mark from our EFL class is 110 in GaoKao, but the ones from the JFL class are 130 or 140 (out of 150)]

I: 오~ 그래서 먼저 대학교 붙구 와야 된다? [Okay. In other words, you should have considered university admissions first]

Y: 예. [Yes]

As mentioned earlier (Section 5.1.1), Young is an active Korean-Chinese-English learner at the PKSS and she later on chose to learn Japanese as her university major. As an EFL learner who challenged the FL test at the GaoKao in English, she also highlighted practicality as an essential motivation in learning a FL. Young also considered that learning JFL is better than learning EFL especially in terms of the GaoKao [大学 시험 성적은 그래도 ... 일어 하는게 나은거 같습니라]. She observed there was around a 30-mark gap in the final marks between the JFL classes and EFL class [i.e., the Class of 2012];
the highest mark from the EFL class [영어반] was only around 110 (out of 150), compared to 130 or 140 from the JFL classes.

In summary, all teenagers acknowledged their awareness of the different values attached to languages at school and in the social world. They highlighted that a good mastery of a foreign language would bring various advantages in designing a better future, especially through schooling under the K-MNS. They showed their strong awareness of the dynamics and symbolic values of language use in their social interactions, as well as a strong impact on their language learning. For them, participation in various learning activities has a strong relevance towards their experience and construction of their representation of plurilingualism. This can be reflected in their awareness about some tensions between institutional (/societal) constraints and individual agency in the phenomenon of plurilingual practices in and out of classroom contexts (see examples in Section 5.2.1, and Section 4.4 in Chapter 4), especially along with an increased level of their ‘mobility’ between multiple spaces.

5.3. Experiences of ‘Mobility’: Navigating ‘multiple’ Spaces

As discussed in Chapter 1 (Section 1.6), a nuanced understanding of new generation plurilingual learners' increasing level of ‘mobility’ between multiple (linguistic, cultural, geographical and virtual) spaces is the key to better support learner diversity in contemporary classrooms.

[T]he emergence and global spread of the internet, other forms of mobile communication technologies (synchronous with the new forms of migration), and unprecedented work-related migration around the globe have created a ‘network society’ (c.f., Castells, 1996) in which people live and act in relation to long-distance, “virtual” peers in sometimes enormous online communities. (Van de Vijver, Blommaert and Gkoumasi, 2015, p. 2)

As such, the politics concerning the competence of a foreign/additional language learner is no longer only about matters of the ‘nativeness of a language speaker’ (Cook, 2008; Lippi-greene, 1994), but also involves other dynamic factors (Darvin & Norton, 2015, 2016). This includes an increased level of a plurilingual learner’s ‘mobility’ between multiple linguistic, cultural, geographical, and virtual spaces. In particular, the rapid development
of technological new media tools in today’s ‘network society’ adds another dimension to mobility as they navigate new virtual spaces of learning.

In this sense, as part of my effort to have a better understanding of these teenage plurilingual learners’ backgrounds, I partially employed Braun & Cline’s (2014) “background analysis tool” (p.5) and asked participants some questions related to mobility and their schooling. Table 5.2 was created based on their responses. Key questions asked the teenagers include:

Did you attend G1-12 school in Mudanjiang Region?
Answer 1: Yes: Did you complete all your G1-12 schooling at the PKSS?
Yes: Group A (Local 1) – You are non-transfer student who attended school at the PKSS
No: Group B (Local 2) – You are a Transfer Student (Type 1) from other school secondary schools nearby the Peace town.

Answer 2: No: Did you attend/transfer your schooling within Mudanjiang region?
Yes: Group C (Non-Local 1) – You are a Transfer Student (Type 2) from a school outside of the Peace city but within Mudanjiang region.
No: Group D (Non-Local 2) – You are a Transfer Student (Type 3) from a school outside of Mudanjiang region but within the Heilongjiang province.

As Table 5.2 shows, the main characteristics of the ‘mobility’ of each teenage plurilingual learners are divided into four main groups. 12 of them are in Group A which is the only group that consists of non-transfer students from Peace city (Local 1a) and nearby suburbs (Local 1b); the rest are transfer students – 4 in the Group B, 3 in the Group C (non-local 1) and 3 in the Group D (non-local 2). In other words, the ratio between transfer and non-transfer students is almost even: almost half of these student participants are transfer students, which is evidence of an increased level of intra-territorial mobility.

Besides their mobility between linguistic and cultural spaces, an increased physical and virtual mobility is a characteristic of student participants in this study and can be divided into the following three main types:
(i) Increased domestic or intraterritorial mobility;
(ii) Increased international or transnational mobility; and
(iii) Increased virtual mobility.

### Table 5.2. Dynamic Profile of 22 Teenagers’ ‘Mobility’

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Participants</th>
<th>Profile ID</th>
<th>Living with/in</th>
<th>Comments</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Local 1a (5; 22%)</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ying</td>
<td>J1_A1</td>
<td>Grandparents or mom</td>
<td>Group A.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Min</td>
<td>E1_A2</td>
<td>Grandparents (GP)</td>
<td>Non-transfer Students Type 1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rim</td>
<td>E2_A3</td>
<td>Parents(P)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ahn</td>
<td>E3_A4</td>
<td>P / dad(D)</td>
<td>(Schooling in Peace City; Born and raised in downtown)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hong</td>
<td>E8_A5</td>
<td>Home (with elder sister)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Local 1b (7; 32%)</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ryuen</td>
<td>J2_A1b</td>
<td>Home (w/ Japanese tutor)</td>
<td>Group A.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Yeon</td>
<td>J3_A2b</td>
<td>Dorm or Parents</td>
<td>Non-transfer Students Type 2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Moon</td>
<td>J4_A3b</td>
<td>Parents</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>m.Yeon</td>
<td>J11_A4b</td>
<td>Grandparents (GP)</td>
<td>(Schooling in Peace City; Originally from Suburb)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bada</td>
<td>J13_A5b</td>
<td>mom</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Young</td>
<td>E6_A6b</td>
<td>mom</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wei</td>
<td>E7_A7b</td>
<td>Grandparents (GP)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Local 2 (4; 18%)</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jin H</td>
<td>J5_B1</td>
<td>Dome</td>
<td>Group B</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gao</td>
<td>J7_B2</td>
<td>Relatives</td>
<td>Transfer Students Type 1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jiling</td>
<td>J12_B3</td>
<td>Dorm</td>
<td>(transferred from other schools within the Peace Prefecture)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ran</td>
<td>E4_B4</td>
<td>Grandparents (GP)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Non-local 1 (3; 14%)</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Zheng</td>
<td>J6_C1</td>
<td>Home (with elder sister)</td>
<td>Transfer Students Type 2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jung</td>
<td>J14_C2</td>
<td>Grandparents (GP)</td>
<td>(transferred from other schools outside of the Peace Prefecture, but within Mundanjiang region)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Qing</td>
<td>E5_C3</td>
<td>Dorm</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Non-local 2 (3; 14%)</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Yuan</td>
<td>J8_D1</td>
<td>Dorm</td>
<td>Transfer Students Type 3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tian</td>
<td>J9_D2</td>
<td>Dorm</td>
<td>(from outside of Mudanjiang)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jinok</td>
<td>J10_D3</td>
<td>Dorm</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Note: Refer to notes in the Table 5.1 for the meanings of some abbreviations used here.*
5.3.1. **Increased Domestic Mobility**

Increased levels of domestic or Intra-territorial mobility are a common characteristic of student participants’ learning trajectories in this study. As noted earlier, this group mostly consists of transfer students who are frequent travellers in inter/intra territorial spaces. The main contributing factors for such mobility were varied: four students transferred to the PKSS because of an unexpected closure of the school that they were attending (e.g., Gao and Jin H), while six students were seeking better educational opportunities (e.g., Yuan and Jinok). Of these teenagers with school transfer experiences, some transferred to new schools due to family reasons that are often beyond their control (e.g., Tian is from a family consisting of a cross-cultural marriage). One common feature in their school transfer experiences is non-voluntary transfer, which was often carried out because of strong parental influence.

**School Transition for a Better Education?! Gao, Yuan, Tian**

**Type 1. Unexpected**

Some participants shared their experiences of unexpected school transfer, including Gao and the other three who are from far out in the suburbs in the Peace prefecture (Local 2). Gao transferred to the PKSS when he was in Junior level 2, grade 8 in the BC school system in Canada, because of an unexpected closure of the K-MNS that he was attending. Like the situation of a few other K-MNS schools in Mudanjiang (mainly the ones offering junior secondary level programs), the school was closed due to a decreased student intake. All students had to merge into a larger WanQuan ZhongXue [a full high school offering both junior and senior level classes]. For Gao, the PKSS was the closest Wanquan Zhongxue that he could enroll in amongst the five K-MNS in the Mudanjiang region. It was the only K-MNS in the Peace prefecture.

Transferring to a new school, even though it was within the Peace prefecture, was *not* an easy decision for Gao and his parents, as it required extreme confidence and effort both emotionally and financially. Emotionally, his parents had to make a decision as to whether to keep Gao in his hometown by sending him to a local Han majority school, or to send him to a larger K-MNS outside of their hometown (i.e., the PKSS). For the former, they had to give up on their only child’s opportunity of receiving a formal ethnic Korean
language and cultural education. For the latter, they had to send their young son to a boarding school as it was not realistic for him to attend his new school from home. Hence, it took quite some time for Gao’s parents to find a place where they could send him. Initially, Gao stayed in the school dormitory, and a few months later he moved in with his father’s good friend, mainly due to some issues with food as he preferred to have a family meal. On the other hand, matters concerning economic factors were also an important aspect for Gao’s parents to consider for Gao’s school transfer. Even though the program fee for a public school like the PKSS was not very high, they could not ignore the other extra costs of living away from home – such as expenses for accommodation, meals, transportation and communication tools (e.g., iPhone). In an interview, Gao’s father Dr. Ko, a physician in his hometown, informed me that Gao’s school transfer caused an extra cost for the family, an average of 1500-2000 CYN each month – which was equivalent of almost 20% of their monthly family income. Thus, when Gao entered Senior high, Gao’s mom decided to work in Hanguo to make extra income to support Gao’s education especially in preparing for his university.

Based on the interview with Mr. Ko in the summer 2012, and several interviews with Gao between 2012 and 2015, despite all pluses and minuses, both Gao and his parents were positive about Gao’s school transfer. They mentioned as one main reason the fact that the PKSS was a ‘better’ school compared to the K-MNS that Gao originally attended, which would help Gao to earn higher marks on the GaoKao (see Chapter 5 for more). In this regard, other participants in this group made similar comments about the outcome of their school transfer.

**Type 2. Well-planned**

Well-planned school transfer is the main characteristic of experiences shared by some student participants, including Yuan and others who are mostly from groups B, C and D.

Yuan is a Korean-Chinese-Japanese-English quadrilingual. She speaks intermediate level Japanese and low beginner level English. As an only child, Yuan was born into an ‘elite’ family in the Korean community; both her parents are teachers at a K-MNS located in the main town in Tangyuan prefecture, near the City of Jiamusi, which
was approximately 4-6 hours away by a local train from Peace city. As strong supporters of multilingual education, her parents sent Yuan to receive a full multilingual education under the K-MNS system from elementary school. At the K-MNS in her hometown, Yuan learned both Korean and Chinese. Since entering junior high in grade 7, Yuan learned both English and Japanese as part of her school’s formal curriculum. Having competed junior high in grade 9, Yuan transferred to the PKSS in Mudanjian. In order to catch up with the gaps between the curriculum between the PKSS and her original school, she chose to learn Japanese as her primary foreign language (FL1) as part of her preparation for the GaoKao.

Yuan considered herself to be a ‘lucky’ child who could spend her early youth with both her parents, as they wanted to make sure to keep their daughter at home until she transferred to the PKSS. Not until Yuan completed her first year of senior level studies (grade 10) in the summer of 2012, did her parents visit Hanguo for short term work during the summer break - with a special work permission granted to the professionals with GongWuYuan [government workers] status in China including public school teachers. She reported that a key motivation for her school transfer was for better educational options. In an interview, her mom confirmed this: the family decision to send their daughter to the PKSS was ‘purely’ with the consideration of the PKSS’s good reputation. Yuan also confirmed this during the initial interviews, together with her friends Tian and Jinok who were transfer students from the same K-MNS where Yuan attended. A key point of attraction for their school transfer was the PKSS graduates’ success rate on the GaoKao, which was much better than the ones at their old school’s in their hometown.

‘Mobility’, Identity and FL Learning (1a) Yuan

Yuan is one of the focal student participants who often raised various questions concerning multilingualism, and foreign language learning in general; this was so even after she entered university. In the interviews, she self-declared as an active supporter of multilingualism and plurilingual practice. Like Ying and Min, Yuan is one of the focal plurilingual youths who demonstrated her strong passion in learning multiple languages. Perhaps this is because they all grew up in the main town and generally had a better opportunity to interact with people from the Han majority. They also had a better grasp of
Hanyu compared to other students who grew up in the Korean villages or counties located in the suburbs. At school, they often took up leading roles as Announcers for the Media and News club. Both Yuan and Ying continued this role all the way to the university level. Perhaps because of her linguistic and cultural background, Yuan chose to major in Korean language and trade at university. As mentioned earlier in Section 5.1.1, she switched to learn Japanese as her major from the second term of her studies at university.

**School Transfer Type 3. Non-voluntary**

Non-voluntary school transfer is another type of domestic mobility that I observed from the third group of teenage participants in this study. They include ‘mobile’ children, such as Tian, who were constantly in transition between multiple spaces. Besides general reasons that she shared with most student participants, it seems that their unique family background is a key contributing factor for the increased mobility of these teenagers.

**“Finally, I settled down here”**

Born in a family of Chinese-Korean bi-cultural marriage, Tian grew up in a bilingual environment: her mother is a ChaoXianZu who speaks fluent Korean and has a good command of Mandarin Chinese, and her father is a Han Chinese who has a good understanding of Korean. Her parents had been mostly absent from her hometown since she was 6 months old. They were busy making more money mainly through domestic and international labour migration. Her mother was mainly working in HanGuo [Republic/South Korea] while her father went to Shanghai. Due to their long separation, her parents divorced before Tian entered school. Until she turned 10, Tian was mainly raised by her maternal grandparents, who barely spoke Chinese. As a result, Korean was the primary language that Tian spoke at home and at school during her early youth. Tian was transferred to Shen-Yang when she was in grade 3, as her mother returned from Hanguo. During an initial interview, Tian told me that she did not feel like speaking Korean to her peers at her new school as this was mainly because of her fear: she worried that her new classmates may laugh at her accent (Northern Ham-kyung or Yanbian dialect) which was different from their Pyong-an dialect.
Experiences of mobility shared by Tian are not common, even among the student participants of this study. As shown in her own narratives in Figure 5.1., Tian was constantly navigating transitions while moving between various cultural and geographical spaces:

![Handwritten narrative]

**Figure 5.1. A ‘Mobile’ Child: “My school transfer experience”**

*Note:* This handwritten narrative is provided by Tian, a focal participant of this study who was a Sr. level 2 high school student at the PKSS in Northeast China, on June 28, 2012.

Let me share my experiences of school transfer.

\[(1) \text{Since birth, K-G2:}\] When I was 6-month old, my parents left hometown and went to Shenyang [the capital city of Liao-Ning province] to make a living. So my maternal grandparents raised me for 10 years. I never attended a kindergarten. I attended Grade 1 and 2 at a primary school in Huachuan prefecture [at a small county where her hometown was located].

\[(2) \text{During the G3:}\] Later on, my maternal grandparents went to Hanguo [South Korea] to make a living too. So, my parents made an arrangement for me to attend Grade 3 in the city of Jiamusi; I was left alone [in a boarding school]. My parents were already divorced at that time. [Transfer #1 – to JiaMuSi];
[(3) During the G4:] “I was with my mom when I was Grade 4, in Shen Yang XX Elementary School (a Han School). As I could not catch up in the Grade 4 level studies. A few months later, I had to be downgraded to Grade 3 and to start all over again. After the school was closed due to the lack of students, I transferred to XX ChaoXianZu Elementary School [a K-MNS] and attended Grade 4 there. [Transfer #2/3 – to ShenYang, School 1 & 2];

[(4) Grade 5-7:] One year after I went to that school, my grandparents returned from Hanguo, so I returned to my hometown with them. And then, attended Grade 5 in my hometown in Huachuan. Later on, I transferred to schools in the city of JiaMuSi; I completed Grade 6 (the last year of elementary level studies) and Grade 7 (the first year of junior high-level studies) over there. My mom accompanied me during my Grade 6 and the first semester of my Grade 7, and left for Hanguo for work when I was in the second semester in Grade 7 [Transfer #4/5 – back to Hometown (HuaLin), School 1 & 2];

[(5) Grade 8 -12:] My mom sent me alone to study in Mudanjiang [Before her departure], as she believed that “the education level of the school (PKSS) in Mudanjiang is higher than the one in Jiamusi.” So, I was transferred here [the PKSS] since Grade 8 (Jr. high Level 2), and I am planning to stay here until Grade 12”. [Transfer #6 – to Mudanjiang]

Figure 5.1 indicates that Tian moved between various spaces six times during her schooling years, for two reasons beyond her control:

a) Constant changes of her main caregivers often made her transfer between different schools;

b) For better educational possibilities, which motivated her parents to transfer her to a Han majority school (i.e. in Shen Yang), which also encouraged them to let Tian return to the K-MNS education system (e.g., in ShenYang), and moved her to a better K-MNS (e.g., to the PKSS).

After the improvement of Tian’s family economic situation, her parents tried to transfer her to ‘better’ schools across northeast China (e.g., between Heilongjiang and Liaoning, from their hometown to Mudanjiang). Similar to Gao and Yuan’s parents, Tian’s family was also looking for a school that they thought was best for supporting their daughter’s education. In an interview, Tian said that her parents were looking for a school that not only provided a good quality education, but also offered related package services, such as supervised evening and weekend programs for students like Tian.
‘Mobility’, Identity and FL Learning (1b) Tian

Considering Tian’s unique position with a Korean and Chinese dual identity, I presumed that Tian was different than the ones from the full ChaoXianZu families. Surprisingly, she considers her main identity as a Korean, mainly attributable to her unique linguistic and cultural background.

Tian speaks Korean, Mandarin Chinese, Japanese and English. For her, learning and using multiple languages is essential which is key to defining who she is. She learned English as her L3 and primary foreign language (FL1) since grade 3 when she was attending a school in ShenYang. The school offered English twice a week approximately 40 minutes each session. At that time, Tian was living with her mom and grandparents in the capital city of Liao Ning province, one of the three main provinces in Northeast China where the ChaoXianZu people reside. As with Yuan, when she transferred to the PKSS in her Junior year 2, Tian chose to learn Japanese as her primary foreign language. Even after she entered university, Tian chose to learn English when she entered a university in Shanghai. After the first year of study, she decided to switch her major to Japanese as she found a large gap in her foundational knowledge in English compared to her classmates, who had already learned basic English at secondary school.

When I heard her story of dynamic school transferring experiences, I was concerned that the non-voluntary mobility may have impacted her negatively. Surprisingly, it seems Tian handled the different transitions between multiple places well. Tian kept in close contact with her parents. After graduating from high school, based on her father’s suggestion, she decided to attend a university in Shanghai where her dad was living with his new family; Tian said she enjoyed talking to her baby brother in Hanyu. As her mom was still busy with travelling to South Korea for work, Tian visited her mom in Korea several times; Tian said that visiting Korea was a good chance for her to improve her HanGuoYu - with a standard South Korean accent. In a follow up interview, Tian said that such domestic and international mobility provided her with opportunities to think about the significance of different languages and cultures, especially about the importance of learning Hanguoyu (legitimate Korean language spoken by people in South Korea) as well as English (an international trade language).
5.3.2. Increased International Mobility

The increased level of international mobility is the second main feature of student participants in this study. All student participants reported their experiences of travelling internationally, even though their destinations were mostly to Hanguo. During the initial interviews in the early summer of 2012 when they were in grade 11 (Sr. 2 at high school), only a few teenagers reported that they had experienced visiting overseas. However, all teenagers had done so by the time of the follow up interviews in the fall of 2014 when they were in Jr. 1 or 2 year studying at university. While most of their visits were in the short-term to see their parents, a few students were traveling frequently as their parents decided to immigrate to Hanguo. Almost a quarter (5) of the 22 teenage participants went to Korea for a long-term stay with the following three key objectives:

(i) **Well-planned visits for academic purposes**: Like Ran, some teenagers travelled to Hanguo to live closer to their parents and also to attend a Korean university;

(ii) **Unexpected visit for academic purposes**: To attend a Korean university (e.g., Qing) or to prepare for applying to a Japanese university (e.g., Zheng), mainly due to unexpected changes in their original plans – such as studying at a top ranked Chinese university;

(iii) **Unexpected visit for work**: To visit Korea for long-term work (e.g., Miyeon) or short-term work over the university break (e.g., Yuan), mainly due to unexpected changes in their original plans – such as unsatisfactory university life at a Chinese university or because of a family emergency.

*“I planned, but …”*

Some participants like Ran originally planned to visit S. Korean for a long-term visit. As a Korean, Chinese and English trilingual speaker, Ran is constantly travelling between multiple linguistic and cultural spaces. Besides her rich linguistic background, she has a relatively complex cultural background. Similar to Tian, she was also born from a Korean mother and a Chinese father. In Ran’s case, however, she barely received any influence from her dad and his family as her dad passed away when she was a baby. Thus, she was brought up by her mom and especially by her maternal grandparents because her mom went to Seoul for work when Ran was 3-years-old. Her mom’s recent naturalization in Seoul S. Korea triggered her increased level of international mobility, which became a key motivation in planning her education in Korea.
Ran had a firm plan to attend a university in Seoul Korea upon graduation from the PKSS. During the initial interviews, she was very optimistic about this plan. She seemed so excited when she was sharing her educational aspirations and future career in S. Korea. Ran told me she wanted to learn English as her major, with a strong belief that her trilingual training at the PKSS would help her to become a competent speaker of this world language. I was surprised, however, when I met her again in October 2013 during my phase 2 fieldwork in Yanji, the capital city of Yanbian Korean autonomous prefecture located in the Jilin province, Northeast China. She was studying at a Chinese university and majoring in Korean language and literature. I was curious about why Ran had changed her plans. In a follow up interview at that time, she provided two main reasons:

(i) *Feelings of Isolation* (from her new peer group in S. Korea). She could not fit into the new learning community, especially after she attended a two-month university preparation program in Seoul that her mom recommended, while waiting for the outcome of the Gaokao [national college entrance exam]. She did not like it when her new peers (mostly Han Guo Ren) commented on her ChaoXianZu accent - which is closer to the Yanbian Dialect. Ran said she felt an invisible wall with the people in her new peer group, which she never felt when she was with her classmates at the PKSS.

(ii) *Feelings of Loneliness (in a new family environment)* is another reason that Ran could not fit well into her life in Seoul Korea, even though she was living with her mom. She said, perhaps it was because of her long separation from her mom and also because she had to interact with her step-father, considering that it was her first experience staying with her mom for more than two weeks. Ran said she missed the freedom of a more relaxed lifestyle in China. Although she was living with her mom, they could not spend a lot of time together because her mom was too busy with her work. One year later when I visited Yanji city again during my Phase 3 field study, she surprised me again: She went to South Korea to attend university (majoring English with a minor in Business) after the completion of her first year of study at a Chinese university in Yanbian (majored in Korean language and literature).

Different from Ran, both Qing and Zheng had no plans to study abroad. They seemed happy with their aspirations of attending a university in China, but did not put a lot of thought into how life might lead them to different paths. After the Gaokao [national college entrance exam in China], I was surprised to hear that they both went to Seoul Korea; during all interviews before Gaokao, both of them expressed their strong will to continue on their post secondary education in China rather than studying abroad.
Qing is a Korean, Chinese and English trilingual teenager, as introduced in Section 5.2 (see Interview Excerpt 5.1). As an only child, Qing was born into an ‘elite’ ChaoXianZu family in the city of Mudanjiang. Her dad was a government official and her mother was a K-MNS elementary school teacher until they decided to go to Seoul Korea for long-term labour when Qing completed grade one. Even though her mom speaks fluent Korean, Hanyu was the main language spoken at home and between her parents. It was mainly due to the fact that her dad attended a Han Chinese school and Qing attended a Han Chinese Kindergarten. Her family wanted her to receive a full multilingual education under a full K-MNS system. Her grandparents brought up Qing during her parents’ long absences from their hometown. A key figure who influenced Qing’s educational decision was her grandfather who was an administrator in the minority nationality affairs office in Mudanjiang. Later on, after Qing transferred to the PKSS from grade 8 (Jr. year 2), her parents sent her to stay in the school dormitory mainly because her grandparents often visited South Korea to see their children. Whenever her grandparents returned to China, Qing returned home in Mudanjiang during the weekend school breaks. Perhaps owing to such complexity in her sociolinguistic and sociocultural background, Qing considers herself as having double mother tongues and dual identities as a ChaoXianZu.

