

Bank Street College of Education

Educate

Graduate Student Independent Studies

Spring 5-11-2020

Asian American: a personal exploration of my identities and some possible implications for teachers

Seung Youn (Danielle) Kim

Follow this and additional works at: <https://educate.bankstreet.edu/independent-studies>



Part of the [Bilingual, Multilingual, and Multicultural Education Commons](#), and the [Educational Methods Commons](#)

Running head: Asian American: an exploration of identities

Asian American: a personal exploration of my identities and some possible implications

for teachers

By

Seung Youn Danielle Kim

Literacy and Childhood General Education

Mentor: Mimi Rosenberg

Submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirements of the degree of

Master of Science in Education

Bank Street College of Education

2020

Abstract

As the population of Asian Americans in the United States grows fast, so does the incidence of racist attacks on Asian Americans. The urgency for anti-racist educators to commit to learning how to best serve Asian American children, their families, and their communities in accordance with antiracist, counter hegemonic linguistic practices, and culturally sustaining principles grows exponentially. Through a deep reflection on my personal and often painful experience as a Korean immigrant in the United States, I use an interdisciplinary approach including Socio- and Racio-linguistics, Social Psychology, Anthropology, and Culturally Sustaining Pedagogy, to analyze some of the challenges that I have experienced and observed throughout my life here as a student, teacher and permanent resident. My focus is primarily on three groups of Asian Americans from North Eastern Asia—China, Japan, and Korea. Included are some suggestions for teachers who want to learn more about recognizing, understanding, and being responsive to the myriad strengths that their Asian American students, families and communities bring. I conclude with an afterword that recent attacks on Asian Americans related to the COVID-19 crisis emboldened me to write.

Keywords: Asian Americans, culturally sustaining pedagogy, culturally responsible pedagogy, language development, language acquisition, culture and language, multilingualism, race, raciolinguistics

Acknowledgement

My deepest gratitude goes to my mentor, Mimi, and the thoughtful supporter, mentor, and fantastic friend, Jina Accardo. Without you, I would not have been able to come to where I am now with this project. Thank you, and *ありがとう* (/arigatō/, “thank you”).

My appreciation also extends to the members—professors, classmates, and friends—of Bank Street Community who became parts of my precious memory, here at Bank Street. I acquired the courage and the language that I was looking for to describe who I am after I came here.

Lastly, my dear husband, J. J, and my fantastic family, who fed me with food, love, and encouragement in the moments of disbelief in myself— I am greatly indebted to your love and support. Words cannot describe how grateful I am to you. Thank you. Thank you. Thank you. 사랑해.

Table of Contents

Abstract	Error! Bookmark not defined.
Acknowledgement	1
Table of contents	3
Structure of this thesis	4
Part 1: Guiding questions to this thesis and some working definitions	5
Where I am from	22
Part 2:	25
Chapter 1: 2007, Can you speak English?	25
Chapter 2: 2009, Language of Power	34
Chapter 3: 2012, はじめまして (/HA-JI-ME-MA-SHI-TE/:Nice to meet you in Japanese)	42
Part 3:	52
Chapter 4: 2019, What does it mean to be a teacher? Smile!	52
Chapter 5: 2019, Child Study of Ethan: On being understood	59
Chapter 6: 2019, J and J's mom	72
Chapter 7: 2020, Let's talk	78
Afterword: Reflections in the time of COVID-19	82
References	87
Appendix	96

Structure of this thesis

This thesis has three major parts, which I will describe below.

In the first part of this thesis, I explain why this project is personally meaningful to me by outlining the guiding questions that shaped my study with working definitions of the critical terms used in this work. I include this part, hoping that the readers who are interested in any topics related to race, culture, language, Asian American identity, multilingualism, culture, and education may find my work meaningful, somehow. The topics that I will be discussing are not new, but they are discussed in a personal, first-person perspective. This perspective is what I hope to be found a little different.