Both Qing and Zheng went to Seoul Korea after they found out that they could not enroll in a satisfactory ranked university in China. Nevertheless, the reason that triggered their longer stay in Seoul is different. Qing was attending a Korean university – majoring in international hotel and hospitality management, while Zheng was there mainly to prepare for her Japanese university application.

Zheng is a Korean-Chinese-Japanese trilingual who speaks intermediate level Japanese. She is one of the five participants who has siblings. When first interviewed, Zheng was living with her elder sister who accompanied her throughout her schooling since she transferred to the PKSS in grade 9 (Jr. level 3). Her father had been in South Korea for work since she was in grade 3 and her mom followed him as soon as Zheng graduated from junior high. Zheng chose to learn Japanese as her primary FL when she entered secondary school. During the initial interviews, she expressed her belief that

---

50 Now her dad speaks good Korean as he studied Korean after his longterm work in Seoul.
focusing on one foreign language (Japanese) and making a constant effort in learning that language (Japanese) would help her to be successful both academically (e.g., GaoKao) and professionally; in turn, she asserted that “there is no need to learn English” (June, 2012).

Zheng is one of the focal teenagers who demonstrated a solid view of her plan for the future. This included her ambition to study at a top ranking Chinese university in a large city - preferably Beijing. Her performance on the GaoKao could easily allow her to study at a PuBen [4-year general university], even though it was not high enough for a university that she wished to enter. Some PuBen in northeast China accepted Zheng, but she declined their offer. Instead, she decided to study abroad (Japan). After she graduated from the PKSS, Zheng went to Seoul Korea where her parents and elder sister were working. When I spoke to Zheng in early spring 2014, she was preparing for the Japanese proficiency level test in Seoul, as part of the process of applying for a Japanese university in the Metropolitan city of Tokyo where her cousin was studying.

‘Mobility’, Identity and FL Learning (2): Ran, Qing and Zheng

Qing’s learning trajectory is unique, compared to that of her other peers from the non-local group who mainly grew up in the town/urban areas and have school transfer experiences. As introduced in Section 5.2.1, Qing often shared intriguing and interesting experiences and perspectives in relation to her representation of plurilingualism (see more examples in Chapter 6). During the first interview, she informed me that her proficiency in Chinese was higher than Korean, despite the fact she was concerned about her “Chinese-accented” Korean. She believes that this is due to her less-competitiveness in legitimate Korean (HanGuoYu) – based on her experience of visiting HanGuo (a two week visit after graduation of Jr. year 3). On the other hand, Qing was very proud of her talent in HanYu and English. She was happy with her fluency in Chinese and her performance in English, and the positive comments she received from her peers and teachers. Her peers and teachers’ perspectives on her languages and linguistic proficiency seemed to profoundly impact her representations of plurilingualism and multilingual learning.

Lastly, not everyone in the teenage group in this study valued learning a foreign language. Gao and Jinok, for example, considered foreign languages as important
subjects to learn, but did not believe them to be essential keys to their future success. They both chose non-linguistic subjects as their major: Gao is interested in news and media, while Jinok is interested in finance and accounting.

5.3.3. Virtual Mobility

The increased level of virtual mobility is another main feature of student participants in this study. As stated previously in Chapter 3 (Section 3.2.2), all teenagers in this study are self-motivated ‘travellers’ through virtual networking. They kept up their ongoing creative communications with their families and friends through constant interaction over active peer-networking on SNS sites such as WeChat.

In short, the teenagers were constantly ‘in-motion’. Through their dynamic experience of intra-territorial/ transnational/virtual mobility, the focal teenagers showed unique, complex representations of plurilingualism and learning multiple languages that have a strong relevance to the complex construction of their identities.

‘Mobility’, Identity and FL Learning (3): Ying, Young

Born and raised in Peace city, Ying attended a local Han Chinese kindergarten; nevertheless, she completed a full 12 years of schooling under the K-MNS education system. Ying was living with her grandparents because her parents had been away from home and working in Hanguo since she was in grade 3. Compared to most of her peers, she spent more time with her parents, especially her mom (Mrs. Li) - who travelled between China and S. Korea 2-3 times each year to meet her daughter Ying. As she mentioned earlier (see Narrative Excerpt 5.1 in Section 5.2.2), Ying enjoys learning multiple languages. Speaking four languages, she is fluent in Korean and Chinese with intermediate level Japanese and introductory level English. English was the first foreign language that Ying learned when she was in grade 3 from an out of school tutoring centre for 4 years. Later on, she chose to learn Japanese as her primary foreign language from junior high at the PKSS. At the university level, she chose to study Korean language and literature as her major. Attending a university in the Yanbian Korean autonomous prefecture, Ying became an active promoter of her heritage language and culture through participating in various activities and events at the university – e.g., as a volunteer MC and
Announcer for the Korean language and cultural group as well as a dancer for the university dance club.

Perhaps attributed to her dynamic experiences in travelling between multiple linguistic and cultural places, Ying is highly talented in strategically using various language and literacy resources when carrying out communication in different settings. Ying is an active practitioner of multiliteracies. Similar to her teenage peers, she has been actively utilizing ‘Multi’ (-lingual, literacies and multi-/new media) tools for more effective and efficient communication and learning in her daily live (see examples in Section 6.2 in Chapter 6).

Being the same as Ying, Young is a Korean-Chinese-English-Japanese quadrilingual. She spoke intermediate level English at the time of the first interview in the summer 2012. Young chose to learn Japanese as her major at a university in Dalian, a beautiful coastal city in Liaoning, in northeast China. Now she has become an advanced level Japanese speaker, while continuing to learn English. Similar to her peers from the nearby suburbs, she spent her early childhood in her hometown but grew up in urban areas after she started schooling. Young completed her schooling through a full K-MNS education system in Peace town. Her parents worked in Seoul Korea since she was in grade 1 but purchased an apartment in their hometown, which helped make Young’s schooling easier. As with Ying, her mom often travelled back and forth between Korea and China. After Young’s baby brother was born when Young was about to graduate from junior high, her mom spent more time in their hometown to take care of the two children, especially to support Young’s transition to senior high. Similar to the majority of the focal plurilingual teenage learners, Young is an active practitioner of multilingualism and multiliteracies. She is familiar with and highly capable of utilizing multiple linguistic and literacy resources via current social network sites such as WeChat (see examples in Section 6.4.1 in Chapter 6).

Based on a casual conversation with Young in late summer 2017, I learned that she found a job in an international business company located in Dalian right after graduating from university. Young said that her high achievement in the level 1 Japanese Language Proficiency Test (JLPT; see http://www.jlpt.jp/en/) was an asset for finding a good job. Young was excited to share her experiences of studying at a Japanese university located in southern Japan for one year as an exchange student during her 3rd year study.
5.4. Conclusion

In the above sections, I paid particular attention to the dynamics and symbolic values of language use in social interaction. This was with consideration of the tensions between institutional (/societal) constraints and individual agency in the phenomenon of plurilingual practices (/practice of the 'multi') in and out of classroom contexts, along with an increased level of globalization. Key findings in this chapter suggest that the teenage ethnic Korean plurilingual student participants’ dynamic experiences and complex representations of plurilingualism have a strong influence on their (foreign) language learning in general. Most participants considered that knowledge in multiple languages and active practice of the ‘multi’ (i.e., capability in moving between multiple linguistic and cultural spaces) made them feel special, privileged and empowered. These students were experiencing various levels and forms of ‘mobility’, including both physical (intraterritorial and international) and virtual mobilities. They highlighted that their increased level of ‘mobility’ between multiple spaces is closely connected to their active exercise of agency for effective learning and efficient communication.
Chapter 6.

The Plurilingual Youths in Motion

6.1. Introduction

As shown in the previous two chapters, student participants in this study considered that being a plurilingual learner at a K-MNS (PKSS) was a great asset to them in developing their language skills and strategies required to navigate multiple linguistic and cultural spaces, which in turn could also facilitate their transitions such as from high school to universities. Thus, even after they entered university, the teenagers made continuous and constant effort to explore various strategies for more effective learning and communication. They were constantly searching and creating spaces for the inclusion of diverse semiotic resources, complex linguistic practices and new identity performances.

This chapter explores how experiences of learning multiple languages affected these youngsters’ aspirations and learning trajectories, around three key points: (i) their understanding of how learning foreign languages is an asset for their future as young professionals (Section 6.1.1); and (ii) their heightened awareness of the assets of navigating several languages and identities (Section 6.3); as well as (iii) their continuous development of plurilingual and intercultural competence (Section 6.4).

6.1.1. A ‘Life-long capital’

The plurilingual and pluricultural competence concept is considered as an essential “life-long capital” of plurilingual speakers. (Coste et al., 2009)

Student participants in this study affirmed that their plurilingual competence is an asset, “an essential life-long capital”.

Overall almost all student participants in this study expressed satisfaction with their experiences of learning foreign/multiple languages. As noted earlier, the teenagers demonstrated their strong awareness of the significance of plurilingualism as an asset for a better future, especially as an essential stimulation for more engaged learning and
communication. They consider that being a plurilingual makes them feel very special and privileged. As noted in Chapter 5, they were making constant effort in developing the ‘multi’ in their dynamic linguistic and cultural repertoire, despite their awareness of the imbalanced power attached to their languages. In particular, most teenagers ponder the ‘multi’ as ‘a strategic facilitator’ (See Section 6.2.1) and their ‘mobility’ as ‘a learning facilitator’ (see Section 6.2.1), especially for (renewed) understanding of the complexity involved in languages and identities. They believed that plurilingualism was an essential ‘life-long capital’. This can be seen in their choices of university majors, which I shall now introduce.

**The Class of 2013**

As mentioned previously, student participants in this study consider practices of the ‘multi’ as an essential asset. From this point of view, it is remarkable to note the number of focal participants who chose to study a language as a university major after their university entrance exams [GaoKao], as Table 6.1 illustrates. More than half of the twenty-two student participants chose to continue learning languages at the university level: 7 of them chose to major in a foreign language (4 Japanese and 3 EFL), 2 chose to study Korean, 3 chose to major in Chinese. These choices further illustrate the fact that the majority of these teenagers had very clear objectives when investing in learning multiple languages; they reported that foreign language learning would facilitate better leisure, academic or career options. More than half of the student participants who chose to learn a particular (foreign) language shared that they had detailed long term plans in their minds.

In particular, these teenagers showed high interest in studying different languages and cultures: Young, Yuan, Zheng and Tian opted for Japanese as their university major; Hong and Ran chose to continue learning English; Qing chose to study hospitality and hotel management as her major and English as a minor; Ying and Mi-yeon chose to learn Korean; and Min, Ahn and Yeon chose to major in Chinese language arts and literature.
Young chose to challenge herself by learning a new foreign language, Japanese as her major at a university in Dalian - a beautiful coastal city in Liaoning, in northeast China. Like Rim, she was one of the students who often contacted me through WeChat to ask questions related to her university assignments especially concerning her Japanese and English classes. When I last spoke to her in the fall of 2016, she was studying in a
Japanese university in Southern Japan as an exchange student between China and Japan. As introduced in her “multilingual virtual diary” presented in Chapter 5 (Section 5.3), Young is one of the teenagers who often travelled between multiple (physical and virtual) spaces while maximizing the ‘multi’ (lingual, cultural and multimodal tools) in her dynamic repertoire.

Yuan chose to major in Korean language and trade at a university in Qingdao. After her first term, she changed her major to Japanese; she explained that this was because the Korean program offered at the university was mainly designed for foreign language learners. She considered her level of Korean to be too high when compared with the majority of her classmates who were from the Han Chinese community, and were beginning learners. When I last spoke to her in early spring 2016, Yuan was continuing to study Japanese at her Chinese university, while preparing an application for graduate level study in Korea.

Min struggled in the selection of her university major, as introduced in Section 4.4 (see Figure 4.11 in Chapter 4). Initially she wanted to major in DuìWài HanYu [teaching Chinese for international learners] at university, but she then decided to study standard Chinese language and literature when she was admitted into a highly prestigious university in Shanghai. Once at university, she continued to learn English.

Four teenagers went to HanGuo for long-term study. Both Qing and Zheng turned down offers from Chinese universities and went to Korea right after the GāoKāo. As briefly introduced earlier, Qing was passionate about traveling around different countries. Perhaps for this reason, she decided not to accept an offer from the department of Korean language and literature at a university in northeast China. Instead, she entered a University in Seoul Korea to major in Hospitality and Hotel Management with English as her minor, despite the fact that she had to take an extra term of preparation courses prior to her formal admission to the university. Similarly, Zheng received offers from several Chinese universities but turned them down. Perhaps because she was one of the top 5 students with the highest performance on the GāoKāo, Zheng was very disappointed when she found out that she had been rejected by a more prestigious institution in Beijing.

To fill up the gaps between Korean and Chinese school systems.
that she had applied to. Eventually, she went to Korea where her parents and sister were working; in my last interview with her in the fall 2013, she said that she was preparing for admission exams to enter universities in Tokyo Japan. On the other hand, both Ran and Yeon attended and completed their first year of study at Chinese universities in northeast China. Ran completed a program in Korean language and literature, while Yeon took Chinese language and literature as her university major. Then, both of them left their Chinese universities and went to Korea, for different reasons. Ran continued on her studies at a university in the suburb of Seoul, following her mother’s wish. Yeon decided to drop out of university and help out at her family’s fashion boutique business, which often required frequent travelling between China and Korea.

Overall the teenagers were excited to continue learning foreign languages at university, even though the key motivation for some of them was simply to fulfill academic requirements. They include students who chose to study non-language subjects, such as Gao who chose to study media broadcasting at university, Jinok who chose to study Finance and Accounting as her major at university, and Rim who chose to major in Law. Both Gao and Jinok continued learning Japanese at university. Although Rim expressed his reluctance to learn other languages besides Chinese, he seemed to be happy about the opportunity to continue learning English at the university level.

6.2. Practices of the ‘Multi’ as an Asset

[T]he enrichment of the repertoire involves enhanced abilities, comprised of language learning, language management and language maintenance skills (Herdina & Jessner, 2002, p.160)

Overall all student participants expressed satisfaction with their experiences of learning multiple languages. The teenagers stated that the plurilingual competence that they developed through plurilingual education at PKSS was essential for the “enrichment of the[ir] repertoire”. As discussed in Chapter 4 (Section 4.5), this enrichment went beyond the simple mastery of new vocabulary and grammar structures. It encompassed an active exploration of the know-how of managing and maintaining different languages. The teenagers considered that the plurilingual pedagogy implemented in the PKSS supported
their active practices of the ‘multi’ at school, which helped them to bring out their ‘best’ parts for a more effective learning and communication. In this sense, for them, practices of the ‘multi’ were a crucial asset, which contributed to increasing their agency in learning. As attested by their selection of university majors in the previous Section, the teenagers considered that learning multiple languages at PKSS helped them transition better to the larger world.

The next section illustrates some key features (i.e., ability and strategies) of these youth as plurilingual speakers who are able “[to] throw in light or shade certain zones of his/her competence, (dis)activate, (re)invent and negotiate his/her multiple resources in context” (Moore & Gajo, 2009, p. 142; see Section 2.1.1 in Chapter 2) depending on situations and contexts. I will highlight (i) the ‘multi’ as a strategic facilitator through ‘improvisation’ (i.e., making a contingent decision to enable or limit the use of single or multiple languages as a key tool for negotiating his/her positionality in different contexts; it is a key strategy to negotiate dynamic repertoires in complex sociolinguistic situations. For instance, “[d]epending on how the speaker (and he/his interlocutors) interpret and categorise the situation of communication, she/he can be encouraged to use her/his repertoire as a bilingual or as a learner and sometimes, even, as a monolingual” (Moore & Gajo, 2009, p.142; also see examples in Blommaert et al., 2005, Jessner, 2008a, Zhang, 1998, 2005). In the case of student participants in this study, two examples presented in this section illustrate such improvisation.

6.2.1. ‘Multi’ as a Strategic Facilitator – ‘Improvisation’

As noted earlier, the ethnic Korean plurilingual youths in this study consider that the ‘multi’ is a ‘strategic facilitator’ in learning. In particular, active practices of the ‘multi’ involve a capacity for ‘improvisation’ for more effective communication. By improvisation, I mean how each plurilingual speaker makes a contingent decision to enable or limit use of single or multiple languages as a key tool for negotiating his/her positionality in different contexts; it is a key strategy to negotiate dynamic repertoires in complex sociolinguistic situations. For instance, “[d]epending on how the speaker (and he/his interlocutors) interpret and categorise the situation of communication, she/he can be encouraged to use her/his repertoire as a bilingual or as a learner and sometimes, even, as a monolingual” (Moore & Gajo, 2009, p.142; also see examples in Blommaert et al., 2005, Jessner, 2008a, Zhang, 1998, 2005). In the case of student participants in this study, two examples presented in this section illustrate such improvisation.
Writing in Different Languages

Writing in different languages is a good example of these teenagers’ practice of the ‘multi’ as a strategic tool, as shown in Qing’s examples in interview Excerpt 6.1. As a Korean-Chinese-English speaking trilingual, Qing has been actively utilizing different resources in her repertoire. In interview excerpt 6.1 (a), she is efficiently alternating between Korean and Chinese in her writing on a QQ (a social networking service) site. Qing generally uses Chinese on the QQ site, as the common language with her peer group, whose members belong to both the Korean and Han Chinese communities.

Interview Excerpt 6.1 (a) (Qing)

Researcher (R): 请问你如何使用不同的语言(写)? [How do you use different languages (in written form)?]

Qing (Q): 在 QQ, 我一般用汉语写 [I generally write in Hanyu on QQ (a SNS site)]

R: 那朝语呢? [How about in Korean?]

Q: 朝语几乎不用。用我朋友他们都能听得懂, 一看就一目了然的那种。[I barely use Korean. I use a language that all my friends understand verbally, and would be able to read at a quick glance.]

R: 哦~ 那你在 QQ 从不用朝语? [I see. So, you never use Korean in QQ?]

Q: 嗯..有的时候用 [hum.. Sometimes I use it]

R: 什么时候? [When?]

Q: 不想打字的时候。 [when I don't feel like typing]

R: 那你朝语打得很快? [Then, I guess you are a fast typist in Korean?]

Q: 打字用朝语比汉语快好多。 汉语是 하나하나 찾아야 .., 朝语是 一个 글..字母 钮上打就行了 , 然后 툭툭툭 치면 됩니다. [My typing speed in Korean is much faster than it is in Chinese. Typing in Chinese is too slow because I have to find each character once at a time, but in Korean typing all I have to do is just to touch some letter keys on the key board ...]

R: 아~  그렇구나 [Okay, I see]

(Qing, April 30, 2013)
As noted in the above interview excerpt, Qing claims her preference for using Korean when she wants to type faster because her typing skills in Korean are better than in Chinese. As shown in Interview Excerpt 6.1(b) below, Qing also uses English but for different purposes:

**Interview Excerpt 6.1 (b) (Qing)**

R: 你什么时候用英文？ [When do you use English?]

Q: 想要让别人看不懂的时候。[When I don’t want to share {my feelings} directly with others]

R: 오~ 能不能举个例子？ [Ah, I see. Can you give me an example?]

Q: 嗯... 怎么说呢... 就是... 今天我跟谁谁吵架了，然后我说他坏话的时候就是不想直接表达的时候。然后，我就绕着弯子表达就有意义一些。[hum.., how should I say this, for example, when I had an argument with someone and especially when I wanted to express my resentment, but do not feel like speaking it out loudly. Then, I use an indirect way to talk about this.]

R: 那你能不能举个具体的例子？ [Do you have any specific examples?]

Q: 어.. 就是语言本身方面就是绕着弯子的这么说。我感觉他/她是日语生，我是英语生的话 那就更绕弯子，直接看不懂。[humm.., I mean that in-direct expressions are available in language itself. Considering I am an English learner, this strategy works better when I speak to a Japanese [non-English] learner, as he/she would not understand {what I am saying} for sure]

R: 오~ 查字典也看不懂？ [Really? .. You mean even with a dictionary?]

Q: 应该看不懂，我们英语有个缩写吧！他们看不懂，找不出来应该。[I guess so. Because, there are abbreviations in our English. So I think that they won’t be able to {figure out my true intention} find it in a dictionary.]

（Qing, April 30, 2013）

Qing uses English when she feels like recording her feelings but is, at the same time, reluctant to share her secrets. English, a foreign language for her and her peers, permits her to express, and at the same time distance herself from her feelings, what she refers to as “in-direct expressions” [绕弯子]. For instance, sometimes she was strategically utilizing her knowledge in English when she was interacting with JFL learners: “Because,
there are abbreviations in our English. So, I think that they won’t be able to {figure out my true intention} find it in a dictionary” [应该看不懂，我们英语有个缩写吧！他们看不懂，找不出来应该].

**Speaking in a Foreign Language – for Fun: 「どこにいるの」**

As shown in the above examples of Qing, the focal ethnic Korean teenagers in this study were regularly using different languages for different purposes. Overall, they consider that speaking in Korean gives them a feeling of being gentler and of closeness (to the listener), speaking in Chinese gives them the feeling of being much ‘tougher’ and more in control (as a speaker), and speaking in foreign language (Japanese or English) gives them the feeling of more fun and ‘foreign’. Interview Excerpt 6.3 is a good example to illustrate such dynamics, shared by Jinok and Yeon (a Korean, Chinese and Japanese speaker). The interview was conducted in the summer 2012 at PKSS.

**Interview Excerpt 6.2 Jinok & Yeon**

I: 你什么时候用日语呢？ [When do you use Japanese?]

Jinok: 전화람 하무 막 친하무, 머.. もしもし 하구 그냥 그렇게 일어, 일어로 물어보구 그렇다. [When I talk on the phone with a close friend, I use Japanese, say “moshi moshi”{hello} and ask some questions.]

I: 뭐라고 물어보는데요? [what do you ask?]

Yeon: 어.. 「どこにいるの」하구 물어두 보구. (笑) [Humm.. such as “Doko-ni iru-no” {where are you}] (laugh)

I: 오~ 그래~ [Ah, really?]

J: 예, 재밌습니다 (笑) 친하니까 별무 그렇게 막 따지지 않구 하니까나. 그냥 더 친한다. [Yeah, that’s really fun (laugh). As we are close friends and not very picky. So this {using some Japanese} makes us feel closer.]

I: 오~ 그래, 친해 보이는구나~ [Ah, I see. That makes you feel closer ~]

Jinok: 일어, 조선어, 한어 비기면은, 한어 좀 빡한다. 좀 박박해서, 좀, 대기 감정이 없어 보임다. [Compared to Japanese and Korean, speaking in Chinese makes me feel very harsh with no emotion.]

I: 오~ 그럼, 일본말은 조선말 다음에 감정이 있어 보여? [I see. So, do you feel emotion attached to the Japanese language, besides Korean?]
In the above interview excerpts, both Jinok and Yeon mentioned their feelings and strategies of using their knowledge of Japanese in daily peergroup interactions. Other student participants shared similar feelings about the emotions attached to different languages. Both Yeon and Jinok considered Korean as the softest language and then Japanese, while they thought that Chinese had a “harsh” feeling; this echoes other participants’ reference to Chinese as ‘a work language” (e.g., Min; see Section 5.2.1).

6.2.2. ‘Mobility’ as a Learning Facilitator – ‘Invention’

‘Invention’ (i.e., create an alternative or new resource) is another key characteristic of a plurilingual speaker’s communicative competence (see Section 2.1.1 in Chapter 2), as part of his/her strategic management of plurilingual assets. As will be discussed in the upcoming sections, the focal teenage plurilingual youths were constantly exploring language resources and navigating multiple spaces, thus triggering creative learning and translanguaging practices (as will be discussed in Section 6.4). The rapid development of technological new media tools in today’s ‘network society’ (Blommaert, 2010; Blommaert, Collins & Slembrouck, 2005) was an added dimension as youths navigated new virtual spaces of learning.

6.3. Navigating the ‘Multi’ to Learn, Imagine New Spaces

Overall the focal teenagers seemed happy with their experiences of learning multiple languages. At the same time, they also shared their critical awareness about the complexity involved in the relations between languages and identities. In particular, the focal teenagers’ experience of learning foreign/multiple languages is a complex but
essential part in their life trajectories. Along with their increased level of physical and virtual mobility, the teenagers were constantly exploring and developing various strategies of utilizing the ‘multi’ in their dynamic repertoires for more efficient and effective learning and communication. More specifically, these experiences have (i) a close connection to the (re)construction and (re)negotiation of their identities, as well as (ii) a strong relevance to their continued development of their plurilingual and intercultural competence. For them, the plurilingual and intercultural education that they received at PKSS not only helped them to learn about their ‘roots’, but also connected them to essential ‘routes’ for building a better future. In this section, I shall focus on looking at student participants’ perspectives on the complexity involving their languages and identities.

6.3.1. Engaging in Multiple Identities

Appreciates the ‘Multi’

The study showed how the participants’ experiences of learning multiple languages supported them to better grasp the complex relations interlinking language and identity. More specifically, the teenagers confided that they kept navigating three key identity spaces, which were all essential to them:

a. Singular identity, as a Korean;

b. Duality in their identities as Korean and Chinese;

c. Hybrid Identity as a GuoJiRen [Citizen of the World].

Almost all of them (20 out of 22) consider themselves as Korean [ChoSen SaRum; Korean race]. At the same time, all teenagers asserted their unique position as ChaoXianZu [ethnic Korean Chinese], the duality in their identities as both Korean [ChaoXian Ren; ChoSen SaRum] and Chinese [ZhongGuo Ren; ChungGuck SaRum]. While emphasizing their general identity as an overseas Korean group living in China [ZhongGuo ChaoXianZu], most of them clearly differentiate themselves from the ‘legitimate’ Koreans from North Korea (PDRK) or South Korea (HanGuo). They also pointed to hybridity as an essential aspect of their identities, especially when participants visualized themselves as multilinguals (see Section 5.2).
“I feel Privileged”

Most student participants affirmed their awareness of a strong connection between the development of their languages and identities at different stages of their life, as Interview Excerpt 6.3 illustrates. As a Korean-Chinese-English speaking trilingual, Min showed high satisfaction with her multilingual skills. When I asked her feelings of being a speaker of multiple languages, Min responded that “I feel privileged” [我感觉优越感] and shared different experiences that made her have such feelings as shown below.

**Interview Excerpt 6.3-a (Min)**

Min: 이모. 이모 북경에 계시는데 이모랑 여동생 있거든요. 이모집 딸. 그래서 저랑 세사람 같이 여행가는데. 이모는 우리학교에서 일어를 배우고 졸업하셨거든요. 그리고 동생은 지금 물론 언어실력은 좋지 않고, 그래서 제가 어떻게 같이 다니면서 외국사람 만나면 제가 설명도 해주고. 한번은 우리가 든 호텔 옆방 외국사람이 있었거든요. 그래서 우리 방에 도움을 청하러 왔는데.. [I often travel with my aunt in Beijing, along with her daughter - my younger cousin. My aunt learned Japanese and graduated from the PKSS. My cousin is not yet good at speaking different languages right now, so I often travel around with them and am the main person talking to foreigners. For instance in a trip, I spoke to some foreign visitors who stayed in the room next to our hotel room when they came to ask for help.]

I: 영어로? [Did you speak to them in English?]

M: 예. 그 분들은 어디서 왔던가, 영국인가. 그래서 맘 설명해준적이 두.. [Yeah.. Hum.., let me see where they were from.. perhaps from England… Anyways, I helped them out at that time..]

I: 그래요? 조금 더 설명해줄래요? [Really?! Hope you don’t mind to give the details?]

M: (웃음) 그 때 뜨거운 물 어떻게 하느냐 그 사람들 물어봤거든요. 그래서 제가 “..”(see her above statement in English), and showed them how to turn it on. Then, I told them like this “…”

I: So, were you happy at that time?

M: Yes, I was so proud of myself.

I: you mean about your language skills?
M: Yeah.
I: Is that right? When was it?
M: 2 ~ 3 years ago in Shanghai.
(Min, April 30, 2012)

Like Min, most student participants confirmed with me that they were learning by doing, and through their various experiences of interacting with different people in different times and spaces. In particular, the experience of learning a FL/PL motivated them to explore /imagine new and alternative identities. In the case of Min, for example, as shared in the interview excerpts 6.3 (a) and 6.3 (b), she reflects how learning different languages involved engaging in multiple identities. She described (i) her initial awareness about Korean-ness through active interactions with her peers, such as with the Han peers at Kindergarten and her classmates at PKSS in-person or on virtual spaces; (ii) her communication with people from North and South Korea, such as through in person experience or family connections; and (iii) direct contact with Westerners, such as in restaurants or through various domestic and international family trips.

**Interview Excerpt 6.3-b (Min)**

I: 你觉得自己的 identity 自我认同意识在不同的阶段有变化吗? [Have you been experiencing changes in your identity in different stages of your life?]

Min: 变化있습니다. 그러니까 어릴 때는 학교다니기 전 때는 한어를잘했거든요. 한족유치원이니까, 그러니까 조선족, 그 민족란에는 다른애들은 다 한족이라고 썼는데 내혼자 조선족이라고 쓰니깐 나는 그 사람들과 다들 렛에 왔 나는 아내가 동갑지. 한어밖에 모르지하고, 그리고 할머니 할아버지지는 저하고 주로 조선어를 많이 쓰니까 알아듣기는 한데 쓰줄 모르지 그랬거든요.

[Yes, I do. Hum.. I was fluent in Chinese before entering school, because I attended a Han Chinese Kindergarten. Basically ..., I was the only one who filled in my ethnic identity as an ethnic Korean when my classmates filled in their ethnicity as a Han Chinese; and I was wondering why I could only speak Chinese just like them [my classmates]. My grandparents were speaking to me in Korean, so I was also wondering why I couldn’t write in Korean but could only understand by listening.]

---

53 Kindergarten education [Xue Qian Ban; 学前班], one-year full time schooling before entering the grade 1 study, is often offered as part of the formal school system in China.
[However, while learning Korean through schooling (at the K-MNS), I realised the privilege that I have compared to my Han peers...Later on, I was reassured this which would enable me to communicate freely with people from both the South and North Korean peninsula...]

I: 북조선 가본적 있어요? [So, have you visited North Korea (DPRK)?]

M: 아니요. 집에 북조선 손님이 오셨끼도, 그때 대화하는데 지장같은거는 전혀 느끼지 않고. 그래서 내 패럴다 하구요. [Not really. We had visitors at home from DPRK...and I had no problem in communicating with them.]

I: 그랬군요. 그럼 남한에서 온 손님들과도 대화한적 있어요? [Okay. How about your experience of speaking to people from South Korea (HanGuo)]

M: 예. 엄마가 한국에 많이 다니시니까. 그러니까 지금은 한국에 있으시니까 한국 사람이 말투로 변해가고 있는데. 엄마랑 대화할 때도 문제도 없고 엄마 손님들과의 커뮤니케이션도 괜찮았다고 말구요. [Yeah, as my mom was often traveling to Hanguo, and she is currently living over there. Her accent in Korean is changing to Hanguo dialect..., but I have no issue in communicating with my mom and her customers.]

그리구 지금 영어까지 할줄 아니면 원가...방금 말한것처럼 KFC 에 가서 외국 사람 만나고 막 그릴 때면, 대단하다. 이런게 있거도요. 예. [And, I now also speak English. so now I feel very special, as I mentioned earlier when I was able to communicate with the foreign visitors in the KFC restaurant]

(Min, April 30, 2012)

Similar to the case of Ying (see Section 5.2.2 in Chapter 5), Min also pointed out the importance of connecting her learning with active practices of the ‘multi’. Min felt particularly empowered when she was given opportunities to utilize her knowledge in different languages in real life settings. She affirmed her ability in carrying out good communication with her family’s guests from both South and North Korea, as well as when encountering foreign visitors at restaurants or during family trips. Even after her graduation from PKSS, she continued actively using her plurilingual assets while in contact with people from wider communities. For instance, in a follow up interview in the end of her first term of study at a university in Shanghai, she shared her experiences of communicating with her peers at PKSS and some of her new friends who were from South Korea. I asked
her how she felt about these experiences; questions asked including: “U both are Koreans. Do you feel the same? 你讲延边话，他们不会讲的朝鲜语的方言[ ... (in Chinese) You speak Yanbian Hua, a dialect which they are not familiar with]” (January 8, 2014 on WeChat). To Min, it seems that the gap between ethnic Korean dialect and South Korean dialect was not an issue in her communication with the people from the Korean peninsula. This can be seen from the following excerpt from her responses at that time:

강 조선족애들이라면 한국어로 한국애들끼리 한국어로 상해 바꾸길래 괜찮습니다 (in Korean) [It’s fine as I can speak ChaoXianZu dialect with the ethnic Koreans, and then switch to Hanguo dialect when I speak to people from South Korea].

Like Min, most teenagers in this study reported that they were actively engaging in multiple and interwoven identities. They were making ongoing efforts to navigate and reconfigure different “learning identities” (Kolb & Kolb, 2009; Wenger, 1998; see Section 2.1.1 in Chapter 2). They also considered such engagement of ongoing practices of the ‘multi’ in their identities as an essential part in their journey to become a plurilingual (learner).

Unlike Min, as will be introduced in next section, some participants (e.g., Qing and Gao) showed their struggles about their language and identities, notably around the question of Korean-ness.

In summary, plurilingualism has always been with all the student participants. Learning multiple languages contributed to enhance their understanding of languages as ‘assets’ for learning and for navigating life transitions. Most student participants showed their heightened awareness of the strong connections between their languages and identities. They affirmed that the process of learning and using multiple languages helped them gain in-depth understanding of the complexity involved in the (re)construction and (re)negotiation of their multiple identities, including issues around authenticity and legitimacy.
6.3.2. “Korean-ness”

Representations become apparent not only through behaviour, but also and especially through discourse on language in general, or on specific aspects of language…. [“Discourse on language or languages” can be understood as] the images held by the different social actors about language in general or about a particular language, its rules, its features, its status with relation to other languages, etc. (Moore & Py, 2011, p. 263)

Interviews showed that the participants were constructing complex social representations about languages and identities. Many discussed mixed feelings regarding their legitimacy as ‘authentic’ speakers of their heritage language (Korean), and the potential discrepancies between hetero and self-identifications about what constituted ‘Korean-ness’.

**Legitimacy and Authenticity**

Despite their closeknit relationships, there is a difference between legitimacy and authenticity: ‘legitimate’ implies legal (or accepted from the outside) while ‘authentic’ implies original (or accepted from the inside). However, many original things are not always legal and many legal things are not always original. Thus, recognizing the legitimacy or authenticity (e.g., of a language or one’s linguistic competence) is a difficult balance between auto and hetero-categorizations. The power imbalance between different groups in a particular context create ongoing tensions about the legitimacy of various speakers in various languages, and which languages are viewed as “linguistic capital” (Bourdieu, 1991) by whom, and when:

*The dominant competence functions as linguistic capital, securing a profit of distinction in its relation to other competences only in so far as certain conditions (the unification of the market and the unequal distribution of the chances of access to the means of production of the legitimate competence, and to the legitimate places of expression) are continuously fulfilled, so that the groups which possess that competence are able to impose it as the only legitimate one in the formal markets (the fashionable, educational, political and administrative markets) and in most of the linguistic interactions in which they are involved* (Bourdieu, 1991, pp. 56-57).
In the case of student participants in this study, the notion of authenticity and legitimacy is particularly relevant for them, considering that they are constantly engaged in multiple linguistic and cultural practices in their daily lives.

**Legitimate but not Authentic?**

As noted earlier, teenagers in this study strongly asserted their unique position as a *ChaoXianZu*; they emphasized that the duality in their identities is important to them. In the semi-structured interviews, participants repeatedly asserted their positionality as an overseas Korean living in China: as a Korean [+조선사람 ChoSen SaRum] and also as a Chinese [中国人 ZhongGuoRen or 중국사람 ChungGuck SaRum]. They affirmed the importance of their heritage background as a Korean, insisting on their ‘Korean-ness’, while showing their fond-ness and sense of belonging to China. This is for example the case of Qing, in the Interview Excerpts 6.4-1(a). Likewise, they also showed their strong awareness of some gaps between them and the people they coined as ‘legitimate Koreans’ - the Korean people who are currently living in the Korean peninsula – the land of their ancestors. They clearly differentiated themselves from the ‘legitimate’ Koreans, as revealed from Gao and Qing’s statements in Interview Excerpt 6.4.

**Interview Excerpt 6.4 (a-1) (Qing)**

Qing (Q): 我为自己是中国人而自豪。[I am so proud of being a Chinese]

I: 哦～那你觉得你是汉族吗？[Okay. Then, do you feel that you are a Han Chinese?]  
Q: 不是。我是朝鲜族。[No, I am a ChaoXianZu (ethnic Korean Chinese)]

I: 是韩国人吗？[A HanGuoRen (South Korean)?]  
Q: 不是。[No, I am not]

I: 那么，韩国人对你来说是？[Then, what does HanGuoRen mean to you]  
Q: 他们是外国人。[They are foreigners]

In the Interview Excerpt below, Qing also illustrates her experience of “legitimate but not authentic” (Kramsch, 2012, p. 113): she at the same time experiences feelings of belonging, as a legitimate Korean (e.g., as an overseas Korean with ancestors from the
Korean penninsular) and feelings of inauthentic (as she could not speak legitimate Korean, meaning here the South Korean dialect).

**Interview Excerpt 6.4 (a-2) (Qing)**

I: 那你去过韩国嘛？[Have you been to HanGuo?]

Q: 恩。2次。[Yes, twice]

I: 你每次去都有一样的感觉吗？[Did you feel the same in each of your visits?]

Q: 恩。[Yes, I did]

I: 嗯~ 你能不能举个例子？[Okay. Then, do you have any examples?]

Q: 就是.. 음, 지하철 탈때. 我们조선말 하구 한국말 다를 때. 조선어, 그.. 不是有方言嘛，그무 달 보면 중국 사람인지 일본 말 쌍혀가 한국말 바 맞Arsan 그러네요. 맞 약간 떨리해구 아니로 계속 보구 그렸습니다. [I mean, ..humm..., on the subway for instance, and when our Korean is different from HanGuo Yu. As you know, we [ethnic Korean in China] speak a different Korean dialect. So the people in HanGuo, ‘they’ treat ‘us’ differently when they see the Chinese-ness in us. Often, they either stay away from us or keep staring at us.]

I: 嗯~ 그래요？[Ah, really?]

Q: 예, 그래서 엄마, 부모들 훔한게 한국에서 한국말 하지두 말구. 그냥 약간 한국말해해라구 그래봤다. [Yes. So my mom, my parents told me not to speak Chinese when I was in HanGuo, and learn to speak HanGuck (South Korean) accent]

I: 嗯~ 근데 Qing 은 한국말해요？[So, do you speak with a HanGuck accent?]

Q: 예? 못한다. 내 조선말말 잘 못하는데. (웃음) [No, I don’t. I don’t even speak our Korean dialect very well] (laughing)

I: 嗯~ 그러면 한국가면 부모님이 필수적으로 터내지 말라고 해요？[Okay. So, in HanGuo, your parents wanted you not to show your Chinese-ness]

Q: 예. 그래서 별로 자유가 없는 감이 들다. 그리고 가기에 우리를 쌍혀나하면 나두 가네를 쌍혀한다. [Yes, so I feel that I didn’t have enough freedom (when I was over there). Basically, I am trying to stay away from them because they first rejected me]

(Qing, April 30, 2013)

As shown in the above interview excerpt, when Qing visited Seoul Korea, she felt speechless due to her lack of linguisic capital which could help her to authenticate her origin and therefore authorize her to communicate with recognizable authority [i.e. an
evidence of her legitimacy]. In other words, she needed the ‘right’ capital to claim her legitimate membership in the local context. However, Qing did not feel that she had such capital. As a result, she felt that the local Koreans (HanGuoRen, the legitimate Korean) were trying to stay away from her or rejected her accessing to the local community. She gave the example of feeling that way in the subway, because she was speaking ethnic Korean dialect, and not the local dialect. As an alternative solution, her parents suggested she should try to learn enough of South Korean dialect so she could communicate. Overall, Qing considered that she felt a lot of pressure (and lack of freedom) when she was visiting South Korea. This is an example of how “language makes us able to fit into a context” (Kramsch, 2012, p. 113; c.f., Stavans, 2001, p.251); in the case of Qing’s parents, they wanted their daughter to fit into a new context by learning the local dialect, however, Qing felt uneasy and showed her resistance to their advice.

Like Qing, the teenagers have an increased level of critical awareness about themselves and the others, particularly through direct contact with the ‘legitimate Koreans’.

**Authentic but not Legitimate?**

Different from Qing, Gao never had a chance to visit HanGuo. Nevertheless, through the eyes of his friends and family members, he was forming his unique perspectives about the legitimacy of being Korean. This was the same with most teenagers in this study, as shown in Gao’s statements in Interview Excerpt 6.4 (b) below.

**Interview Excerpt 6.4 (b-1) (Gao)**

I: 你刚开始说你有两个 Identities. 是吗？ [You said that you have two identities. Right?]

G: 예 [Yes]

I: 你觉得小时候 & 现在..有不同的 identity 吗？ [Do you have different IDs, when you were a child and now?]

G: 没有太大的变化。 [Not a lot.]

I: 你觉得 identity 有点变化吗？比如在家里的时候 或在外面的时候？ [Does your ID change, such as at home or in the community?]
G: 呵...在家的话, 比在外面 조선사람쪽에 좀 더 많애지는거 같습니다. [Humm..., compared to when I am in outside, I feel more 'Korean-ness' at home]

I: 어떤 면에서요? [To what extent]

G: 대화람에 하자면. 그래두 계속 집에서는 기본상 조선말하고, 그리구 밖에서는 중국에 있으니까 중국말로 다 해야 하나냐, 집에 있을 때는 조선사람이라는 감각이 더 크게 납니다. [In a conversational context, for instance, we mainly use Korean at home. As I am living in China, I usually have to speak Chinese outside of home. So, I feel more Korean-ness when I am at home]

As in his statement in the above interview excerpt, Gao shares his perspective about the close relations between language and identity. Gao said that he felt more Korean when he was at home because of his regular use of Korean, compared to when he was outside where he has more contact with people in the large Chinese community.

Interview Excerpt 6.4 (b-2) (Gao)

I: 오~ 그런데 그 "조선사람"이라는게 "한국사람"이랑 좀 다른것 같아요? [Okay. Is the "ChoSen Saram" (a Korean person) that you are referring to different from "HanGuo Saram" (a South Korean)]

G: 예, 감각이 달-dismissible. [Yes, that has different feelings]

I: 어떤 면에서요? [To what extent]

G: 우리 조선사람.. 중국에 있던 조선사람들, 한국에 가두 그 사람들이 우리가 본지방사람이 아니고 교포라고 하나냐.. 우리 국적이 아무래도 중국에 있으니까, 그 사람들과 그래도 차이가 난다고 생각한다. [We are ChoSen SaRam, ethnic Koreans living in China [ChaoXianZu]. It is because, even we go to HanGuo, they (people in HanGuo) see us as non-locals and address us as "KyoPo" (overseas Koreans)... I think that's because of our nationality is China, so there are some gaps with them]

I: 오~ Gao 는 한국 가본적 있어요? [Have you been to HanGuo]

G: 가는 못 봤습니다. 하지만 들어는 봤습니다... [No, I have never been to there, but I heard about this...]

I: 오~ 그런데 한국에 대해 잘 아네요? [Okay. But you know about HanGuo]
Here Gao shared his perceptions of why the ethnic Korean’s status in South Korea is “authentic but not legitimate” (Kramsch, 2012, p. 110). He considers that, the ChaoXianZu consciously position themselves as a Korean Chinese because they have Chinese passports. At the same time, he also highlighted that it was also because of their awareness about how they were positioned as “KyoPo” (overseas Koreans) by the ‘legitimate Koreans’, such as through direct or indirect contact with South Koreans.

In summary, like Min (see Section 6.3.1), Qing and Gao, all teenagers in this study highlighted their unique position as ChaoXianZu. They pointed out their awareness of the difference between in and out of home contexts. Similar to the case of Gao, the majority of teenagers reported that they felt a stronger sense of heritage identity (i.e., ‘Korean-ness’) at home compared to when they were in the community at large. On the other hand, the teenagers showed their strong awareness of the gaps between themselves and others, regardless of whether they had or had not had experiences of visiting the land of their ancestors. As Interview Excerpts 6.3 and 6.4 illustrate, they were actively learning and rethinking, such as by making direct contact with ‘legitimate’ Koreans (e.g., Min and Qing) or through experiences of their family and friends (e.g. Gao). They use terms like ‘we’ [우리] to refer to themselves, while referring to the legitimate Koreans as ‘North Korean’ or ‘South Korean’, as well as ‘they’ [그 사람들] or ‘foreigner’ [외국인]. Some teenagers claimed that the key reasons for this were mainly triggered by some ‘legitimate Koreans’ who first treated them differently. As Gao pointed, this includes referring to the ChaoXianZu as Kyopo [교포; an overseas Korean] with Chinese nationality.

These examples are all related to matters concerning the legitimacy of Korean-ness. More specifically, they showed student participants’ awareness of the complex relationships between their languages and identities. In addition, such complexity can also illustrated by the participants’ perceptions of what constitute markers of their ethnicity, for
instance, what language is their ‘mother tongue’ (and do they have one or two) and the need to ‘learn their heritage language’ (Korean).

‘Mother Tongue’, ZuGuo 祖国

Of many activities that I witnessed in my fieldwork in the PKSS, I still clearly remember some of the extracurricular events held in the school, especially a larger scale regional athletic event in Mudanjiang in the summer of 2012 (see Chapter 5, Section 5.2.1). Even after several years have passed, I could not stop my curiosity about what ZuGuo [祖国; homeland or mother-land] means to these youths (when I was watching the opening ceremony at the event which lasted almost one hour). So, I asked the focal teenagers about this in the follow up interviews.

All of them claimed that their homeland is China; however, they had different views about the related concept of ‘mother tongue’. It was similar to the case of the teenagers in my pilot study in Beijing, who often struggled due to the social and parental pressure which left some of them feeling ‘helpless’ because of perceived conflicting loyalties. This was evidenced how some of the teenagers, such as Rim, envision Korean or Chinese as mutually exclusive choices as a mother tongue [that] they need to adhere to and put first in a hierarchy of language choices (Ehlert & Moore, 2014).

Almost all teenagers in this study (19 out of 22) asserted Korean as their only mother tongue. The Korean language represents their identity as an ethnic Korean, even though they are currently living in China, as illustrated in Gao’s statements in the above Interview Excerpt 6.4 (b-1).

The others claimed both Korean and Chinese languages as their mother tongues; the former being their heritage language and the latter (Chinese) was mainly for work [GongZuoYu]. This was particularly noticeable with some teenagers who grew up in urban areas, which will be discussed more in the upcoming sections.

Learning Korean

While struggling with the occasional vagueness attached to navigating multiple identities, the focal teenagers in this study asserted their main identity as being an ethnic
Korean. They self-identified as the ChaoXianZu in China [ChoSenZock중국조선족; see Section 1.6.1], and they sometimes were seen as ethnic Koreans from China [kyopo교포] or Koreans who lived in China [중국에 있던 조선 사람들], as noted in earlier sections. In particular, they considered the knowledge of Korean as a key marker of their heritage identity, an essential in-group symbol. They demonstrated an acute awareness of, and strong attachment to, the importance of learning their family language, Korean (Ehlert & Moore, 2014). Compared to the teenagers in Beijing, the participants in this study demonstrated a much stronger awareness of the importance of their heritage language education, as exemplified in statements of Qing (see Interview Excerpt 6.4 a-1), Gao (see Interview Excerpt 6.4 b-1), and Min (see Interview Excerpt 6.3 b). As introduced in Chapters 4 and 5, for them, learning Korean is a moral duty and obligation. Most of the student participants considered that good knowledge of Korean (and multiple languages) makes them feel ‘special’; in the interview, they repeatedly used both ‘advantage’ [우세우시; YouShi; 우세 U-seh] and ‘privileged’ [우월감YouYueGan in Chinese; 우월감 U-yueh-gahm in Korean]54 to express such feelings. In particular, they emphasized the important connection interlinking their competence in Korean and their heritage identity.55

Interviews also highlighted some gaps in the teenagers’ view of the ongoing tensions between learning Korean as their heritage language (KHL) and Chinese as their national language (CNL). While the majority emphasized the importance of learning Korean, some of them pointed out the practicality of prioritizing the learning of Chinese over their heritage language learning. They were aware that the knowledge of Chinese could empower them in many ways, mainly because China’s national power has been getting stronger in recent years. Such a tendency was particularly noticeable in some student participants who were born and raised in the urban areas and had lesser opportunities to use Korean during their early childhood. This includes some teenagers

54 Translation of “privilege” in Chinese also can be rong-xing[荣幸], depending on the context. For instance, Min’s statement of “I feel privileged” (p. 220) can be translated into WoHenRong-xing[我很荣幸]. Based on the key responses of student participants in this study, I decided to take you-yue-gan as the main translation for the word “privileged”.

55 In my pilot study in Beijing, three out of the six teenagers in Beijing considered that their identity is NOT necessarily attached to high levels of competence in the Korean language.
like Rim, who consider learning Hanyu as being more important than learning other languages. As illustrated in Rim’s statement in Chapter 5 (Section 5.4, Interview Excerpt 5.2), competence in their heritage language does not necessarily strongly connect to their heritage identity, as long as they remember they are Korean. Some teenagers who were also born and raised in the township, such as Min and Ying, demonstrated a strong attachment to learning their heritage language.

What I also found intriguing is that some student participants felt being ‘foreign’ and ‘alienated’ when they were in contact with Koreans from Korea, such as HanGuoRen [Koreans from the south Korea], as shown in Qing’s statement in Interview Excerpt 6.4.

6.3.3. Foreign-ness: Hybridity?

The focal participants in the study all attached strong benefits to plurilingualism and their plurilingual competence (i.e., practices of the ‘multi’), which they linked to bilingual[multilingual] education, and their diverse individual experiences within the complex social, historical, political and cultural time and spaces in which they located their language use (Ehlert & Moore, 2014; also see examples in Byrd Clark, 2010, 2012; Canagarajah & Silberstein, 2012; Feng, 2007; Noro, 2006, 2009; Zhou & Hill, 2009). Overall the teenagers in this study expressed the view that being a multilingual makes them feel proud of themselves. In particular, the process of learning a foreign language or L3 enabled them to rethink and learn about their own language and identities. Some of them pointed out their awareness of how an L1 can play an essential role (i.e., as a cognitive tool) in learning; they shared various examples of how their prior knowledge – e.g., experience of learning L1/L2 – helped them to learn a new language more efficiently and effectively. In addition, they demonstrated a refined understanding of how language can play different roles and display shifting values in the linguistic global and local markets, as discussed earlier (in Chapter 4). In particular, they affirmed the positive market value of learning a foreign language; a girl described foreign languages as money (i.e., $$ or US dollars) (Yeon), while others said that speaking a foreign language makes them feel “smarter” (Min). Most of the participants revealed their keen investment in English or Japanese as desirable international languages to learn and master. For instance, the majority of teenagers studied English from an early age (generally from grade 3), including
the ones who chose to learn Japanese as their primary FL in the PKSS. They considered English as an important language to learn because of its capital value, as an international common language in today’s increasingly globalized era.

As such, the teenagers were actively utilizing the strength of their knowledge of multiple languages and cultures in their daily lives. They utilize their experiences from learning Korean and Chinese in learning their L3 or FL, Japanese or English. For almost all student participants, learning FL/L3 is a strategy for success. Some teenagers also consider it was a strategy to overcome the extra pressure from learning additional languages compared to their friends who are attending the Han majority schools. They consider the experience of learning a FL is strongly connected to the development and (re)negotiation of the ‘multi’ in their identities, which allowed them to rethink and learn about their own language and culture. As shown in different examples in this section, they consider that learning a FL made them feel ‘super’ empowerment [超能], they consider themselves as ‘citizens of the world’. For them, hybridity is an essential aspect of their identities: a strong feeling of ‘in-between-ness’, as they travelled between multiple linguistic and cultural spaces. As will be shown with more examples in the upcoming sections, they were actively producing and exploring different identities.

In summary, student participants’ dynamic experiences of plurilingualism and mobility were strongly connected to not only their knowledge (re)production but also to their identity (re)configuration. In this sense, for them, foreign (/multiple) language learning becomes a process of “experience of identities” “because learning transforms who we are and what we can do” (Wenger, 1998, p. 215). Learning a foreign language (as L3) at school is not just an acquisition of linguistic codes and grammar structures, it is also a process of becoming a ‘citizen of the world’. As shown in the examples in this section, for the focal ethnic Korean youths, plurilingual learning is an experience of actively engaging and reconfiguring the ‘multi’ in their identities; this includes the ‘legitimacy’ of their heritage identity (i.e., Korean-ness), the ‘duality’ of their identity as a ChaoXianZu (i.e., Korean-ness and Chinese-ness), as well as the ‘hybridity’ as they explore alternative or new (imagined) identities (i.e., foreign-ness). As discussed in Section 6.2, for these students, ‘practices of the multi’ and ‘mobility’ are considered strategic facilitators for more effective communication, an essential aspect in their learning. Thus, even after graduating from
high school, the teenagers were constantly searching for new and alternative ways to learn and communicate, as part of their ongoing effort to deal with current issues involving their language and literacy practices. They were actively trying out various communicative and learning strategies, as will be introduced in the upcoming section.

6.4. Translanguaging as Creative Ways to Learn, Share & Transform

[Plurilingual speakers have the capability to] shuttle between languages, treating the diverse languages that form their repertoire as an integrated system. (Canagarajah, 2011, p. 401)

In this study, I witnessed a myriad of examples of such practice of the ‘multi’. The 22 ethnic Korean plurilingual youths affirmed that learning foreign /multiple languages helped their increased agency in more effective learning and communication. In particular, they consider that this process had equipped them not only with the knowledge of Korean, Chinese, Japanese and/or English, but also with a wide range of communicative strategies that gave them a flexibility that they acted through. For instance, as will be discussed in this Section, they shared various examples of their active and ongoing “translanguaging practice” - as “communication transcends individual [a plurilingual speaker’s] language [and] words, and involves diverse semiotic resources and ecological affordances” (Canagarajah, 2013a, p.6). Among the advocates of such a pluralist approach, Cummins (2000, 2006) also highlights the significance of using multiple linguistic and literacy tools as an essential empowerment tool, especially for supporting students with diverse linguistic and cultural backgrounds.

The focal ethnic Korean teenagers considered their ‘translanguaging’ as a creative way to learn, share and transform. For them, the ‘multi’ could serve as ‘a strategic facilitator’ (see Section 6.2.1) and the ‘mobility’ as ‘a learning facilitator’ (see Section 6.2.2). As noted in Chapter 3 (Section 3.3.3), they were also using different new media tools to interact with their peers and family members in the virtual social network services (SNS) site – such as KaKao Talk, QQ, and WeChat [WeiXin] - for strategic learning and effective communication. As will be discussed in this section, student participants’ translanguaging involvement was particularly evident in their creative use of WeChat, a
new avenue for their translanguaging practices on a SNS site to share, learn and transform. Through interaction on this site, they could stay in close connection with friends and family in local and international contexts. In this section, I shall focus on presenting how they considered translanguaging practices as a tool for seeking peer support. This will be achieved through looking at two main areas: (i) how they explored and developed various strategies of practicing the ‘multi’ (see Section 6.4.1), as well as (ii) how they imagined and created spaces for more interactive and joyful learning (see Section 6.4.2).

### 6.4.1. Exhibiting plurilingual competence on WeChat – ‘Intervention’

In this section, I shall first review the key rationale for their WeChat use, and then move on to look at some related examples of how they exhibit their plurilingual competence as a tool for sharing, learning, and transforming.

**To Share, Learn, Transform [分享 共勉 创新]**

As stated previously, the active engagement in communication in virtual SNS is a key feature of young learners today. The same applies to the 22 student participants in this study who were born in 1994 or 1995. They have been actively involved in languages and literacy practices, especially through their strategic use of multiple linguistic and ‘mobile’ resources as a facilitator for strategic learning or effective communication (also see Sections 6.2). For instance, using new media tools especially smartphones, they created a virtual social network space on WeChat - a less formal but essential communication and learning context. More specifically, WeChat became a tool that attracted and motivated these teenagers to Share, Learn, and Transform. Their key participation styles in activities on this SNS site can be categorized in three ways. They use WeChat as

- **A site for casual and free sharing & interaction** [无特殊拘束 自由的活用]: e.g., sending greetings, sharing daily news, and posting virtual multilingual and multimodal diaries (see Sharing 1);
- **A place for engaging in current and interactive learning and communication** [网上学习 教堂]: e.g., sharing and chatting about hobbies and university life (see Sharing 2);
• A space for Imagining, creating and transforming: e.g., exploring and discovering a new and different self, as well as learning about others (see Sharing 3).

In the upcoming sections, I shall introduce and discuss the above three main examples of how the focal plurilingual youths exhibit their plurilingual competence on WeChat.

Sharing 1. As Public & Private Spaces

One main type of the teenagers’ use of WeChat was as a peer networking space for both ‘collective’ and ‘private’ purposes. They were using this SNS site as a site for casual and free use, to share, interact with their peers, as both public and private spaces. On the one hand, they are highly capable of utilizing the space for public use, mainly for communications with peers. Their ‘virtual multilingual diaries’ are good illustrations of how the teenagers share their daily news. On the other hand, these could also be used as ‘private’ spaces to share their feelings, utilizing WeChat’s key features and functions.

Virtual Multilingual Diaries (Ying, Hong, Ahn, Young)

The Multilingual Virtual Diary is a good example of the focal teenagers’ practice of their ‘multi’ (multilingual, multiliteracies, and multimodal resources), an outcome of how they strategically utilize various tools in a less formal learning context. Whether they are in or out of a classroom setting, having the agency of utilizing their multiple (linguistic and new media) resources was important for the teenage learners. For them, the “multi” in their dynamic repertoire has a strong connection to their feeling of empowerment, as Young stated: “to me, language is a tool that enables me to impress, encourage and inspire people. Language has superior power. Writing in multiple languages makes me feel like a professional writer, and feels writing better” (Young, June 8, 2012).

The teenagers were constantly using their dynamic repertoire of multiple linguistic resources on WeChat. Figure 6.2 and Figure 6.3 illustrate a “Multilingual Virtual Diary” that exemplifies the complexity and dynamics involved in their language and literacy practices; it shows a new way of journaling and learning by the plurilingual youth in China today. In their daily lives in and out of the school context, for instance, they informed me that they were trying to utilize multiple linguistic and new media resources in different
contexts. Of their main strategies in communication and learning, translingual practice seems to be the most significant, and characteristic of these new generation plurilingual youths.

As noted earlier, a virtual interactive learning ‘diary’ is a unique but common way that the focal teenagers use this space as a current and informative ‘storage’. Posting such diary entries enables these youths to share current information with family and peers without disturbing them. With such strategies, they also create opportunities to invite old and new friends from various places to start up new conversations. People who are interested in their postings can react and make different types of comments by means of voice messages, texting or simply adding a heart emoji to confirm that the posting has been read and liked. They also use this space to practise their multilingual skills, and by utilizing their (even limited) knowledge of foreign languages.

Figure 6.2 (a) shows Ying’s new year’s greetings to her peers and family for the year of the horse (2014). She created the posting by strategically utilizing multiple linguistic knowledge (in Korean, Chinese an English) and new media resources (e.g., semiotic symbols) in a less formal but essential communicative setting. Her unique use of “complex merging” of [multiple] languages and other semiotic resources to create meaning and learning is typical of how the focal plurilingual youth appropriate languages and literacies to interact, relying on translingual and multimodal practices to enhance their communication. Her posting interwove Chinese, Korean and emoticons. In lines 1-2, she wrote her greetings in Chinese adding seven emoticons: 亲们，新年快乐 [hi everyone, happy New Year] (with 3 emoticons). 祝大家马上有钱[wish you all become rich soon] (with three emoticons), 马上有对象[find your love soon] (with an emoticon). In lines 3-6, she used Korean (translating what she said in Chinese and adding more wishing comments) with 7 more emoticons. Below the image of the horse, Ying used two main types of peer interactions on WeChat: the first type is the ‘heart’ emoji which is a simple symbol but can show a follower’s acknowledgement - as a friend or supporter - like the ones that Ying received from her six peers; the second type is the ‘comment’ing: this allows interactive text comments between the account holder and his/her followers, like the interactions between Ying and myself.
Figure 6.2 (b) illustrates how Hong utilized her virtual multilingual diary to describe her new life at university in Harbin, the capital city of Heilongjiang province in northeast China, and an event during her winter break in hometown. In her five postings, Hong was alternating three languages and multimodal tools (pictures and videos), as well as emoticons to create simple but informative short news and events, fun and meaningful in her daily life. This simple but informative diary shows Hong’s strategic use of multiple linguistic, multimodal and semiotic codes. Using all her languages seems to be important for Hong, a K/C/E trilingual who is majoring in Business English at her new university. In her posting on October 13th, she used Korean to make comments about the weather that day in Harbin: “it’s cold, cold … (with two emoticons)”. As for her posting on November 28th, she used Chinese to talk about her plans for the upcoming weekend: “This weekend (with two emoticons) … just stay in the dorm (with two emoticons)”. In her posting on January 19th, she used three emoticons as her comment (i.e., attention please) and
shared a link to a Chinese song titled “we are the same” by the Cotton Candy. On her posting on January 27th, she also made a short online comment; she used two languages and a symbol (&) plus four photos to report an event on that day in her hometown that she attended with her three friends. [“커피숍&강변”], one English word (“with”), and wrote down her three friends’ names in Korean. Her posting on February 3rd was a simple comment in English: “Life is made up of simple pleasures”; later on, she told me that it was a note about her new realizations about life in general.

As such, the teenagers demonstrated their competence and love of being a “translingual” who has the capability to utilize their knowledge in multiple languages and literacy tools to successfully cross different norms and codes in response to particular contexts and objectives (Canagarajah, 2013a). They were actively using WeChat to share good news, and call for support or commenting on unhappy moments and seeking shared solutions. They demonstrated the significance of how the ‘Multi’(lingual, cultural and literacies/media tools) can support and stimulate a more engaged learning/communication of these new generation learners/students. Such strategic use of several languages and multimodal and multiliteracies resources adds incentive and visual aesthetics, but also indicates the complexity and a shared (multiple) learner’s identity (Ehlert & Moore, 2014).
Figure 6.3 also illustrates two more examples of WeChat postings. Figure 6.3 (a) shows how Ahn utilized WeChat as a site to share greetings and daily news, and favourite things (e.g., popular songs, survey). Figure 6.3 (b) shows how Young is sharing her favourite popular song in English and Korean.

In summary, the Virtual Multilingual Diary that participants posted on WeChat, showed how they actively engaged in daily peer networking with their classmates, friends, family and relatives in local contexts (hometown and other Chinese cities) and international contexts (e.g., Korea, Japan, and Canada). Their plurilingualism allowed them to imagine new and creative virtual multilingual and multimodal interactions, and transformative ways to self-identify as plurilingual youths.
Sharing 2. Life at a University (Qing, Gao, Min)

For the teenagers, WeChat is a place for engaging in current and interactive learning and communication. They share and chat about hobbies and university life. Examples and discussions in the sections below illustrate how the focal plurilingual youth are engaging in active communication with peers on WeChat. For them, such interaction in a less formal but essential communicative space is also a fun and interactive form of learning. In this place, they exchange daily news regarding academic information and seek support on academic matters. In this space, they are encouraged to fully utilize multiple linguistic and new media and multiliteracies resources in whatever way they want, whenever and wherever they want to express themselves, and with whomever they want to speak. Through active sharing, exploring and creating new and imagined worlds, the teenagers engage in “deep learning” (Kieran, 2009).

During this process, they feel a stronger sense of belonging through positive peer-group support, while practising multilingual/foreign languages and exploring and creating new senses of ‘Self’. Thus, even after they graduated from PKSS, they were continuing their journey of expanding the ‘multi’ in their dynamic repertoire between multiple spaces.

“给我抛个英语专业课?” [Drop me an English class?]

Qing & Gao’s communication in Figure 6.4 is an example which illustrates how these two graduates of PKSS were interacting with each other through WeChat about their new lives at university, even though they were physically apart from each other; Qing was studying in South Korea and Gao was in northeast China.
Qing: Taking it next term, if nobody wants to swap. All good classes were gone within 5 minutes

Gao: Oh gosh [in Chinese]. Humm, you are in Korea but your posting is in Chinese. Does it make sense to your peers?

Qing: We are international students - the Chinese.

Gao: What?! They are all Chinese, the Han Chinese? Or people from different ethnic backgrounds?

Qing: Yep, people from different countries, including HanGuoRen. Just people that I invited to my WeChat are all Chinese.

Gao: Okay I see. …How is your university? A fun place?

Qing: It hasn’t started yet.

I found Qing’s communication styles on virtual spaces fascinating. Often Qing utilizes the WeChat site both as public and private spaces for networking with different
groups of people. Qing was using this site for exchanging information with her peers. By sharing information in the public space, she makes it available to her peers who may want to know about their friend Qing’s life in a new university system in Korea. In her private virtual space, she could keep in touch with her friends from other / previous networks. By doing so, she could give friends like Gao a chance to extend her own experience and learn about a a Korean university.

The above images in Figure 6.4 illustrate how Qing maintains regular communication with her peers by utilizing a virtual network space on the WeChat. These were excerpts from her communication with her PKSS peers after she graduated from PKSS and decided to attend a university in Seoul (Korea); the examples presented here were from her postings right before the first term of her year 1 began. As part of her registration process, as shown in the image on the left, at 22:50 on Feb 23rd, she uploaded a posting with a short initiation message to seek some information from her new friends at the Korean university: “您们谁能给我抛个英语专业课？跟我换一个？能的私聊一下~” [Hey guys, is there anyone who wanna pass me a main English class? Do you want to swap it with mine? If you can, let's chat privately]. She attached her preliminary class schedule for the semester. One of her peers from the PKSS, Gao who was studying at a university in Heilongjiang China at that time, also saw Qing’s message and made comments about his impression about Qing’s university life.

Gao asks Qing why she is posting her message in Chinese, considering she is in Korea. Qing answers that her classmates on her WeChat are international students from China, while highlighting the status of her peer group as “俺们是留学生。.. 中国人” [We are international students... Chinese]. While all of Qing’s answers are in Chinese, Gao is communicating in Korean except for one word – WoQv in Chinese.

“잉글리쉬 쓰쓰바” [English, u die]

During the process of actively sharing and reflecting on information related to their academic lives on WeChat, the focal plurilingual youth were actively developing their

---

56 As introduced earlier in Section 5.2, Qing’s formal admission to the Korean university was not until Spring 2014, as she had to take some preparatory courses in the fall 2013.
communicative competence. In particular, the teenagers considered the WeChat site as a tool for active peer interaction, a space where they could express their identities (i) as a plurilingual speaker, who values the use of multiple linguistic and cultural resources, and (ii) as a new generation learner, who often prefers to use new media tools for more efficient, fun and creative communications. For instance, in Figure 6.5(a), Min shares a page from a key reading (with which she “fell in love at first sight”) from a Chinese literature class that she took during her first year of university study in Shanghai. She was interacting with those followers/peers who were interested in knowing more about her reading notes. For instance, I found the poem that Min attached with her posting was interesting, so I asked her to provide its source. She answered in Chinese: “The Author is Simpska; I found this poem from a Poem collection.”

Figure 6.5(b) illustrates how Qing was using the WeChat site as a tool for more effective peer communication. She shared her feelings of anxiety about preparing for an English class: “English, [u] Die!” (En-g-li-shu Qv Si-Ba, “English, [u] Die!”). This example was from her postings during the last 2-3 days before her university English [DaXue YingYu] level 4 test at a most prestigious Chinese university in Shanghai that she had been attending since the fall of 2013. The way she posted this information is fascinating. She utilizes different linguistic and semiotic codes in her chat with her peer. For the main topic of this posting, an excerpt from a screenshot of her communication on WeChat with her friend, Min created an interesting comment, which consists of seven Korean texts and one emoticon. She used the words “English” in Korean (잉글리쉬) but with the original English pronunciation, with a mixture of a Chinese word – but with the Chinese pronunciation (취쓰바) along with an emoticon (crying); she used Chinese [Qv Si-Ba] with its original pronunciation in Korean. As shown in the image, Min mainly used Korean with a few emoticons in their main conversation. Later on, when I had a chance to talk to her about the title of this posting, she told me that she wanted to catch her friends’ attention.
As such, even after they entered university, the focal ethnic Korean teenagers were actively utilizing the ‘multi’ in their dynamic linguistic and cultural repertoires. Through the SNS site like WeChat, they were motivated to learn, reflect, and intervene. While allowing them to share their daily news and intellectual knowledge, this space facilitates their critical, creative, and imaginative thinking.

6.4.2. Exploring, Imagining and Transforming

Overall, most student participants in this study showed a strong preference for utilizing a variety of multilingual, multimodal, and multiliteracies resources. As introduced in earlier sections, through active translingual practices on WeChat, they developed a wide range of sharing and commenting strategies. They were carrying out complex but interesting, seemingly ‘natural’, mixtures and switching of different ‘codes’ in their daily
communication with friends and peers. This includes their use of popular network languages (e.g., emoticons), photos, and simplified expressions to express their sophisticated emotions. Their participation on WeChat can be summarised in three main ways: ‘simplifying’ [求简], ‘merging’ [合并], and ‘exploring & inventing’ [创新].

First of all, they showed a preference for simple and convenient but efficient and effective ways of communication with peers and friends in their daily lives. They prefer to use shortened expressions and punctuation-free sentences. One of their main strategies for simplifying their communication is the use of new media tools (i.e., smartphones) for WeChat. They seldom used e-mails or traditional handwritten letters (see Section 3.3.3 in Chapter 3).

Secondly, the teenagers showed a preference for merging multiple linguistic resources (i.e., meshing different linguistic and semiotic codes) as part of their sharing and learning strategies. As illustrated in various examples in the previous section, they have a preference for more frequent use of their first two languages, Korean and HanYu (or Mandarin Chinese). They consider L1 Korean as an essential “cognitive tool” and “identity negotiation tool” (Cummins, 2006, 2014), in carrying out formal and informal literacy practices. Since their transition to university – a Mandarin Chinese environment where the main body of students graduated from Han majority schools, the teenagers seem to have an increased preference for using Chinese. In addition, they prefer mixing up different languages and semiotic codes in their daily communication. They use their L3 or L4 (Japanese and/or English) from time to time, even though this depended on individual preference.

Finally, the teenagers were constantly exploring and inventing different communication strategies to imagine and create new ‘selves’ for transformation.

**Sharing 3. Imagining, Authorizing ‘Self’s (Yuan, Rim)**

The teenagers were actively exercising their agency in active practices of the ‘multi’ and using new media tools. For them, WeChat is a space for exploring new possibilities, intervention and transformation. This includes learning about themselves and others. They enjoyed exploring and creating new and imagined selves, and passing on
their special messages. For instance, they seemed to enjoy the freedom (or agency) to choose or change their profiles on WeChat. This includes their Tou Xiang [head image] and ID names, as well as their private messages (under “What’s up”). Almost half of student participants in this study were changing their WeChat ID almost 3-5 times within a three-month period, while a few of them changed over 10 times. Occasionally, they changed their identities back and forth. Ying, for example, changed back to her old WeChat ID approximately three times in the fall 2013 term (4.5 months). Ying told me that, after trying out different IDs, she realized that she liked the original one best.

“A>> Let it go”

Overall, the teenagers constantly imagined and created new spaces for more fun and creative learning and communications. For them, WeChat is the virtual space which connects them to an imagined locale (i.e., the US, France, Korea), as they create new and imagined identities such as a super-man/woman or an actor/actress. Figure 6.6 (a) illustrates how Yuan, a non-local student who decided to continue studying Japanese as her major at a university in QingDao (a developed east-coastal city), is exploring her new identity. She imagined herself as a person living in Los Angeles, with a WeChat ID name “Mr. Wow” (a foreign name). Similarly Figure 6.6 (b) illustrates how Young is exploring and imagining a new self-image, as a person living in Paris, France.

Some participants also preferred to utilize WeChat as a site for passing special messages out as part of their strategies to explore and express their inner-Selves. Often, they were using the profile section (i.e., “What’s up”) on WeChat to post their key messages at a particular point in their lives. Figure 6.6 (c) shows an example from Ahn, a focal student who is currently studying elementary education at a normal university in Harbin (the capital city of Heilongjiang province): “A>> Let it go” [of things make her sad or weak…]. It was the main part of her message during the first two months in the year 2014. At that time, Ahn often posted similar messages in her diaries that she was sharing in the peer network (under “Moments”). It seems this message was connected to certain dilemmas or struggles that she was going through at that time, which bothered her a lot and she wanted to overcome. As an EFL learner, Ahn often included some English expressions and sentences in her postings. For another example, Figure 6.6 (d) illustrates how Rim, one of the three male student participants who is studying law at a university in
Tianjin (a major city of China less than one hour away from Beijing), strived to pass on his special message through “What’s up” section on his profile page: “重要的不是当不当爷而是当不当孙子” [What really matters is not about whether one becomes a boss or not, but it is about how one does not become a coward].

**Figure 6.5. Exploring & Imagining**

*Notes:* (A) “Mr. Wow” (Yuan); (B) “France Paris” (Young); (C) “A>> Let it go” (Ahn); (D) “What really matters” (Rim) (Jan 30, 2014)
In short, as demonstrated in different examples (e.g., interview excerpts, class notes, screenshots of communication records on SNS sites) throughout this dissertation, the teenage plurilingual youths in this study were actively and strategically using their plurilingualism as an empowering tool for learning and effective communication. As the new generation of plurilingual youth, they consider that their practices of the ‘multi’ and their virtual ‘mobility’ played important roles in maintaining their life and learning styles. Their experiences of learning multiple languages helped them develop a keen awareness of the significance of their translanguaging practices, and of the legitimacy of their ‘mobility’.

6.5. Summary

The key findings in this chapter suggest that the student participants’ experiences of learning Japanese /English as a foreign language (/L3) at school had a strong impact on their learning and life trajectories. The main influence is two-fold: (i) active engagement in multiple identities, and (ii) continuous development of plurilingual competence. As for the former, most of the teenagers considered that FL learning was an essential journey which motivated and enabled them to actively engage in multiple identities. As discussed in Section 6.3, it was the process that not only helped them to have the opportunity of rethinking and re-configurating their existing identities (e.g., relating to their heritage/national languages), but also enabled them to have a space for exploring and imagining new identities (e.g., relating to their new language and culture). As for the latter, experiences of learning foreign languages along with other languages at school helped them to not only construct their knowledge in multiple languages, but also helped their in-depth understanding of the key rationales for maintaining and improving their plurilingual competence (see Section 4.4 in Chapter 4 and Section 6.2). As an outcome, even after they graduated from PKSS, they continued with the active development of their plurilingual competence as they constantly travelled between multiple spaces (see Section 6.4).

Even though there may be some individual differences, most student participants reported that the journey of learning multiple and foreign languages increased their agency in accessing upward social mobility. On the one hand, they consider that this journey allowed them to develop heightened critical awareness about self and otherness, as they
were accumulating experiences of learning about the target language and culture of people in different societies. All teenage students in this study reported that, learning Japanese or English helped them to gain more nuanced understandings about people in Japan or in Western countries. While enhancing their knowledge and competence in different languages, they also confirmed that increased mobility triggered their motivation to re-think and re-configure their existing identities, such as through domestic and international travelling (see Section 5.3 in Chapter 5). Their experiences of travelling to South Korea was an essential contributing factor to raise their awareness pertaining to the politics concerning their ‘Korean-ness’ (i.e., the legitimacy, duality in their identities), especially from their experiences of direct or in-direct contact with the people from the Korean peninsular that they coined as ‘legitimate Koreans’ (see examples in Section 6.3).

At the same time, the teenagers showed their struggles, as they were learning more about the politics pertaining to ‘Korean-ness’, especially in relation to their languages and the duality in their identities. Qing, for instance, believed her visits with parents who were living in Seoul Korea made her begin to notice the differences between ethnic Koreans in China and Hanguo-ren [people in South Korea], giving examples of interacting with Hanguo-ren on public transit and in supermarkets. In an interview, Qing shared her dilemma about the legitimacy of her Korean accent, as her parents advised her to learn the South Korean dialect [HanGuoYu]. At that time, Qing was struggling with whether she should take her parents’ advice or not – to invest her time and effort in learning South Korean (so that she could act like a HanGuoRen) (see Interview Excerpt 6.4, a-2). Other participants explained how they were rethinking the legitimacy of their Korean-ness through in-direct contact with South Koreans, such as their parents and family members. Gao, for instance, shared that his mother who was working in South Korea to support his education greatly influenced his sense of identity; he shared his struggles because he learned how ethnic Korean workers in South Korea were treated differently, and commented that “for them, we are ‘KyoPo’ [overseas Koreans]; we are different, as we have Chinese nationality and we are living in China” (see Interview Excerpt 6.4, b-2).

This study also highlights the importance of peer support for student participants. Key findings in this chapter suggest that, the peer network helped these new generation ethnic Korean plurilingual youths to compensate for what they perceived as their parents’
social limitations, and to advance their academic and emotional fulfilment. Teenagers in different groups (e.g., transfer vs. non-transfer students, local vs. non-local students; see Table 5.2 in Chapter 5), however, indicated different friendship orientations (i.e., peer-networking patterns) and diverse academic aspirations (which connected to the gaps in their educational paths). This includes their understandings about power relations between their own languages and identities, as shown in their attitudes toward the complexity involved in learning Korean language and ‘Korean-ness’ (see Section 6.3.2) and the dynamics involved in their foreign language learning and ‘hybridity’ (see Section 6.3.3).

In this sense, this study raised awareness of the importance of peer group support, especially for the effectiveness of using alternative tools for empowered learning. All student participants affirmed that their peer-network is essential for their sense of belonging, even after they entered university and spread out to different cities and countries. In particular, they consider that the peer support network through virtual spaces was essential for them to maintain a sense of self. They were actively utilizing this peer network space mainly in two ways: (i) as a tool for learning – especially through active use of multiple linguistic and literacy resources (see Sections 6.2.1 and 6.4.1, also see Chapter 4); and (ii) as a tool to (re)construct, (re) negotiate, authorize, and imagine new identities (see Sections 6.3 and 6.4.2).

In short, this chapter (research) identified some key strategies that new generation learners developed for effective learning and efficient communication. In particular this includes their strategies of activating and capitalizing on the ‘multi’, which has been understudied previously. A relevant key discussion point here, however, is how their ‘practices of the multi’ can be considered as an essential pedagogical tool for supporting increased diversity in contemporary classrooms. To understand the distinct features of their communicative competence, and how to capitalize on the assets the plurilingual youth bring to the classroom seem to be an important challenge for educators to tackle.
6.6. Conclusion

In the sections above, I explored how the focal teenagers appreciate plurilingualism and connect this to their interwoven multiple identities, as they “weave in and out of ascribed, ideal and normative identifications, loyalties and affiliations” (Ehlert & Moore, 2014, p.182). I also explored how the teenagers relate the ‘multi’ and an increased level of ‘mobility’ to their agency for better learning and communication. Key findings of this chapter suggest that, while navigating multiple “-ness”, the focal teenage participants were actively engaged in different language and literacy practices. In particular, the experience of learning foreign languages affected their maximized development of communicative competence, not only for the ‘win’ but also for ‘fun’. Even after they entered university, the teenagers were making ongoing efforts to expand their ‘multi’: actively appropriating plurilingualism and utilizing multiple literacy tools for more effective and joyful communication. They were actively appropriating the ‘multi’ as a strategic tool to learn, share and transform, such as through their translanguaging practices. In addition, the process of learning a foreign language (as L3) made them think often about the differences between cultures (their own and others’). Experiences of learning a foreign language helped them to have a better sense about the ‘self’ and ‘otherness’, including a heightened level of metalinguistic and critical awareness about (learning) different languages. Finally, key findings in this chapter also highlighted the importance of peer group support especially through strategic utilization of (new) generation-specific communication tools for effective and empowered learning.
Chapter 7.

Conclusion: Learning as Experience of ‘Multiple’ Identities

Employing a ‘wholistic’ approach, this study examined the dynamics and complexity involved in tri-/multilingual education at a school. Using plurilingualism as a lens to highlight the unique features of pluri-/multilingual learners’ dynamic repertoires and agency, this study allowed me to conduct a comprehensive investigation of a small but dynamic group of new generation learners. I carried out an in-depth documentation of focal ethnic Korean plurilingual youths’ experiences and their perspectives on plurilingualism and foreign language (as L3) learning within the context of ‘social transformation’ (Mackerras, 2003). This aimed to better understand how these new generation learners construct their aspirations and strategies for academic success through their schooling experience under the publicly funded ethnic Korean minority nationality school (K-MNS) education system in northeast China. The study involved an in-depth investigation of how these focal learners engaged in multiple languages, literacies and identities at school while navigating various transitions, such as from high school to university. The study showed how the sociolinguistic, historical and political context in and around the school shaped dynamic learning trajectories and influenced their development of complex representations and practices of plurilingualism.

One of the most noteworthy contributions of this study is perhaps the perceptions of ‘learning as the experience of identities’[^57], which highlights tensions between plurilingual speakers’ development of their multilingual repertoires and agency in the use of different resources in formal educational settings. In this sense, with an emphasis on the essential role of the ‘multi’ (-lingual, cultural, and literacy resources) in the plurilingual youths’ learning experiences, the study explored learning a foreign language at school as a process of experiencing multiple identities. This study showed the very sophisticated competence and complex plurilingual practices that participants engage in their daily practices in and out the classroom. It calls for the importance of not only acknowledging...

[^57]: See Section 2.1.1 in Chapter 2.
plurilingualism (or promoting multiculturalism) but also activating the ‘multi’ for empowering all students. I argue for a need for action to actively explore and develop different strategies for capitalizing on the ‘multi’.

In this concluding chapter, I first present the summary of my responses to the one general research question and three specific research questions that organized my study. I then discuss key implications of my findings for pedagogy, followed by a proposal of some orientations for future studies.

7.1. Responses to Key Research Questions

How do L3 (JFL/EFL) learners of ethnic Korean heritage in a multilingual education program in a minority nationality high school in Northeast China navigate the complexity and mobility of their multiple languages and identities?

As mentioned in Chapter 1, a main contributing factor to the complexity involved in the lives of these teenage plurilingual students is the duality in their group characteristics. They represent a (linguistically and culturally) homogeneous group due to their schooling under the K-MNS educational system. Concurrently, they also represent a (socially and economically) heterogeneous group in terms of their construction of self, attitudes toward plurilingualism, as well as their action strategies for better academic achievement and their career advancement. Despite such complexity, key findings in this research suggest that student participants in this study were actively learning, navigating, and transforming. As will be reported in this section, this can be seen from (a) how these students’ dynamic experiences and complex representations of plurilingualism were involved in their learning trajectories and development of ‘multicompetence’, as they consider plurilingualism as an asset for learning and navigating transitions (see Section 7.1.1); (b) how they perceived their languages and learning foreign/multiple languages, especially along with an increased level of ‘mobility’ between multiple (linguistic, cultural and virtual) spaces (see Section 7.1.2); and (c) how they considered plurilingualism as a life-long asset, while engaging in ‘practices of the multi’ as an empowerment tool for better learning and effective communication (see Section 7.1.3).
7.1.1. ‘Multicompetence’: Plurilingualism as an Asset for Learning and Navigating Transitions

What are the teenage ethnic Korean students’ experiences and representations of plurilingualism?

Key findings of this chapter suggest that student participants in this study have dynamic experiences of plurilingualism; and these experiences became an essential contributing factor in the construction of their complex representation pertaining to plurilingualism and tri-/plurilingual learning. As mentioned in Chapter 4, all the teenagers consider plurilingualism as an asset for learning and a key tool in their navigation of various transitions. Most of them reported that multicompetence - which they were developing through learning in the Korean-Chinese and Japanese/English trilingual education program at PKSS – helped their transition to university. In particular, they highlighted that learning a foreign language (i.e., Japanese or English as L3) at PKSS under the K-MNS educational system is (i) an important process of becoming a plurilingual (learner), and (ii) a key strategy for their preparation for better survival in today’s competitive social world.

Overall, the teenagers consider that their schooling experiences under the K-MNS educational system allowed them to learn and explore various meaningful strategies for how to deal with complex matters related to the ‘multi’ in their dynamic repertoires. Despite the challenges and struggles in this process, the teenagers consider that these experiences enabled them not only to equip themselves with a maximized communicative competence in multiple languages, but also to develop important networks that were important to their sense of belonging and understanding. In addition, all 22 teenagers affirmed their awareness of the politics concerning the validity of their ‘multicompetence’; the mainstream academic discourses have for a long time problematized the deep-seated habit of assuming monolingualism as the norm for individuals and societies. Nonetheless, they acknowledged plurilingualism as an essential asset. They consider the process of learning multiple (foreign) languages at school as an essential part of their dynamic journey of becoming a plurilingual, and as relating strongly to their development of complex representations of plurilingualism. For them, the advantages of multicompetence are twofold: (i) they emphasized the practice of the ‘multi’ for better learning (e.g.,
academic subjects), and (ii) to facilitate their transition to the larger world (e.g., from high school to university).

The learner-centered dynamic ‘wholistic’ approach implemented by the K-MNS school, and the ‘plurilingual pedagogy’ employed, were meaningful to the focal plurilingual youths. As addressed in Section 4.5, key findings in this study revealed how plurilingualism and plurilingual pedagogy were considered to be an important resource and an initiative for fostering increased learner diversity in PKSS. Concurrently, in common with some key implications from Marshall & Moore’s (2016) study of an advanced writing AL98 class at a Western Canadian University, I consider “it is by embracing the representation of all languages in a classroom, even those that perhaps only one student may understand, that plurilingual pedagogy challenges monolingual discourses, ideologies, and representations, thus embracing diversity” (p. 11; also see Castellotti & Moore, 2010; Cummins, 2014; Lin, 2007). In this sense, the plurilingual pedagogy is beneficial to all students, regardless of their (minority or majority) linguistic and cultural backgrounds.

7.1.2. Increased ‘Mobility’ betwixt Multiple Spaces

How do their experiences and representations of plurilingualism affect the focal teenage ethnic Korean students’ (language) learning?

As mentioned in Chapter 5, student participants in this study confirmed that the complexity involved in their dynamic experiences and representations of plurilingualism has a strong influence on their (foreign language) learning in general. This is in line with a main outcome of the existing literature review that highlights the complex politics pertaining to differences in society; more specifically, the politics concerning the imbalanced power between different languages in the social world make a strong contribution to the construction of ‘learner diversity’ (Cummins, 2000, 2014) especially in contemporary classrooms. Even though there were some differences in individual expressions, all teenage students showed awareness of the power imbalance between different languages.
Key findings in this chapter suggest that the main effect of such complexity involved in their foreign language learning can be revealed in two areas: first, from the teenage students’ perceptions toward each language in their dynamic multilingual profile; second, from the teenagers’ perceptions on the legitimacy of their ‘mobility’, as they were experiencing various forms of ‘mobility’ such as both physical (intraterritorial and international) and virtual mobility.

On the one hand, the development of student participants’ dynamic multilingual profiles is intrinsically connected to the complex underlying assumptions related to learning a foreign language (i.e., as L3). More specifically, it is about how they conceptualize and talk about the ‘multi’ in their language and literacy practices, social networks, and language learning. The process of learning a foreign language, for instance, involves complex power relations, for example, which language is considered to have more capital and investment value. Most teenagers reported their awareness of how such politics concerning power attached to different languages impacts their language learning in reality. One contributing factor that they informed me about was the influence from their parents, especially the ones who made the commitment to send their children to learn English (a powerful language from their view) from an early age. As mentioned in Section 5.1.1, as an outcome, almost 80% of student participants (17 out of 22) reported their experiences of learning English for 6 months to 4 years during their elementary school years. They include students who chose to learn Japanese when they entered PKSS; however, none of the teenagers who chose to learn EFL for GaoKao reported any experience of learning Japanese.

On the other hand, the study affirmed the importance of validating the ‘mobility’ of the focal plurilingual youths, in connection to their agency in the use (maximized utilization) of their ‘mobile’ resources. As illustrated in Section 5.3, these students were experiencing various levels and forms of ‘mobility’, both physical (intraterritorial and international) and virtual mobilities. They highlighted that their increased level of ‘mobility’ between multiple linguistic and cultural spaces was closely connected to their active exercise of their agency for effective learning and efficient communication. Attributed to such ‘mobility’, as will be discussed more in Chapter 6, the teenagers were actively engaged in multiple identity
practices (see Section 6.3) – such as translingual practices as a strategy for the development of plurilingual competence (See Section 6.4).

Moreover, the experiences and perceptions of student participants also indicate that it may not be appropriate to establish hard boundaries between different languages when working with plurilingual learners.

7.1.3. Foreign Language Learning: The ‘Multi’ for Empowerment

How does the learning of foreign (and multiple) languages affect the focal ethnic Korean plurilingual youths’ life trajectories?

As mentioned in Chapter 2, research in second/foreign language acquisition and bi-/multilingualism has generally looked at the acquiring of one single language separately or different aspects of the competence acquired in different languages. Participants who advocated for the pluralistic approach, however, questioned this view. In the assessment of language proficiency, for instance, they highlighted that multi-/plurilinguals develop unique characteristics in their communicative competence (i.e., ‘plurilingual competence’) but not simply the sum of two or three separate monolingual competencies in separate languages. With various proposals such as the ‘wholistic’ educational approach, they put emphasis on the plurilingual speakers’ ‘total linguistic repertoire’ (Cook, 1995, 2001; Grosjean, 1992, 2008; Hordiners & Jessner, 2003; Lee & Marshall, 2011). Key findings of this study support this pluralistic view, and a learner-centred wholistic educational approach. Further to the key findings reported earlier in Section 7.1.1, student participants consider that foreign language learning helped them to upgrade their multicompetence. In particular, the focal plurilingual youths advocated practices of the multi (i.e., use of multilingual and multiliteracies resources) as an important source of empowerment, and highly valued the development of the ‘multi’ in their dynamic repertoire. In addition to the discussion in Section 7.1.2, these new generation learners considered that the strategic use of multiple linguistic, cultural resources to enable and increase their ‘mobility’ (i.e., moving between different linguistic/cultural or physical/ virtual spaces) (See Chapter 6). In this sense, as an important part of citizenship education, foreign language learning was an essential part in their learning trajectories.
More specifically, learning several foreign/multiple languages strongly affected the focal ethnic Korean teenagers’ life trajectories: (i) it contributed to enhancing their understanding of languages as assets for a brighter future; (ii) it helped the development of a more nuanced (plurilingual) competence; and (iii) it motivated active engagement in multiple identity practices. First, learning a foreign language or L3 enhanced their understanding of the key role of foreign languages for their future as young professionals. For them, knowledge of foreign languages is an important asset which may connect them to a bright future with a myriad of new possibilities. Thus, they were actively appropriating the plurilingualism and using multiliteracy resources as a strategic tool to learn, share and transform. Secondly, foreign language learning helped the teenagers to develop a more nuanced (plurilingual) competence. Student participants shared their appreciation about ‘multicompetence’, and actively explored the possibility of maximized development of communicative competence in different languages. They highlighted that teachers’ support and encouragement at school were important for their development of multicompetence, for instance, by allowing them to have the opportunities to use multiple linguistic and cultural tools for empowered learning (e.g., in the case of JFL class at K-MNS; see Section 4.3.1. in Chapter 4, and Section 5.2.2 in Chapter 5). As illustrated in Chapter 6, they were actively appropriating plurilingualism and utilizing multiple literacy tools for more effective communication, by considering the multi and mobility as strategic learning ‘facilitators’ (see Sections 6.2.1 and 6.2.2). Finally, foreign language learning also helped the focal plurilingual youths to develop a heightened level of metalinguistic awareness about different languages. The process of FL learning helped them to gain a better sense about themselves and ‘otherness’, to understand the power imbalance between their own and other’s languages, which also turned out to be a key aspect in developing their representations of plurilingualism. Therefore, these students were making an ongoing effort to maximize their agency by creating new spaces for the inclusion of diverse semiotic resources, complex linguistic practices and new identity performances (See Section 6.3 and 6.4.2 in Chapter 6).

In short, for the focal teenage plurilingual students, learning foreign/multiple language(s) was not only for a ‘win’ but also for ‘fun’. They were making an ongoing effort in exploring and creating new spaces as part of their active engagement in multiple identities. Such spaces motivated them to (re)configure different, new, or imagined
identities while (re)constructing and (re)negotiating positionalities (in a learning context / through different activities).

7.2. Key Implications, Suggestions and Future Studies

Each mind is different and has a different perspective on the world. In the process of learning, the student has to fit whatever is to be learned into his or her unique complex of meaning-structures that are already in place. This requires restructuring, composing, and reassessing of meanings. (Egan, Madej & Takaya, 2007, p.13)

Hence this dissertation research was set to explore how to better support increasing levels of learner diversity in contemporary classrooms, with a focus on how student participants navigate the complexity and the mobility involved in their multiple languages and identities in relation to their learning. Key findings of this study suggest that, due to various dynamic contributing factors, the construction of these new generation plurilingual students’ knowledge and performance is complex. From this perspective, their knowledge and performance should be viewed as a contextual and complex co-construction of different sociolinguistic, political (/economic) and cognitive factors which are often interwoven with each other in a situation. These factors include but are not limited to student participants’ social identities (who they are), their peers’ social identities, the classroom and educational contexts, as well as the curriculum and pedagogical strategies that the teachers and educational institutions employ.

More specifically, based on the above mentioned key findings, I argue for a need for action to actively explore and develop different strategies for capitalizing on the ‘multi’. I propose a ‘pedagogy of the multi’ as an alternative approach to support students’ active development of a ‘multi-competence’, as will be discussed more in this section. As an extension of the ‘plurilingual pedagogy in action’ (Marshall & Moore, 2016; see Chapter 2), the pedagogy of multi highlights active and strategic practice of the ‘multi’ as an essential learning tool (/resource) to support increased learner diversity and empower all students in today’s classroom, within “the continua of multilingual education” (Cenoz, 2009), and “the continua of biliteracy [/multiliteracies]” (Hornberger, 2000, 2017).
In this section, I shall discuss these understandings with a focus on the key implications for research, pedagogy and directions for future studies.

### 7.2.1. Implications for Research

While (social) representations have been examined in various disciplines such as psychology, sociology, and so on, and have been recently applied to research in education and applied linguistics, there have been insufficient studies that investigate experiences of ethnic minority students in multilingual contexts. In particular, as mentioned in Chapter 1, teenagers’ experiences and representations (on plurilingualism and multiple identities) are still rarely examined in research. Many studies focused on Japanese or English as foreign language (especially as L3) education are primarily concerned with teaching learners in higher education, teaching methods, and curriculum (e.g., Liang, 2013; Xiu, 2011; Zhang, 2007, 2013; Zheng & Li, 2007). In this study, I attempted to focus on an understudied group in a complex situation during times of transition, 22 teenage learners of Japanese/English as their foreign language or L3 from an ethnic Korean Minority nationality school in Northeast China. I was interested in examining (i) how these teenage ethnic Korean plurilingual students constructed their multilingual resources in various sociospatial contexts; (ii) what value and meaning they assigned to different languages in their repertoires and to learning new languages; and, (iii) how they engaged in complex multiple negotiations of identities and solidarities.

One thread running through Chapters 4 to 7 has been how these new generation plurilingual students construct their representations about languages and plurilingualism in their ongoing life trajectories. Overall, the study supports previous research that demonstrates the richness of valuing plurilingualism as an asset (Schechter & Cummins, 2003), and the importance for students to tap into their experiences and multilingual resources in and outside the classroom as triggers for learning. The study showed that these plurilingual learners actively engaged in imaginative uses of their linguistic resources, while constantly exploring and developing various strategies of managing the ‘multi’ (multilingual, multicultural and multiliteracies resources) in their dynamic repertoires. This echoes the plurilingual/multilingual speaker’s ability to “throw in light or shade certain zones of his/her competence, (dis)activate, (re)invent and negotiate his/her
multiple resources in context” depending on their interpretation and categorization of the communicative situations (Moore & Gajo, 2009, p.142; also see Canagarajah, 2011, 2013).

Drawing on the literature reviewed in this thesis and my research findings, I have summarized my discussions on plurilingualism as an asset, notably ‘practices of the multi’ as a strategic tool for empowerment, as follows:

1) (active practice of) *multi as strategic learning facilitator*, to explore and create new spaces, as part of active engagement in multiple identities;
2) *engaging in multiple identities*, to (re)configure different, new, or imagined identities while (re)constructing and (re)negotiating positionalities;
3) *translanguaging for empowerment*, as creative ways to learn, share and transform.

This research also points to the continued need to complexify the “model minority discourse” (Gao, 2009) that tends to essentialize *ChaoXianZu* as a homogeneous group with shared educational attitudes and success, and to adopt a more complex view and critical approach to the conceptualisations of what makes the *pluri-* in learners’ multiple language and identities (Ehlert & Moore, 2014).

**Language, Ethnicity and Power**

One key implication from this research is how the complexity involved in issues of language, ethnicity and power played out in practice. Chapter 5 (Section 5.2) and Chapter 6 (Section 6.3) revealed the participants’ complex representations about languages and plurilingualism.

Whilst plurilingualism is a norm in their everyday life, most participants emphasized the positive market value of multilingual learning, and highlighted plurilingualism as a phenomenon that makes them feel ‘special’. In addition, the study revealed the complexities of combining minority/additional languages and foreign languages in formal educational contexts (Cenoz, 2009). The study highlighted a specific manifestation of how the power dynamics and the political economy of languages play out in reality, as revealed in multi-layered discourses concerning (i) the complex politics involved in matters
concerning their ‘multicompetence’ (e.g., issues related to the paradox pertaining to ‘multicompetence’ of plurilingual students, such as about the nature of plurilingual competence) (see Section 2.2 in Chapter 2); (ii) the ongoing debates on the role of students’ heritage language (e.g., the complex relations between the plurilingual students’ heritage language (/L1) and learning, as well as their identity negotiation) (see Section 6.3 in Chapter 6); and, (iii) the ongoing tensions between students’ agency (in practices of the ‘multi’) and institutional structure, as learners’ practices of the ‘multi’ (/plurilingualism) are often dependant on institutional constraint (such as the classroom dynamics, language policy, and teachers’ language ability) (See Section 4.3.1 in Chapter 4).

The study showcased that the teenage student participants’ social representations around languages and plurilingualism are highly complex. They evolved over time and space and were constructed and reconstructed in and through conversations with me, their peers, families, and teachers. As Moore & Py (2011, p.268) pointed out, “social representations exist in and through discourse. It is in and through discourse that they are built, modified and transmitted. It is also in and through discourse that social representations are known and circulated in a social group” (Moore & Py, 2011, p. 268).

**Methodology: WeChat, Knowledge Co-construction**

As mentioned previously, I adopted a qualitative, ethnographic visual approach for my study. In the research process, my student participants and I became engaged in the development of personal (and professional) identity especially through co-construction of data. Our interactions across this inquiry accorded an opportunity for my participants to learn about their cultural selves (e.g., as plurilingual learners of ethnic Korean heritage) and, in the meantime, for me to (re)learn about my own (as a novice plurilingual researcher). When I asked the student participants how their ‘practices of the multi’ affected their life trajectories, I was also considering how plurilingualism affected my own life trajectory.

As the researcher and the researched, we learned from each other. As mentioned in Chapter 3 (Sections 3.1.2 and 3.3.3), for instance, my participants introduced me to WeChat and invited me to their WeChat peer network. They shared their preference of their engagement in the use of WeChat, instead of regular mobile websites and apps (such
as QQ, or RenRen). Their reasons for this was similar to many WeChat users in China, those who highlight that the success of the Chinese WeChat is mainly because this social networking app offers “tightly integrated services with a wide-ranging set of convenient features, accessed through a simple and unified design” including the “conversational user interface” 58 (Cheng & Nielsen, 2016). Even today, I am so grateful for their recommendation to use WeChat. The timing was perfect.59 Using a new research tool – a “digitally-mediated communication” tool like WeChat in the process of data collection highly contributed to knowledge creation and construction, through ongoing interactions with participants. The participants inspired and gave me the opportunity to explore and use WeChat as a new research tool. At the same time, I also noticed some limitations in the use of WeChat as a research tool:

- **data-validity**: compared to in an in-person interview, participants showed a tendency to respond to my questions with very short sentences, which often made me wonder about the reliability of their answers;
- **limited accessibility**: Personal ‘moments’ on WeChat, a ‘virtual diary’ where they keep and post some events and news in their daily lives, is only open to friends of a participant;
- **time-consuming**: to be invited as a ‘friend’, a research should get to know the participants first, and then, even after getting invited to their network, the researcher has to pay a close attention to the sites and maintain regular interactions with each of the participants (e.g., reading their ‘moments’ and replying to their inquiries);
- **ethical issues**: considering communications on WeChat is on an online space, this involves various ethical issues.

Of all these matters, I consider that ethical issues are the most important; “[t]he nature of our ethnographic research raises ethical issues which highlight the impossibility of divorcing ethics from project decision-making and the difficulty in prescribing one set of ethics to guide all researcher-participant relationships”, and in particular for “the role that

58 These researchers found that there were 700 million WeChat users in China as of April 2016.
59 As mentioned in Chapter 3 (see Sections 3.1.2 and 3.3.3), I was desperate in searching for an alternative way to improve communication with the participants. At that time, I was struggling with the inefficiency of using traditional journaling as a data collection method (with my original plan/proposal) after almost eight months of not very successful tryout of various other traditional and new literacies tools (e.g., written journals, QQ, emails).
digitally-mediated communications play in the co-construction of social distance and closeness in research relationships” (Tagg, et al., 2016, p.2).

These various considerations highlight the importance to understand the “discursive co-construction of knowledge, identity, and difference” in a qualitative study (Duff, 2012)\(^6\). In particular, I side with Bell’s plead for “the mutuality of exchange and the complexity of the researcher-participant relationship”, and the call for the need for the ethnographic researchers “to carefully negotiate this relationship and to acknowledge and actively respond to participants’ motivations [is reinforced]” (Bell, 2011, p.523). This echoes Kumaravadivelu’s (2007) note that the key quality of an ethnographic researcher is “to make various critical and reflective choices as to how to attain the appropriate information data can best represent the social dynamics one has been investigating” (c.f., Marshall, Clemente & Higgins, 2014, p.10). As Marshall, et al. pointed out:

“[s]uch a position accepts and recognizes that ethnographic means of representations are partial and contingent; that is, such representations are constrained by the time and space realities of both the ethnographer and the ethnography, and such representations are contingent upon the actual social and material realities of all those involved in producing the narrative [e.g., the researcher and the researched]… Methodologically, this involves opening the interviewing practices [including the follow ups on WeChat] to allow for more reflective dialogues between all the participants in the endeavor, sharing and collaborating on how the range and style of ethnography can be developed, and collectively searching for forms of multimodal expressions of all the actors’ activities. (2014, p. 11)

7.2.2. Implications for Pedagogy

The discussion in the previous sections for this chapter showed the strong connection between the complex politics in the educational discourses around plurilingual practices and the (re)production of stereotypical biases (e.g., toward communicative competence of plurilingual speakers). The key step for minimizing tensions in the classroom and creating a more supportive learning environment is to reform our educational practices. Now I shall discuss these understandings relating to teaching

---

60 In her ethnography of communication, Duff discussed about this point through a study of discourse in mainstream high school classes (in North America) with a large proportion of ESL students.
practices in the following main aspects: general design, task content and assessment, instruction, and professional development.

First, a class or program with a customized design of activities and assignments which considers the subject matter, learner diversity, as well as the development of peer group relationships with a goal of minimizing the tensions among learners, should benefit all students’ academic achievement. The findings have shown that the strategic use of multiple resources can be an important empowerment tool for supporting effectiveness and efficiency in learning; this includes strategic implementations of (i) instructional media (multi to mono) and (ii) using ‘mobile’ resources (plurilingual practices on virtual network spaces). Therefore, it might work better to implement a combined approach of designing activities and assignments with a strategic use of ‘mono’-lingual and ‘multi’-lingual resources in a course. For instance, active practices of the ‘multi’ – increase students’ agency in using multiple linguistic and literacy tools – in some informal activities at the beginning of the term (such as in the brainstorming or preparation stage) should help learners to establish better peer-to-peer relations and have a better understanding of the class. When students have a better grasp of each other’s skills and learning styles, this should have a positive impact on the effectiveness and productivity in their long-term learning outcome.

The design of class activities and assignments should make students aware of the importance of keeping a good balance in the commitment required for the tasks between self-regulated and collaborative work. A key point here is to provide a space for students to experience not only learning from teachers about the new subject matter but also learning from their peers. This is in the sense that the highlight of learning is the process of integrating different knowledge, activity, and reflection, as suggested by scholars such as Kolb (1984), who considers that the “cycle of learning depicts the experiential learning process”.

In foreign /additional language classes for instance, this can be done by designing more “effective classroom learning tasks and exercises [that] provide opportunities for students to negotiate meaning, expand their language resources, notice

61 More specifically, a focus in this view is on learning as the process of integrating knowledge (the concepts, facts, and information acquired through formal learning and past experience), activity (the application of knowledge to a ‘real world’ setting), and reflection (the analysis and synthesis of knowledge and activity to create new knowledge). (Indiana University, 2006, n. p.)
how language is used, and take part in meaningful interpersonal exchange" (Richards & Burns, 2012, p.2). Some practical educational approaches include: (i) setting up a common goal for the class that every student is expected to achieve; (ii) assigning every student a unique role or resource to contribute, such as by offering students the flexibility in the use of different linguistic, cultural and generation-specific resources that may help better learning and meaningful communication; (iii) setting up multi-level evaluation approaches, such as self-based, collaborative (peer group) and individual (instructor’s) assessment; and (iv) to follow up with the quality of each student’s contribution at different stages.

The second key implication of this study is concerned with task content and assessment. As elaborated in Chapter 4, findings have shown that the course curriculum and assessment criteria play an essential role in constructing the forms of symbolic capital (asset), which can be prominent learning resources and have a strong connection to students’ agency in classrooms. The evaluation includes a learning activity such as peer group work. A curriculum that often constrains learners’ ability and freedom to maximize their use of multiple linguistic, cultural, and literacy resources can hinder active learning of students from linguistic and cultural minority groups. On the other hand, a learner-centred wholistic educational approach suggested by the advocates of the pluralistic view (Adams & Feng, 2014; Cenoz, 2009; Jessner, 2008) has become a main trend in formal educational settings. I consider this wholistic approach to be important in global citizenship education, especially with an emphasis on a strategic implementation of a plurilingual and intercultural curriculum and pedagogy. It is particularly relevant when dealing with issues related to changing student demographies and increased global mobility (Feng, 2007; Lee & Marshall, 2011; Ma, 2009; Marshall & Moore, 2013). Some practical recommendations include: (i) introducing teaching materials in more than one language besides the main language for the instructional medium; (ii) having each student investigate and share different knowledge and the practices from their home culture and legitimate such knowledge in class; (iii) making plurilingual competence and intercultural understanding part of the skills to be assessed in class; and (iv) designing hands-on activities through which plurilingual students can make valuable contributions, such as by allowing them to use some cultural-specific, and generation or group specific resources.
The third implication concerns the clarity and details for task instruction. Key findings from this study suggest that instructors’ clear explanation of the activity and assignments can stimulate student participants’ academic performance and improve their learning outcomes. For instance, as discussed in Chapter 4 (Section 4.3.1), use of students’ prior linguistic knowledge - L1 Korean and L2 Chinese in the case of foreign language classes at PKSS - helped the learners' better understanding of subject matter and connected to improving their learning outcomes. More specifically, task instruction focusing on transparency, facilitation, flexibility, and creativity should help students’ academic achievement. A key point here is to provide a space motivating and inspiring students to have ‘meaningful communication’ which may result in process content that is more relevant, purposeful, interesting and engaging (Richards & Burns, 2012). Besides some practical principles mentioned in the initial two implications, more feasible actions might be: (i) to keep a high level of transparency, such as providing details about course objectives and procedures for each assignment, as well as clarifying the assessment criteria; (ii) to facilitate a co-constructive learning experience between student-teacher and among learners, such as through activities that can motivate their active learning by combining different approaches (e.g., self-regulated, collaborative and experiential learning); (iii) to offer more flexibility in students’ use of different resources, such as to have students share each other’s linguistic, cultural and literacy backgrounds, and conduct a brief SWOT analysis (i.e., talk about strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats); and (iv) to encourage creativity, by providing a supportive classroom culture that allows the learners to actively explore and utilize various linguistic and generation specific resources through fun and active interactions with their peers.

The final implication is to offer courses and workshops as an initiative to promote a learner-centered wholistic approach for both faculty members and students. As noted earlier, plurality became an essential component of curriculum in formal educational contexts. Student participants in this study also highlighted plurality as an asset for

---

62 This can be done by allowing students to have a space - where they can actively utilize the ‘multi’ in their dynamic linguistic, cultural and literacy repertoires – to exercise their agency for a more effective and creative learning. For instance, we have seen how the student participants prepare for the GaoKao through learning in a Korean-Chinese and Japanese/English trilingual program at the K-MNS (see Chapter 4), as well as from their academic results on the GaoKao that they are as good as those in other areas of China (see Chapter 6).
success, and identified plurilingual competence as an essential strategic tool for better learning. A focus can be on the continual exploration and development of more detailed, contingent and practical steps for the ‘pedagogy of the multi’, which aims to develop and increase our awareness concerning the legitimacy of practices of the ‘multi’ in the workings of academic groups. This can be done by designing and offering workshops related to topics concerning multicompetence, mobility, activity strategies, and conflict resolution skills.

7.2.3. Future Studies

This study is an initiative to support foreign /additional language education in the 21st century especially with a focus on the utilization of multilingual and multiliteracy tools (Boschman & Ehlert, 2016; Ehlert & Zheng, 2015). It is also an initiative aimed at the ‘protection of linguistic diversity’, which often goes along with the use of different languages in classrooms for a better and broader communication (Cenoz, 2009). The results of this research can be helpful for other contexts with issues concerning the maintenance and promotion of a minority language, as well as institutions interested in the development of strategies for capitalizing on multilingual, multiliteracies and new media resources. Nonetheless, this study is only an investigation of a small group of twenty-two ethnic Korean plurilingual speakers from one secondary school. Even though key findings of this study represent some common and prominent issues in academic group interactions, the outcomes should not be generalized to the entire Korean student groups in China nor other East Asian contexts considering the small scope of this research. Now I shall share my suggestions for the direction of future studies.

Based on the above mentioned key implications from this study, it is my hope to continue the exploration of strategies to better support learner diversity in contemporary classrooms, with a focus on three main directions.

Firstly, I hope to expand the research scope and the number of research participants. Considering the main goal and due to the limited scope of this study, this study could only focus on looking at the experiences and perspectives of teenage student participants but could not look at the perceptions of other participants. Further studies
should also include an in-depth analysis of the experiences and perceptions of their teachers and parents about foreign/additional language education along with increasing transnational mobility. This should be helpful to gain a broader, more balanced view of the issues at stake.

Secondly, I am keen to apply what I have learned in this study to examine the situations of learners from different social groups and in different contexts including students in Canada. The understanding of learner’s diversity (i.e., linguistic and cultural plurality) suggests that all students are likely to experience power struggles in classrooms due to the complex politics involved in the linguistic and cultural plurality in education and society at large. In this sense, it is also pertinent to investigate experiences and perceptions of students from different communities. They include both students with minority and mainstream language backgrounds, especially their experiences in mixed group educational contexts. I am curious to understand the complex politics concerning the distribution of learning resources in other settings.

Thirdly, further to my suggestions in the implications for pedagogy, it would be interesting to examine how teacher training (e.g., courses and workshops related to the ‘pedagogy of the multi’) can help encourage inclusive, cohesive peer group interactions. It is important to find ways to help not only instructors, but also administrators and policy makers to gain a better understanding of learners from diverse linguistic and cultural backgrounds, and to better support students who are transitioning from one milieu to another (like from high school to university, between academic cultures) to overcome various (linguistic and cultural) barriers.

I therefore identify and propose to develop a ‘pedagogy of the multi’, with a special highlight on the significance of maximizing students’ (and teachers’) agency in utilizing multiple linguistic, cultural and literacy resources as tools for learning. This builds from the ‘plurilingual pedagogy’ (Marshall & Moore, 2016), and expands on related practices as I was able to observe them in action at PKSS. It is with a particular consideration that plurilingualism and practices of the multi’ are also sites of hope and new possibilities, where all learners (regardless of their linguistic and cultural backgrounds) can engage in diverse ways of communicating, being, and learning.
7.3. In Closing

Keen understanding of plurality at various levels – local and central – is an essential quality for a citizen in today's highly globalized world. This is particularly applicable for many educational institutions in China and elsewhere, which have become venues for an influx of ‘mobile’ learners with diverse linguistic and cultural backgrounds. The voices of all learners, especially those of an ethnic minority background, should be heard. With an ultimate goal of better supporting increased learner diversity in contemporary classrooms, this study aimed to portray experiences of new generation ethnic Korean plurilingual students who learn in multilingual contexts, who strive to establish a sense of learner identity, and who constantly explore their aspirations for a better future within the local/Chinese and global educational spheres. As mentioned previously, key findings of this study suggest that learners capitalize on their experiences and multilingual resources for active learning and effective communications.

What emerged from this study was a tapestry of conversations that enabled me to look into a group of new generation minority learners’ representations about themselves and their relevant ‘others’, which revealed the realities of learning a foreign language as their L3 at school in a local context such as Northeast China. The cases of the 22 plurilingual youths reported in this study speak to the need for reconceptualizing “learning as a social phenomenon that is fundamentally linked to a sense of identity and self-worth within culturally diverse school populations” (Feuerverger, 1997, p.51). I am grateful for the insights I gained from many theorists and scholars, which enabled me to have more nuanced perspectives on these students’ identities and to capture the dynamics and complexity involved in their experiences and representations. As this study illustrates, in order to have a better grasp of their identifications and needs, it is necessary (i) to frame their attitudes and practices within the context in which they are located; and, (ii) to appreciate the unique linguistic, cultural, and generation-specific knowledge that they bring with them. A key objective for the professionals who work at and around multilingual educational contexts, is to provide better resources and tools to motivate and inspire our future generations. As Kramsch (2012, p.107) suggested, we need “to take advantage of the increasing multilingual composition of language classes and to draw on the students’ multilingual competence, even if they are learning a single language”, for increasing their
agency in learning through fully capitalizing on the ‘multi’ in their dynamic linguistic and cultural repertoires. Concurrently, it is my hope that this emphasis also answers the advocates’ professional call for teachers to “bring into the classroom the full breadth of their knowledge of the society about which they teach, including that society’s languages and language variants, literatures, and cultures” (Geisler, et al., 2007, p.5; c.f., Heidenfeldt, 2017, p. 4)

Through this doctoral work, I gained not only an advancement of knowledge but also learned the true meaning of dedication and patience. I got to know myself better and my passion for education. Being a mature student with multiple identities often made me feel like I was struggling, but it gave me more power. This journey helped me to reconfirm the vital role of education, especially for the young people in minority communities. Despite the ups and downs in my doctoral studies journey, as it comes to its conclusion, I am truly delighted with my own personal and professional growth. From time to time, various obstacles often made me ponder whether it was the correct decision for me to continue this path of exploring the world of academia, and what a degree of doctor of philosophy could bring to my life here and beyond. I now realize this work is just the start of my journey in academia, a grand ‘entrance’ ticket to the world of advanced research and education. It is with great excitement I further engage in this voyage.
References


Ahn, K.J. (2011). How American English native-speaker norms are conceptualized in an English classroom in South Korea. In the proceedings in the 7th YBU-KATE (KATE-YBU) conference on English education: “English teaching in the globalized context. (pp. 6-9), hosted by College of Foreign Languages, Yanbian University, Jilin, China.


https://doi.org/10.1177/1473325011429020


Canagarajah, S. (2013b). “Introduction”. In S. Canagarajah (Ed.) *Literacy as Translingual Practice: Between Communities and Classrooms* (pp. 1-10). New York and Oxon: Routledge.


ELT (2014). The 7th International Conference on English Language Teaching in China (ELT2014) will be held in Nanjing on October 23-26, 2014. The theme is "Localization and individuation: Reforms and research in China’s English language teaching."


FREPA (2015). Competences and Resources. In the “Descriptors for Plurilingual and Intercultural Competences – FREPA”, as part of A Framework of Reference for Pluralist Approaches to Languages and Cultures (CARAP/FREPA). Retrieved from the official URL of the European Centre for Modern Languages at http://carap.ecml.at/ (October 1, 2015), under the affiliation with the Council of Europe.


Minority Education: Studies of Migration, Integration, Equity, and Cultural Survival, 3(2), 119-130.


cchina-highly-detailed-editable-political-map-with-labeling-vector-id511105132_horizontal


regions]. Beijing: Ethnic Publishing House. *Articles in this volume were written either in Korean or Chinese.


Liang, X.M. (2013). Intercultural Communication in English Majored Freshmen of Yanbian University. In YBU-KATE (Eds.), Inter cultural and Interdisciplinary English Language Teaching in the Context of Globalization (pp. 50-53). Jilin, China: Yanbian University.


Ma, R. (2001). 西藏社会发展与双语教育 [Social Development and Bilingual Education in Tibet].


MFAT (2013). 재외동포현황 [Current Status of Overseas Compatriots]. By South Korea: Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade (MFAT). Retrieved on March 30, 2014 from file:///C:/Users/meilan%20ehler/Downloads%EC%9E%AC%EC%99%B8%EB%8F%99%ED%8F%AC%ED%98%84%ED%99%A9%25282013%2529.pdf.


Moore, D. (2014). Multilingual children in Vancouver. A keynote speech presented on October 21, 2014 in a Mini-Symposium under the theme of “Communication without Border”, hosted and organized by the College of Foreign Languages in the Yanbian University, Jilin Province, China.


295


298


YBU-KATE (2013, Ed.). *Intercultural and Interdisciplinary English Language Teaching in the Context of Globalization*. A collection of proceedings in *the 8th YBU-KATE Conference on English Language Education*. This conference was co-hosted by College of Foreign Languages, Yanbian University (YBU), China and the Korean Association of Teachers of English (KATE) on July 31, 2013 in Yanbian University, Jilin, China.


Zhang, Z.A. (2013). Policy making and trilingual education development in Yanbian. A presentation in the *Fourth International Symposium on Trilingual Education in Minority Regions in China*, Organized by College of Foreign Languages, Si-chuan Normal University, on March 7-9th, 2013 in Cheng-du, Si-chuan China


Appendix A.

Interview Protocol

A-1. Examples of Interview Questions (Student Participants)
A. Plurilingualism

1. Can you tell me about the languages that you speak?

2. Can you tell me about how you use languages at school? i.e., with your teacher and peers in classroom, or during the break?

3. Can you tell me about how you use languages during after-school hours? i.e., at home, or friends?

4. How would you define the term “plurilingual” (or “multilingual”)?

5. How do you feel being in a multilingual environment, like you school (the Peace Ethnic Korean Secondary School [PKSS])?

B. Trilingual Learning

6. How do you learn multiple languages? Does it help you to know one to learn the other? Do you separate your languages, and what strategies do you use? How important is it?

- How do you see the role of a formal trilingual program at PKSS, in terms of preparing Gaokao [the national university entrance examination]? And, for your future career development?

- How do you see the role of a formal trilingual program in the ethnic Korean community? And, in China?

Learning Foreign Language (FL)

7. What does learning foreign language(s) mean to you?
8. How do you feel about learning Japanese or English as Foreign Language (JFL or EFL) at PKSS?
   • Why did you choose to learn Japanese (or English) as your first foreign language, instead of learning English (or Japanese)?
   • How do you feel that you choice of first foreign language learning, in relation to your preparation of Gaokao?
   • How do you feel learning Japanese (or English as) foreign language for your future career development?

9. How do you see the role of JFL (or EFL) at PKSS?
   • And, in China? And, in global context (as international level)?

10. How do you utilize your knowledge in multiple languages (i.e., Korean and Chinese) in learning of your foreign (or third) language (FL or L3)? *pay attention to question 6

11. Tell me about other tools or resources (i.e., drama, animation, comic books in the target language) that you prefer to use in your JFL or EFL learning/classes.

C. Multiple and Multilingual Literacies
   12. Tell me about the different kinds of writing that you do?

   13. How do you use your knowledge in multiple languages in different kinds of writing?

D. Identities

   I am interested in knowing how learning, and using multiple languages are connected to your identity.
   14. What is your identity? Or, identities (if you feel you have more than one)? Can you show me examples?
      • Do you feel your identity is changed? If so, to what extent, and how?

   15. To what extent, and how do you feel learning of (or speaking) multiple languages connected to your identity? How would you describe yourself (linguistically and
sociolinguistic?

16. To what extent, and how, do you feel that learning of foreign language(s) is related to your identity?
   - Do you feel that speaking foreign language(s) is related to your identity?
   - Do you feel that writing in foreign language(s) is related to your identity?

E. Transitions

17. Tell me about your experiences of transition, such as taking GaoKao, from grade 11 to 12, from high school to university?

F. End Questions

18. Would you be willing to provide me with some additional personal details? I will use this information in order to compare responses to the questions above according to individuals’ personal details.
   
   Age: __________

   Are you a ZhouDuSheng [a student attending school from home] or a ZhuSuSheng [a student living in the dorm]?

19. Are you willing to do another interview in the future for me to analyze? Can I contact you again to show you may interested in? So that my interpretatun of your interviews, so you can help me in my analysis?

20. Do you have any questions or comments?

   **STAGE 2 (grade 12, term 1 & term 2)**

1. Can you tell me about your experiences studying on the trilingual program this term?

   **STAGE 3 (first year, university)**

2. Can you tell me about how your experiences of studying foreign language or multiple language your life (i.e., as a student and an individual) since your graduation of the PKSS?
A-2. Examples of Interview Questions (Teacher Participants)

Questions to teacher participants were mainly about their perceptions concerning multilingualism, multilingual literacies, and identities. Sample questions are including the following:

1. Can you describe the multilingualism in your foreign language (FL, i.e., Japanese or English) class?

2. To what extent, do you think that it is important for your students learning FL (JFL or EFL) as part of trilingual program at PKSS?

3. To what extent, do you think that it is important for your students to learn Japanese (or English) as their first foreign language, over other language(s) offered at PKSS?

4. How would you define the term “multilingual” (or “plurilingual”)?

5. To what extent, do you allow space for your students using multilingual literacies in their work?

6. How has teaching the JFL or EFL students at PKSS affected your identity and practice as a teacher?
   (a) How do you feel about teaching JFL / EFL to students in trilingual program, at PKSS?
   (b) To what extent, do you allow space for your students utilize their knowledge of multiple languages /literacies in their work?
Appendix B.

Transcription Guides

B-1. Interview Transcription Guides

(in English & Chinese)

Interviewer: (I)

Interviewee: Names, i.e., Qing(Q), Ying(Y)

- Try to write down everything that you hear!
- 2 dots for short pause (0~2 seconds)
- 3 dots for long pause (>2 seconds)
- Font requirement: Calibri, size 12, 1.5 spacing. *see sample
- Divide the entire interview into 3 minutes length (or around 3 minutes)

(e.g: “00:00 – 03:00”, “03:01-06:00”, in red, bold, size 28; or see the sample.) *See sample

- (Laughter), insert it if they are laughing

- (???@XX:XX), if there is uncertain hearing, write down your best guess, put question marks after it and indicate the time that the word or sentence appears, and highlight it (the word, the question marks and the time).

  e.g: “thesis(???@15:35) statement.”

  (if you are not sure with the word “thesis”, write down the best guess, and highlight them all.)

  (if you absolutely couldn’t understand a certain word/sentence, leave it blank, put question marks after it and indicate the time and highlight it.)

  -Something like this → ( ???@15:32) or ( ???@15:32-15:58)

- “x of y pages”: Insert page numbers to the bottom-right section of each page in “x of y pages” format (use Calibri, in size 10, bold-italic).
Marginal word list:

- Yes, Yeah, Yep..
- Unh-unh (negative response)
- Uh.. um.. (hesitation words; filled pauses)
- Hm? Huh? eh?
- unhhunh, uhhuh, mhmm (affirmative response)

Last but not least:

- Remember to note your working hours, so that you’ll have a good idea how many hours you’ve spent on a transcript.

  e.g: write (starting time – ending time) in a piece of paper or something.
采访录音记录：规则 [Guide for Interview Data Transcriptions]

采访者 [interviewer]: (I)

被采访者: 名字，如 Qing(Q), Ying(Y)

请记录下来 你从录音所听到的一切 (包括话语, 笑声, 停顿/间隔的长短)

分段：每 3 分钟，按时间顺序分。如, 00:00~03:00, 03:01~06:00

字体：请用 宋体, 字号-11 (中5号?), 行间距离-1.15 *参照样本

其他细节：

.. (两点) : 简短的停顿 (少于 2 秒)

... (三点): 长一点的停顿 (2 秒以上)

~ (水线): 延长音 （i.e., “아~ 그렇구나” [oh~, really]）

(笑) : 采访者或被采访人笑的时候

嗯.. : 正在思考或犹豫

(??@ xx:xx) 表示不明之处。如, 学校(??@05:25)吃饭吧

… … … : 部分删除
B-2. A Video Transcription Example

(in Korean, Chinese, Japanese & English)

Re: An example of a Short video Transcriptions (1.5 minutes; at a restaurant nearby the PKSS, 2013.04.29??)~

“Multilingual messages from some JFL learners”

Re: Adding English Subtitles

Please note that, (1) the sections written in Black are the researcher’s notes to the ‘Subtitler’. So, there is no need to insert these as part of the English subtitles for the video excerpt); (2) each of the four colors highlighted different parts/words in the conversation indicates:

- Blue – interactions in Korean;
- Green – Han Yu [Mandarin];
- Pink – English;

The content:

Gao (a boy; 00:05 – 00:07): I also wish that you all the ladies here continue to be pretty and young, …heehee..and the gentlemen are more handsome, just like my daddy!

Piao (girl 1; 00:10 – 00:16): Okay then, just let me say a few words: for our dreams, let’s do our best! There are only a few days left [to the GaoKao/exam], it is all up you guys!!

Meilan (the researcher; 00:20-00:24): Miss. Sun and Miss. Piao, hope you guys do not mind leaving some messages in English?!

Sun (girl 2; 00:25-00:59): (laugh) humm…, very very..fantastic! humm…It’s very, very bling bling bling [cool?], Meilan teacher. ..Ahhh…it’s very so hot! Humm..I am sorry, English little, ..humm..no.

Piao (girl 2; 01:04-01:20) Meilan sensee [teacher], welcome to PKSS. I like Chinese, and I like Japanese

Piao (girl 2; 01:20-01:34) heh..humm.. I like Japan, I like Kanada [Canada], I like Amer[i]ca, Soshite [and], Huh…I am very very.. English…Ahhh humm…

Piao (girl 2; 01:35-01:40) And, sometime later, I really want to learn English properly.
Appendix C.

Participant Information Package

Attn: All Prospective Research Participants

Cc: To Whom It May Concern

September 20, 2011

Re: Participant Information Package

– Project Title: “Multilingual Education for Minorities in China: Plurilingualism and Identities of Teenage Trilingual Learners with Ethnic Korean Heritage”

Greetings from Vancouver Canada!

To begin with, I would like to express my sincere appreciation to your interests in my research project.

Further to my recent introduction regarding my study, attached please see a participant information package which will give you more detailed information about my study. For instance, you will find the study info, research participant consent forms and questionnaires. As for a brief summary for the content of this information package, please refer to the second page of this letter.

Participation to this research will bring load of benefits to you in many ways. However, participation to this research is entirely on voluntary basis. I encourage you to carefully review the attached materials, and let me know if you would be interested in supporting my study as a research participant.

Should you have any questions or concerns regarding attached documents or my study, please feel free to contact me anytime in your convenience.

I look forward to talking to you again, and hope we can work together in this exciting project.

With warm regards,

Meilan Piao EHLERT 美兰特 朴美兰
Doctoral Program (LCL) 语言及文化教育 博士研究生院
Faculty of Education 教育学院
Simon Fraser University 西门菲沙大学
www.sfu.ca/edu
A. Study Info

You will find basic info about this research project. This includes the purpose, objectives, research site and participants, as well as the research procedure and protocols of this study.

B. Consent Forms

All participants are required to complete one or two of the following consent statements. Please read the relevant consent statements carefully, and complete the signature section in the end of an appropriate consent form.

1) **Minor Participant Consent Statement:** If you are a minor participant who is under the age of 19, please complete this consent form. Please also make sure that your parent or guardian to complete the “Parental/guardian consent form” for your participation to this research project as a minor participant.

2) **Parental/Guardian Consent Statement:** Required to be completed by the parent or guardian of a minor participant (who is under the age of 19) who wishes to participate in this research.

3) **Adult Participant Consent Statement:** Required to be completed by an adult participant who is 19 years of age or older on the day of signing the consent form.

*The teacher consent statement:* If you are a teacher, please carefully read this section which is included in the Adult participant consent statement (see page 2), and put your initial in the box located in the end of relevant statement.

4) **Sample Phone Interview Consent Statement:** (a) The phone interviews will be used for the interviews of some people who may not be able to attend in-person interviews. In this case, the researcher will obtain the “phone interview consent” from each of these participants prior to interviewing the individual. (b) The phone interview method may also be employed for the follow up interviews of some focal participants who already completed appropriate consent form(s).

C. Participant Questionnaires: After completion of the appropriate consent form(s), you will become a legitimate participant of this research. Then, you will be invited to complete one or two of the three participant questionnaires.

1) **Questionnaire I (Student/Teacher). Basic Personal Info** (i.e., personal history, education, languages).

2) **Questionnaire II (Student). Linguistic Network** (at home, school and communities)

The purpose of these questionnaires is to understand your personal history and language uses in different situations.

D. Focus Group and/or Individual Interviews: You may be invited to one of the two focus group (for students and teachers) discussions or interviews. Some of you may also be invited to semi-structured individual interviews. Participation to these interviews is entirely on voluntary basis. Upon confirmation of your interests in this study, the researcher will provide you more detailed information regarding these interviews.
Study Info

Study Information 研究课题简介

Project Title: Multilingual Education for Minorities in China: Plurilingualism and Identities of Teenage Trilingual Learners with Ethnic Korean Heritage

题目：论中国的多种语言教育：三语学习朝鲜族青少年的多种语言观和意识形态

Investigator Name: Meilan Piao EHLERT

研究学者：美兰·朴·英里特

Investigator Department: The LCL Doctoral Program, Faculty of Education, Simon Fraser University

所属部门：西门菲沙大学 教育学院 语言及文化教育(LCL) 博士研究生院

The Purpose and Main Goals 主要研究目的

The purpose of this doctoral dissertation project is to explore multilingual education for minorities in China. The main goal of this study is to examine plurilingualism and the complex relationship between languages and identities of individuals in Diaspora, particularly through an ethnographic study of a group of trilingual teenage learners with ethnic Korean heritage.

本课题宗旨是研究有关中国少数民族的多语言教育现状。目前的研究重点将放在考察有关三语学习朝鲜族高中生的多种语言观和意识形态的形成及发展。

The Main Research Site and Participants 主要调查研究地点及研究对象

1. Main Research Site 主要调查研究地点

A ChaoXianZu (ethnic Korean) public secondary school located in Mudanjiang region, the Heilongjiang province, northeast China. 位于中国 黑龙江省牡丹江地区的一个公立朝鲜族中学

2. The Participants 研究对象

The main research participants for this study consist of trilingual learners with ethnic Korean heritage who are currently enrolled in the Korean, Chinese and Japanese (or English) trilingual program at the ChaoXianZu public secondary school. In order to understand the full feature of the situation of these youths, the teachers and parents of the focal participants will also be invited to focus group discussions and/or individual interviews.

主要研究对象为目前在上述朝鲜族中学就读的，朝，日（或英）三语学习者，及其老师及家长。

3. The procedure 调查研究程序

1) Voluntary Participation: Your participation to this study is voluntary. All prospective participants will receive an Information Package. You will be given an appropriate time to review the information about this research project, and consider whether you want to support this study as a research participant. As explained in detail in the cover letter from the researcher, the Participant Information Package (Appendix 1) consists of the Cover Letter, Study Info (App. 1-A), the Minor Participant Consent (App. 1-B1), the Parental/Guardian Consent for a Minor Participant (App. 1-B2), Adult Participant Consent (App. 1-B3), Sample Phone Interview Consent (App. 1-B4), Questionnaires (App. 1-C).

参加此研究为自愿。所有的调查研究对象候补者将事先收到本研究课题有关的参阅资料。是否支持本研究成为一个调查研究对象，完全由候补者的决定。

*研究对象候补者参阅资料（附件 1）包括：研究学者的信，研究问题简介（附表 1-A），未成年被研究对象同意书（附
2) The focus group discussions: Upon the completion of appropriate consent form(s), if you are a student or a teacher, you may be invited to attend one of the two focus groups (students or teachers) discussions or interviews. If you decided to join the focus group activities, it is essential for you to assure that any information that you will encounter during the focus group discussions or interviews will be kept confidential and will NOT be revealed to any parties outside of the focus group.

3) The focal participants: Approximately eight to ten teenager participants, as well as their teachers and parents will be invited to further interviews. These semi-structured interviews will be audio recorded. The interviews will be conducted mainly in-person, however, some interviews may be carried out through phone. The phone interviews may be audio recorded and only carried out upon the confirmation of your consent to the phone interview.

4) Phone interviews: In this study, the phone interviews will be used for the interviews of some participants who may not be able to attend in-person interviews. In this case, the researcher will obtain the “phone interview consent” from each of these participants prior to each interview. In addition, the phone interview method may also be employed for the follow up interviews of some focal participants who may already completed appropriate consent form(s). As for the further details about phone interview consent, please refer to Appendix 1-B4, the “sample phone interview consent statement”.

Other 事项

1. How are the participants recruited? 被研究者对象的招募方式

The participants will be mainly recruited based on word of mouth referrals from the investigator’s acquaintances in China, or the referrals by the school teachers and administrators. 通过研究者的个人在中国的联络网或者学校的教职员的推荐。

2. What are the Benefits and Risks for you to participate in this study as a participant? 参加本研究的利与弊

You will have loads of benefits to participate in this project in many ways. For instance, you may benefit from the opportunity to practice your logical thinking and writing skills, or from the opportunity to practice your narrative skills, or from the opportunity to improve your understanding of multilingualism and language education. Nevertheless, you will have some risks to participating in this project. For instance, you may experience fatigue from writing. 参加本研究将给您提供很多利点。例如，会给你提供一个锻炼逻辑思维，个人面谈及公众讲话的最佳机会。同时，这是一个了解多种语言学习及语言教育方面的知识的好机会。但是，填写调查研究表格时您可能感到疲劳。
3. How confidentiality and anonymity will be assured if applicable?

The data of this study will maintain confidentiality of your name (as a research participant), and the contributions you have made to the extent allowed by the law. Other than on the Participant Consent form and the Questionnaire, you will not be required to write your name on any other identifying information on research materials. Your identity (as a participant of this research) will be kept confidential, and your names will not be included in the reports of this study. 本研究学者将尊重及保护每个调查研究对象的隐私权，并保证决不泄露您的真实姓名给外部人员。除了在研究对象同意书及调查表一以外，您不需要在任何文件写明您的真实姓名。研究报告将不包括您的姓名。

4. The security of research data 研究资料的存放

All research data will be stored in a secure location in either electronic or printed form in a locked cabinet for 2 years. 一切研究资料将以电子版或打印件存放在带锁的文件柜里，并存放两年。

5. Contact of Participants at a Future Time or Use of the Data in other studies 将来使用数据

The researcher may contact you (the participant) again or use of the data collected here in other studies in the next 5 years from the date of Research Ethic approval of this study.

6. Research Ethic related Matters 有关研究道德的事宜

The University and those conducting this project subscribe to the ethical conduct of research and to the protection at all times of the interests, comfort, and safety of subjects. This research is being conducted under permission of Research Ethic Board(REB) of the Simon Fraser University, British Columbia, Canada. The main concern of the board is for the health, safety and psychological well-being of research participants. This project has prior permission which has been obtained from the local school in Heilongjiang province, China, allowing this study to be conducted. 此研究是经过加拿大卑诗省西门菲沙大学的研究道德指导中心(REB)的审核及监督下进行的。本研究的REB的宗旨是保护及维护被研究对象的名誉及安全。研究项目是经过中国黑龙江省的有关学校的同意而推行。

Should you wish to obtain information about your right as a participant in research, or about the responsibilities of the researcher(s), or if you have any questions and concerns as a participant of this study, please contact Dr. Daniele Moore, the senior supervisor of this research project, or Dr. Hal Weinberg, the Director of Office of Research Ethics, as shown below: 如您对一个研究调查对象的权力有任何疑问点，请联络此研究课题的主导师丹妮穆尔教授 (Dr. Moore) 或西门菲沙大学的研究道德管理处处长温伯格博士 (Dr. Weinberg) 通过所注联络方式

Dr. Daniele Moore
Professor, Faculty of Education
Simon Fraser University
EDUB8639, 8888 University Drive, Burnaby, B.C. V5A 1S6
www.sfu.ca/educ

Dr. Hal Weinberg
Director, Office of Research Ethics
Simon Fraser University
Multi-Tenant Facility, 8888 University Drive
Burnaby, B.C. V5A 1S6
www.sfu.ca/vpresearch/ethics/
The Minor Participant Consent 未成年被研究者同意书

Simon Fraser University

The University and those conducting the following research project subscribe to the ethical conduct of research and to the protection at all times of the interests, comfort, and safety of subjects. This research is being conducted under the permission of Research Ethics Board of the Simon Fraser University, B.C. Canada. The chief concern of the board is for the health, safety and psychological well-being of all research participants. This project also has prior permission which has been obtained from the local school in Heilongjiang province, China, allowing this study to be conducted.

The Minor Participant Consent form is required to be completed by a minor participant who is under the age of 19. In addition to this consent, the "parental/guardian consent form" is also required to be completed by the minor participant’s parent or legal guardian for his or her participation to this research project.

The researcher will send a Participant Information Package to all prospective participants. The package includes detailed information about this study. It will be delivered to the candidate in-person, via e-mail or by post mail.

Participation to this study is voluntary. As a prospective participant, you are strongly encouraged to take a sufficient time to consider whether you want to support this study as a voluntary participant.

Project Title:  Multilingual Education for Minorities in China: Plurilingualism and Identities of Trilingual Learners with Ethnic Korean Heritage
Investigator Name: Melissa Piao EHLERT
Investigator Department: Doctoral Program (LCL), Faculty of Education, Simon Fraser University

Consent Statements from the Minor Participant:

Having been asked to participate in the above research study named above, I certify that I have read the procedures specified in the Study Information Documents describing the study. I understand the procedures to be used in this study and the personal risks to me in taking part in the project or experiment, as described below:

Purpose and Goals of this Study: The purpose of this doctoral dissertation project is to explore multilingual education for minorities in China. The main goal of this study is to examine plurilingualism and the complex relationship between languages and identities of individuals in Diaspora, particularly through an ethnographic study of a group of trilingual teenage learners with ethnic Korean heritage.

Benefits and Risks: You will have loads of benefits to participate in this project in many ways. For instance, you may benefit from the opportunity to practice your logical thinking and writing skills, or from the opportunity to practice your narrative skills, or from the opportunity to improve your understanding of multilingualism and language education. Nevertheless, you will have some risks to participating in this project. For instance, you may experience fatigue from writing.

What You will be Required to Do: (1) As a prospective participant, you will receive an Information Package about this study. You will be given an appropriate time to consider about your participation. Your participation to this research will be voluntary. (2) Upon the completion of your consent to participate in this study, a) you may be asked to fill up and/or response to the Participant questionnaires; b) you may be invited to the student focus group discussions or interviews which may be recorded or videotaped. If you are invited to the focus group activities, you must promise that any information that you encounter during the discussions in the focus group
will be kept confidential and will NOT be revealed to any parties outside of the focus group; c) you may also invited to in-person and/or telephone interviews. These semi-structured interviews may be audio recorded.

*Statement of Confidentiality:* The data of this study will maintain confidentiality of your name and the contributions you have made to the extent allowed by the law.

*Inclusion of Names of Participants in Reports of the Study:* The identity of the participant will be kept confidential, and his/her names will not be included in reports of this study.

*Contact of Participants at a Future Time or Use of the Data in other studies:* The researcher may contact the participants again or use of the data collected here in other studies in the next 5 years from the date of Research Ethic approval of this study.

*Refusal or Withdraw:* Refusal to participate or withdraw after agreeing to participate, will have no adverse effects on your grades or evaluation in the course or classroom.

I certify that I understand that my signature on this form will signify that I have received an information package which describes the procedures, possible risks, and benefits of this research project, that I had a sufficient time and adequate opportunities to consider the information in the documents describing the project or experiment, and that I voluntarily agree to participate in the study.

I understand that the researcher may contact me for follow up interviews through phone when she is away from her research site or after she returned to Canada. In this case, I understand that the researcher cannot guarantee the confidentiality of my identities since the telephone is not a confidential medium.

I understand that I may withdraw my participation from this study at any time. I also understand that I may register any complaint with Dr. Daniele Moore, the Senior Supervisor of this project, as shown below:

Dr. Daniele Moore  
Professor, Faculty of Education  
Simon Fraser University  
EDU8639, 8888 University Drive, Burnaby, B.C., V5A 1S6, Canada

I understand that I can obtain information about my right as a participant in research, or about the responsibilities of the researchers, or if I have any questions and concerns as a participant of this study, I can contact the Director of Office of Research Ethics ([http://www.sfu.ca/vresearch/ethics/](http://www.sfu.ca/vresearch/ethics/)).

I understand that I may obtain the copies of the result of this study upon its completion by contacting:

Melissa Piao EHLERT  
PhD Candidate  
Languages, Cultures and Literacies (LCL) Doctoral Program  
Faculty of Education, Simon Fraser University  
Education Building, 8888 University Drive, Burnaby, B.C. V5A 1S6, Canada

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Participant Name (PRINT):</th>
<th>(family name)</th>
<th>(given names)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Participant Signature:</td>
<td>Date: (DD/MM/YY)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Witness Name (PRINT):</th>
<th>(family name)</th>
<th>(given names)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Witness Signature:</td>
<td>Date: (DD/MM/YY)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Parental/Guardian Consent for a Minor Participant  父母／保護者同意書
Simon Fraser University

The University and those conducting the following research project subscribe to the ethical conduct of research and to the protection at all times of the interests, comfort, and safety of subjects. This research is being conducted under the permission of Research Ethic Board of the Simon Fraser University, B.C. Canada. The chief concern of the board is for the health, safety and psychological well-being of all research participants. This project also has prior permission which has been obtained from the local school in Heilongjiang province, China, allowing this study to be conducted.

The parental/guardian consent form is required to be completed by the parent or guardian of a minor participant (who is under the age of 19) who wishes to participate in this research. In addition to this consent, as a minor participant who is under the age of 19, your child is also required to complete the Minor Participant Consent form.

The researcher will send a Research Participant Information Package to all prospective participants, including your child. The package includes a letter from the researcher, detailed information about the research project (or the study), and consent forms which include the minor participant consent statement. It will be delivered in-person, via e-mail or by post mail.

As a parent or guardian, you are strongly encouraged to talk to your child about this opportunity, and take a sufficient time to consider whether you want to support your child’s decision of voluntarily participate in the following study as a minor participant.

Project Title: Multilingual Education for Minorities in China: Plurilingualism and Identities of Teenage Trilingual Learners with Ethnic Korean Heritage
Investigator Name: Meilan Piao EHLERT
Investigator Department: Doctoral Program (LCL), Faculty of Education, Simon Fraser University

Consent Statements from the Parent or Guardian:

I certify that I have read the procedures specified in the Study Information Documents describing the above study. I understand the procedures to be used in this study and the personal risks to my child in taking part in the project or experiment as a participant, as described below:

Purpose and Goals of this Study: The purpose of this doctoral dissertation project is to explore multilingual education for minorities in China. The main goal of this study is to examine plurilingualism and the complex relationship between languages and identities of individuals in Diaspora, particularly through an ethnographic study of a group of trilingual teenage learners with ethnic Korean heritage.

Benefits and Risks: Your child will benefit in many ways from participating in this study as a research participant. For instance, your child may benefit from the opportunity to practice his or her logical thinking and writing skills, or from the opportunity to practice his or her narrative skills, or from the opportunity to improve his or her understanding of multilingualism and language education. The risks for your child to participate in this study will be minimum. He or she may experience fatigue from writing.

What Your Child will be Required to Do: (1) All prospective participants will receive an Information Package about this study. They will be given an appropriate time to consider about his or her participation. The participation to this research will be voluntary; (2) Upon the completion of both you and your child’s consent to participate in this study, a) your child may be asked to fill up and/or response to the Participant questionnaires; b) your child may be invited to the student focus group discussions or interviews which may be recorded or videotaped. If your child is invited to the focus group activities, he or she must promise that any information that
he or she encounter during the discussions in the focus group will be kept confidential and will NOT be revealed to any parties outside of the focus group, c) your child may also invited to in-person and/or telephone interviews. These semi-structured interviews may be audio recorded.

Statement of Confidentiality: The data of this study will maintain confidentiality of your child’s name and the contributions your child have made to the extent allowed by the law.

Inclusion of Names of Participants in Reports of the Study: The identity of your child will be kept confidential, and his/her names will not be included in reports of this study.

Contact of Participants at a Future Time or Use of the Data in other studies: The researcher may contact your child again or use of the data collected here in other studies in the next 5 years from the date of Research Ethic approval of this study.

Refusal or Withdraw: Refusal to allow your child to participate or withdrawal of your child's participation, will have no adverse effects on your child's grade or evaluation in the course or classroom.

I certify that I understand that my signature on this form will signify that I have received and reviewed the information package which describes the procedures, possible risks, and benefits of this research project, that I had a sufficient time and adequate opportunities to consider the information in the documents describing the project or experiment, and that I voluntarily agree to allow the minor named below to participate in the study.

Name of Parents/Guardian (PRINT): ___________________________ (family name) ___________________________ (first name)
Name of the Miner (PRINT): _______________________________ (family name) ___________________________ (first name)
Who is the (relationship to the minor) (PRINT): ________________________________ (parents/guardian/other)
I certify that I understand the procedures to be used and have fully explained them to my child (the minor participant), ______________________ (name of the minor participant).

I understand that my child has the right to withdraw from the study at any time, and any complaints about the study can be brought to Dr. Daniele Moore, the Senior Supervisor of this project, as shown below:

Dr. Daniele Moore
Professor, Faculty of Education
Simon Fraser University
EDUB8639, 8888 University Drive, Burnaby, B.C., V5A 1S6, Canada

I also understand that I can obtain information about my child’s right as a participant in the research, or about the responsibilities of the researcher(s), or if I or my child have any questions and concerns about this study, I can contact the Director of Office of Research Ethics (http://www.sfu.ca/vpresearch/ethics/).

Parents/Guardian Name (PRINT): ___________________________ (family name) ___________________________ (given names)
Signature of the Parents/Guardian: ___________________________ Date (M/D/Y): ___________________________
Adult Participant Consent 成年人被研究者同意书
Simon Fraser University

The University and those conducting the following research project subscribe to the ethical conduct of research and to the protection of all times of the interests, comfort, and safety of subjects. This research is being conducted under the permission of Research Ethic Board of the Simon Fraser University, B.C. Canada. The chief concern of the board is for the health, safety and psychological well-being of all research participants. This project also has prior permission which has been obtained from the local school in Heilongjiang province, China, allowing this study to be conducted.

Adult Participant Consent form is required to be completed by an adult participant who is 19 years of age or older on the day of signing the consent form.

The researcher will send a Participant Information Package to all prospective participants. The package includes detailed information about this study. It will be delivered to the candidate in-person, via e-mail or by post mail.

Participation to this study is voluntary. As a prospective participant, you are strongly encouraged to take a sufficient time to consider whether you want to support this study as a voluntary participant.

Project Title: Multilingual Education for Minorities in China: Plurilingualism and Identities of Teenage Trilingual Learners with Ethnic Korean Heritage
Investigator Name: Mellan Pino EHILERT
Investigator Department: Doctoral Program (LCL), Faculty of Education, Simon Fraser University

Consent Statements from the Adult Participant (including the Teacher Participant):

Having been asked to participate in the research study named above, I certify that I have read the procedures specified in the Study Information Documents describing the study. I understand the main procedures to be used in this study and the personal risks to me in taking part in the project or experiment, as described below:

Purpose and Goals of this Study: The purpose of this doctoral dissertation project is to explore multilingual education for minorities in China. The main goal of this study is to examine plurilingualism and the complex relationship between languages and identities of individuals in Diaspora, particularly through an ethnographic study of a group of trilingual teenage learners with ethnic Korean heritage.

Benefits and Risks: You will have loads of benefits to participate in this project in many ways. For instance, you may benefit from the opportunity to practice your logical thinking and writing skills, or from the opportunity to practice your narrative skills, or from the opportunity to improve your understanding of multilingualism and language education. Nevertheless, you will have some risks to participating in this project. For instance, you may experience fatigue from writing.

What the You will be Required to Do: (1) As a prospective participant, you will receive an Information Package about this study. You will be given an appropriate time to consider about your participation. Your participation to this research will be voluntary. (2) Upon the completion of your consent to participate in this study, a) you may be asked to fill up and/or response to the Participant questionnaires; b) you may be invited to the teacher or parents focus group discussions which may be recorded or videotaped. If you are invited to the focus group activities, you must promise that any information that you encounter during the discussions in the focus group will be kept confidential and will NOT be revealed to any parties outside of the focus group; c) you may also invited to in-person and/or telephone interviews. These semi-structured interviews may be audio recorded.
**Statement of Confidentiality:** The data of this study will maintain confidentiality of your name and the contributions you have made to the extent allowed by the law.

**Statement of Confidentiality:** The data of this study will maintain confidentiality of your name and the contributions you have made to the extent allowed by the law.

**Inclusion of Names of Participants in Reports of the Study:** The identity of the participant will be kept confidential, and his/her names will not be included in reports of this study.

**Contact of Participants at a Future Time or Use of the Data in other studies:** The researcher may contact the participants again or use of the data collected here in other studies in the next 5 years from the date of Research Ethic approval of this study.

**ONLY for the Teacher Participant:** Refusal to participate or withdrawal after agreeing to participate will have no adverse effects on your evaluation or employment status in your school or institution.

I certify that I understand that my signature on this form will signify that I have received the information package which describes the procedures, possible risks, and benefits of this research project, that I had a sufficient time and adequate opportunities to consider the information in the documents describing the project or experiment, and that I voluntarily agree to participate in the study.

I understand that the researcher may contact me for follow up interviews through phone when she is away from her research site or after she returned to Canada. In this case, I understand that the researcher cannot guarantee the confidentiality of my identities since the telephone is not a confidential medium.

I understand that I may withdraw my participation at any time. I also understand that I may register any complaint with Dr. Daniele Moore, the Senior Supervisor of this project, as shown below:

Dr. Daniele Moore  
Professor, Faculty of Education  
Simon Fraser University  
EDUB8639, 8888 University Drive, Burnaby, B.C., V5A 1S6, Canada

I understand that I can obtain information about my right as a participant in research, or about the responsibilities of the researchers, or if I have any questions and concerns as a participant of this study, I can contact the Director of Office of Research Ethics (http://www.sfu.ca/vpresearch/ethics/).

I understand that I may obtain the copies of the result of this study upon its completion by contacting:

Meilan Piao EHLEERT  
PhD Candidate  
Languages, Cultures and Literacies (LCL) Doctoral Program  
Faculty of Education, Simon Fraser University  
Education Building, 8888 University Drive, Burnaby, B.C. V5A 1S6, Canada

**Participant Name (PRINT):** ___________________________ (family name) ___________________________ (given names)

**Participant Signature:** ___________________________ Date: ___________________________ (DD/MM/YY)

**Witness Name (PRINT):** ___________________________

**Witness Signature:** ___________________________ Date: ___________________________ (DD/MM/YY)
Phone Interview Consent Statement (Sample)

电话采访同意（样本）

Project Title: Multilingual Education for Minorities in China: Plurilingualism and Identities of Teenage Trilingual Learners with Ethnic Korean Heritage
Investigator Name: Meilan Piao EHLERT
Investigator Department: Doctoral Program (LCL), Faculty of Education, Simon Fraser University

In this study, the phone interviews will be used for the interviews of some participants who may not be able to attend in-person interviews. In this case, the researcher will obtain the “phone interview consent” from each of these participants prior to each interview. In addition, the phone interview method may also be employed for the follow up interviews of some focal participants who may already completed appropriate consent form(s). As for the further details about phone interview consent, please see below for the “sample phone interview consent statement”.

A sample consent statement:

“I certify that I have received the information package which describes the procedures, possible risks, and benefits of this research project, that I had a sufficient time and adequate opportunities to consider the information in the documents describing the project or experiment, and that I voluntarily agree to participate in the study. I also understand that the researcher cannot guarantee the confidentiality of my identities since the telephone is not a confidential medium”.
Participant Questionnaires

Thank you for your interests and support to this study.

After the completion of appropriate consent form(s), you will become a legitimate research participant of this study. Then, you will be invited to complete one or two of the following two participant questionnaires:

1) **Questionnaire I (Student/Teacher). Basic Personal Info** (i.e., personal history, education, languages).
2) **Questionnaire II (Student). Linguistic Network** (at home, school and communities)

The purpose of these questionnaires is to understand the basic info concerning your personal history and language uses in different settings, in order for the researcher to comprehend the full feature of your situations related to languages and multilingual education.

Should you have any questions or concerns regarding the attached questionnaire(s) or this study, please feel free to contact the researcher anytime in your convenience.
Participant Questionnaire I (Student) 调查咨询表 1（学生）

Re : Basic Personal Info

1. Names 姓名: _______ (family 姓) _______ (first 名) 2. Gender 性别: □ female 女 □ male 男


5. I am 我今年____ year 年 old 岁, and was born 出生于 in____ year 年____ month 月 in 出生地: _______ county/town 乡/镇 _______ city/prefecture 市/县, _______ province 省, P.R. China 中国.

6. I am 我是高中 a _______ grade high school student 年级学生, in a 目前上 □ Korean 朝鲜族中学 high school.

7. I am currently living with 目前我 □ my parents and 父母一起住 □ my grandparents 爷爷 / 奶奶 or 姥爷 /姥姥一起住 □ my relatives 和亲戚一起住 □ school dormitory 住在学校宿舍 □ other 其他: _____

7.1 If you are not living with your parents, please briefly describe the reason. i.e., because they are □ in Hanguo for work 去了韩国 □ in overseas for work 在国外打工 □ in different city for work 在其他城市打工 □ living in hometown 在家乡 □ other 其他: ______

8. I am the only child in my family 我是独生子 □ I have 我有 a _______ old brother(s) 哥哥/弟弟 和/或 and/or □ a _______ old sister 一个姐姐/妹妹.

7.1. My brother or sister is 我的兄/妹是 a _______ old 岁的 _______ (girl 女孩? or boy 男孩?).
He/she is currently attending 他/她在上 □ Korean 朝鲜族 □ Chinese 中文 □ other 其他 _______ school 学校. He/she he / she 会讲 □ Korean 朝鲜语 □ Chinese 汉语 □ English 英语 □ other 其他: ______

9. I consider my family's current social-economic status 我认为我们一家在北京的社会经济地位属于: □ Low-income working class 低收入劳动者家庭 □ Intermediate 普通中层家庭 □ Upper Intermediate 中上层家庭 □ Other 其他: ______

Languages

10. Besides Korean language 朝鲜语以外, I can speak 我还会讲 □ Chinese 汉语 □ English 英语 □ Japanese 日语 □ other 其他语言: ______

11. I consider myself as a multilingual speaker because I can speak more than two languages 我会讲两种以上语言: □ Korean 朝鲜语 □ Chinese 汉语 □ English 英语 □ Japanese 日语 □ Other languages 其他语言: ______

Medium of Instruction

12. During the class hours (except language classes), I prefer my teacher using 在课堂里，我喜欢我的老师使用 □ Korean 朝鲜语 _______% □ Chinese 汉语 _______%

13. I am currently learning 目前我学 _______ (English or Japanese) as primary foreign language (日语或英语)为 第一外语。During the foreign language (i.e., English or Japanese) class hours 在外语课堂里, I prefer my teacher using 我喜欢我的老师(讲课时)使用 □ Korean 朝鲜语 _______% □ Chinese 汉语 _______% □ English 英语 _______% □ Japanese 日语 _______% □ other languages 其他语言: _______ %
Participant Questionnaire I (Teacher) 调查咨询表 1（教师）

Personal Info

1. Names 姓名：_________ (family 姓) _________ (first 名)  2. Gender 性别：☐ female 女 ☐ male 男

3. Nationality 国籍：☐ China 中国 ☐ Other 其他：______

4. Ethnicity ☐ Korean 朝鲜族 ☐ Chinese 汉族 ☐ Other 其他：_____

5. I am 我今年___ year old, and was born 出生于 in __ year 年 in
出生地：_____ county/town 乡/镇_______ city/prefecture 市/县, _______ province 省, P.R. China 中国。

6. My highest education level is 我的最高学历为：
☐ high school diploma 高中 ☐ over 2 year of college 中专或大专 ☐ university 本科或相等学历（包括函授）
☐ other 其他：____________

7. I have 我有：☐ one child 一个孩子 ☐ two children 两个孩子。

7.1. My first child is 他/她是一个 a ______ grade student 年级：☐ primary 小学 ☐ middle 初中 ☐ high 高中 学生 He/she is currently attending 他/她现在在上 ☐ Korean 朝鲜族 ☐ Chinese 汉族 ☐ Other 其他：______ school 学校。

7.2. My second child is 我的次子是一个 a ______ grade student 年级：☐ primary 小学 ☐ middle 初中 ☐ high 高中 学生 He/she is currently attending 他/她现在在上 ☐ Korean 朝鲜族 ☐ Chinese 汉族 ☐ Other 其他：______ school 学校。

Languages

8. I consider myself as a multilingual speaker because I can speak more than two languages 我会讲两种以上语言：
☐ Korean 朝鲜语 ☐ Chinese 汉语 ☐ English 英语 ☐ Japanese 日语 ☐ Other languages 其他语言：______

Medium of Instruction

9. I have been teaching 我的教龄为：______ years 年。

9.1 I have been teaching at ethnic Korean secondary school 我在朝鲜族中学教了：______ years 年。

9.2 I am currently teach 现在我教：______ subject for ______ grade(s). 我教初中/高中：______ 年级。

10. During my class hours, I am using 在课堂里我常使用：
☐ Korean 朝鲜语 ____%(%) ☐ Chinese 汉语 ____%(%) ☐ English 英语 ____%(%) ☐ Japanese 日语 ____%(%) ☐ Other languages 其他语言：____%(%)

11. After the class hours, I generally speak to my students in 下课后我常用：
☐ Korean 朝鲜语 ____%(%) ☐ Chinese 汉语 ____%(%) ☐ English 英语 ____%(%) ☐ Japanese 日语 ____%(%) ☐ Other languages 其他语言：____%(%)
Re: Linguistic Network (at Home, School and Communities)

A. WITH FAMILY AND RELATIVES 与家族及亲属

1. Which language(s) do you generally speak at home?
   1.1 With my mother, I mainly speak □ Korean □ Chinese □ other languages: 
   1.2 With my father, I mainly speak □ Korean □ Chinese □ other languages: 
   1.3 With my grandparents, I mainly speak □ Korean □ Chinese □ other languages: 
   1.4 With my brother/sisters, I mainly speak □ Korean □ Chinese □ other languages: 

2. What is your father’s occupation? □ company employee □ self-employed □ other: 
   Highest Education: □ high school diploma □ over 2 year of college □ university □ other: 
   2.1 He is □ an ethnic Korean □ Chinese □ other: 
   2.2 He is from ________ county/town, _______ city/prefecture, Heilongjiang province, China. 
   2.3 He speaks □ Korean □ Chinese □ English □ Japanese □ other: 

3. What is your mother's occupation? □ company employee □ self-employed □ other: 
   Highest Education: □ high school diploma □ over 2 year of college □ university □ other: 
   3.1 She is an ethnic Korean nationality. 
   3.2 She was born in ________ county/town, _______ city/prefecture, _______ province, China. 
   3.3 She speaks □ Korean □ Chinese □ English □ Japanese □ other: 

4. Do your grandparents and relatives often come to visit you at school? □ Yes □ No 
   4.1 If yes: How do you usually communicate with them? 
      □ Korean _______% □ Chinese _______% □ Other: _______% 

5. During the school breaks, do you often visit your family and relatives in hometown? □ Yes □ No 
   5.1 If Yes: When you visit there, which language do you usually speak? 
      □ Korean _______% □ Chinese _______% □ Other: _______% 

6. What is the ethnicity of the two families that close to your family? □ Koreans □ Chinese □ other: 
   6.1 With them, which language(s) do you usually speak? 
      □ Korean _______% □ Chinese _______% □ Other: _______% 

7. Do you often join the major activities held by Korean nationality people in Ningan or your hometown? 
   □ Yes □ No 
   7.1 If yes, please list two main activities: (1) __________________ (2) __________________. 
   7.2 In the activities, which language do you often speak? 
      □ Korean _______% □ Chinese _______% □ Other: _______%
B. AT SCHOOL with TEACHERS and CLASSMATES

B1. Elementary School (grade 1-6):

8. What type of elementary school did you attend?
   □ Korean nationality school □ Chinese public school □ other

8.1 From grade ______, as the foreign language, I learned □ Japanese □ English □ Other ________

8.2 Ethnic background of two of my best friends in elementary school were
   □ Korean □ Chinese □ other:
   8.2.1 We generally communicate with each other in □ Korean (%) □ Chinese (%) □ other languages: ________ (%)

9. In the classroom, I generally spoke
   9.1 to my teacher in □ Korean (%) □ Chinese (%) □ other languages: ________ (%)
   9.2 to my classmates in □ Korean (%) □ Chinese (%) □ other languages: ________ (%)

10. During the class breaks or after the class hours, I spoke
    10.1 to my teacher in □ Korean □ Chinese □ other languages: __________
    10.2 to my classmates in □ Korean □ Chinese □ other languages: __________

B2. Junior High School (grade 7 - 9):

11. What type of junior high did you attend?
    □ Ethnic Korean public school □ Chinese public school □ other: ______

11.1 From grade ______, as the foreign language, I learned □ Japanese □ English □ Other ______

11.2 Ethnic background of two of my best friends in elementary school were
    □ Korean □ Chinese □ other:
    11.2.1 We generally communicate with each other in □ Korean (%) □ Chinese (%) □ other languages: ________ (%)

11.3 I was a member of afterschool activity (i.e., sports/music) club(s) in junior high school, such as ________ club(s).

12. In the classroom, I generally speak
    12.1 to my teacher in □ Korean (%) □ Chinese (%) □ other languages: ________ (%)
    12.2 to my classmates in □ Korean (%) □ Chinese (%) □ other languages: ________ (%)

13. During the class breaks and after the class hours, I spoke
    13.1 to my teacher in □ Korean (%) □ Chinese (%) □ other languages: ________ (%)
    13.2 to my classmates in □ Korean (%) □ Chinese (%) □ other languages: ________ (%)
B. AT SCHOOL with TEACHERS and CLASSMATES 在学校与同学及老师

B1. Elementary School (grade 1-6):

8. What type of elementary school did you attend?
   □ Korean nationality school □ Chinese public school □ other

8.1 From grade _____, as the foreign language, I learned □ Japanese □ English □ Other _____

8.2 Ethnic background of two of my best friends in elementary school were
   □ Korean □ Chinese □ other:

8.2.1 We generally communicate with each other in □ Korean (%) □ Chinese (%) □ other languages: ________ (%)

9. In the classroom, I generally spoke
   9.1 to my teacher in □ Korean (%) □ Chinese (%) □ other languages: ________ (%)
   9.2 to my classmates in □ Korean (%) □ Chinese (%) □ other languages: ________ (%)

10. During the class breaks or after the class hours, I spoke
    10.1 to my teacher in □ Korean □ Chinese □ other languages:
    10.2 to my classmates in □ Korean □ Chinese □ other languages: ________

B2. Junior High School (grade 7 - 9):

11. What type of junior high did you attend?
    □ Ethnic Korean public school □ Chinese public school □ other: ________

11.1 From grade _____, as the foreign language, I learned □ Japanese □ English □ Other ________

11.2 Ethnic background of two of my best friends in elementary school were
    □ Korean □ Chinese □ other:

11.2.1 We generally communicate with each other in □ Korean (%) □ Chinese (%) □ other languages: ________ (%)

11.3 I was a member of afterschool activity (i.e., sports/music) club(s) in junior high school, such as ________ club(s).

12. In the classroom, I generally speak
    12.1 to my teacher in □ Korean (%) □ Chinese (%) □ other languages: ________ (%)
    12.2 to my classmates in □ Korean (%) □ Chinese (%) □ other languages: ________ (%)

13. During the class breaks and after the class hours, I spoke
    13.1 to my teacher in □ Korean (%) □ Chinese (%) □ other languages: ________ (%)
    13.2 to my classmates in □ Korean (%) □ Chinese (%) □ other languages: ________ (%)

B3. Senior High School (grade 10-12):

14. In the senior high school that I am currently attending,
14.1 I am currently attending the □ Wen-ke (文科  art and social science) □ Li-ke (理科 science) class.
14.2 From grade _____, as the foreign language, I learned □ Japanese □ English □ Other ________
14.3 The ethnic background of two of my best friends now is □ Korean ______ □ Chinese ______ □ Other ________
14.3.1 We generally communicate with each other in □ Korean _______ (%) □ Chinese _______ (%) □ other ________ (%)
14.4 I am currently a member of ______________ (i.e., sports or music) club(s).

15. After high school graduation, I am planning to attend
□ Universities/colleges in China □ Universities/colleges in South Korea □ to find a job □ Other: ________

16. My dream job is: a) __________________________ b) __________________________

C. AFTER-SCHOOL 课外时间

17. I am attending after-school private language courses or tutoring. □ Yes □ No

If Yes: I have been taking the following language training:
1. (1) _______________ for _____ years, generally for ____ hours/week.
2. _______________ for _____ years, generally for ____ hours/week.

18. I am attending other after-school programs/activities (i.e., sports, music, or arts). □ Yes □ No

If yes: The type of programs/activities I am attending is ________________

18.1 The programs/activities are mainly carried out in □ Korean ______ (%) □ Chinese ______ (%) □ Other: _________ (%)

19. The ethnic background of two of my best friends now is □ Korean ____ □ Chinese ____ □ Other: _______

19.1 We generally communicate with each other in □ Korean ______ (%) □ Chinese ______ (%) □ other ________ (%)

20. In which language(s) do you prefer to watch animation or movies?
□ Korean ______ (%) □ Chinese ______ (%) □ Other: ________ (%)

20.1 If you are watching the animation movies in more than one language, please list the order of the languages by listing the main ones in the front: (1) __________ (2) __________ (3) __________

21. In which language do you read comic books or animation books?
□ Korean ______ (%) □ Chinese ______ (%) □ Other: ________ (%)

21.1 If you read comic books or watching animation movies in more than one language, please list the order of the languages by listing the main ones in the front (i.e., Korean/Chinese/Japanese):
(1) __________ (2) __________ (3) __________ (4) __________
Focus Group and Individual Interviews

Focus Group Interviews

Attn: All (Student or Teacher) Participants

______________ (dd/mm/yy)

Hi Again dear all,

Thank you for your interests to this research project. You are invited to one of the following two focus group discussions or interviews.

The purpose of the focus group activities is to have better understanding about challenges of the use of languages in public secondary school classrooms. During this semi-structured discussions or interviews, along with the other participants in the focus group, you will be asked to share your thoughts based on some open ended questions as shown in the sample below. As informed in the participant consent form, the focus group discussion or interview(s) will be audio recorded or video-taped.

Participation to these interviews will bring load of benefits to you in many ways. However, your participation to the interview(s) is entirely on voluntary basis. Should you have any questions or concerns regarding attached documents or my study, please feel free to contact me anytime in your convenience.

I look forward to talking to you again, and hope we can work together in this exciting project.

With warm regards,

Meilan Piao EHLERT 英里特 朴美兰
Doctoral Program (LCL) 语言及文化教育 博士研究生院
Faculty of Education 教育学院
Simon Fraser University 西门菲沙大学
www.sfu.ca/educ
Focus Group Interview Protocol (Students)

Re: Challenges of the Use of Languages in Public School Classrooms

Time of Interview: __________________________
Date: __________________________
Place: __________________________
Interviewer: __________________________
Interviewee: __________________________

(Briefly describe the Project)

Sample Questions for Discussion:

Medium of Instructions

- Do you prefer to learn ______ subject (i.e., math, science, history) in ______ language (i.e., Korean and/or Hanyu)? Why do you think so?
- Do you prefer to learn ______ language subject (i.e., Hanyu, Japanese or English) from a native speaker? Why do you think so?

Using of Home Language (i.e., Korean or Chinese)

- What has your experience of using your home language (mother tongue or first language) in your classroom been?
- How do/did your teachers react when you use native languages in their classrooms?
- How do you feel or what has been your experience when you are facing conflicts with your teacher(s) in using home languages in his/her classes?

Notes: Home language: mother tongue or first language

Using target language (in foreign language classes)

- What has been your experience of taking a foreign language class where your teacher using the target language (i.e., Japanese or English) in your classroom?

(Thank the individual for participating in this interview. Assure him or her of confidentiality of responses and potential future interviews.)
Focus Group Interview Protocol (Teachers)

Re: Challenges of the Use of Languages in Public School Classrooms

Time of Interview: ____________________________
Date: ____________________________________________________________________________
Place: ____________________________________________________________________________
Interviewer: _______________________________________________________________________
Interviewee: _______________________________________________________________________

(Briefly describe the Project)

Sample Questions for Discussion:

Medium of Instructions

- Which language(s) (i.e., Korean and/or Hanyu, and/or Japanese/English) do you use when you are teaching ______ subject (i.e., math, science, history, foreign language)? For what reasons? *Please list three reasons of why do you choose to use particular language(s) for your teaching.

NNST vs. NST: If you are a foreign language teacher,

- Which language (i.e., Korean, Hanyu, Japanese or English) do you prefer to use when you are teaching the target language (i.e., Japanese or English)?
- As a non-native speaker teacher (NNST) of the target language (Japanese or English), do you think that you have disadvantage compared to a native speaker teacher (NST) of the target language? Why? *Please list three reasons why do you think so.

Using home languages (i.e., Korean or Chinese)

- What has your experience of using your home language (mother tongue or first language) in your classroom when you are teaching?
- How do/did your students react when you are using their native languages (i.e., Korean or Chinese) in your classrooms?
- How do you feel or what has been your experience when you are facing conflicts with some students when you are using their home languages to teach in your classes?

Notes: Home language: mother tongue or first language

Using target language (in foreign language classes)

- What has your experience of using the target language (i.e., Japanese or English) in your classroom when you are teaching?
- How do/did your students react?
- What has been your experience when you are facing conflicts with some students when you are using the target languages to teach in your classes?

(Thank the individual for participating in this interview. Assure him or her of confidentiality of responses and potential future interviews.)