The second part is the collection of my personal vignettes, and analyses of them with related research. The stories will be examined and compared with other scholarly works, with the purpose of analyzing myself as a language learner. Here I will discuss how my language development and acquisition have changed as I have gotten more acquainted with the cultural context where the languages are used.

The final third part of the paper will develop the discussion of intersectionality of race, language, Asian American identity, multilingualism, and culture from the perspective of an observer and an educator. Some of the vignettes that will be included are from my observations made as a teacher in various school settings. One of the vignettes will be from the child study that I completed as a part of my graduate school course requirement.

The last part of this thesis will be my reflections on this journey of completing this project. This section is created as an addition to the original plan of my thesis and is

more relevant to 2020, the time the entire world witnesses the most unexpected tragedy of the pandemic, COVID-19.

Part 1: Guiding questions to this thesis and some working definitions

Why does culture matter in learning, teaching, and in the classroom? At least, at Bank Street, this was rather a statement than a question. Culture matters in learning, in teaching, and in the classroom. This proposition was more of a given, accepted axiom; however, I think it is necessary to discuss why, because that was how I started this project as my Independent Study.

Before answering that question, I asked, what is culture? Based on my experience in this country, the United States, culture was a very fluid *idea*. This idea, “culture,” is described with words like tradition or the name of nationality, like “American culture” without much discussion on what its definition would be. Culture, the word, has the shape of language, but its content is vague and contextual. The imagery and description that come to one’s mind associated with this word, “culture,” are varied; it could mean all different forms of art, literature, or historical records. It could also mean the system of values shared by those who have the same nationality, use the same language, and understand the social norms or ideas generally accepted by the group. It could mean historical heritage bound by geography.

Despite all the different ways to explain what culture is, one thing is clear: it always carries a sense of belonging. The sense of belonging is associated with a group whose members share “the same imagery and description” in their minds. I believe, in most cases, the usage of the word “culture” is tied with the concept of nationality or

national identities. Therefore, culture is inseparable from the fundamental ideas that build identity—in my case, I would use “Korean culture” to describe my sense of belonging to Korean society, Korean nationality, and the ideas that I learned from Korean history classes that help me identify myself as a “Korean.” Whenever I use “Korean culture,” it means many things: my ethnicity, my family history, my origin, my language, my food, my family, history of Korea, and social norms accepted and understood in the Korean language by Korean people. It is too many to count and boundless, but one thing is clear: all these are mine, and I claim that they are mine. I belong to the group identified as “Korean.” Where I am from, originally, has a very strong sense of social belonging, to begin with; the race of people is rather homogeneous, and its language is very much standardized, while there are various forms of regional dialects. Almost all of their ethnic background is Korean. The ideas and propaganda portrayed in upbringing and education are also rather homogeneous, *compared* to those of the United States.

This is the keyword, “compared.” The culture, particularly when it is associated with identity, is what draws the line between me and non-me. Eventually, it becomes a reference point in my cognition, in my understanding of the world. The identity associated with culture is fortified as time goes by with experience. Cole and Scribner (1974) summarize:

Perception, memory, and thinking all develop as part of the general socialization of a child and are inseparably bound up with the patterns of activity, communication, and social relations into which he enters. The very physical environment that he encounters has been transformed by human effort. His every experience has been shaped by the culture of which he is a member and infused

with socially defined meanings and emotions. Consider language, for example. It is at one and the same time a vital social force and an individual tool of communication and thought; it is so to speak, on both sides of the culture-cognition relationship. (p. 8)

Life experiences I had from South Korea assured me and solidified the idea of what culture was, and how culture impacted my identity as Korean. As the sociologist, Kai Erikson (1966) notes:

Deviant forms of behavior, by marking the outer edges of group life, give the inner structure its special character and thus supply the framework within which the people of the group develop an orderly sense of their own cultural identity. (p.14)

The term, “culture,” in this thesis is used as an all-embracing term to describe everything aforementioned. Mostly, the working definition of “culture” in this thesis will focus on how this term is used to shape one’s identity.

Going back to my guiding question of this thesis, why does the culture matter in teaching, in learning, and in classrooms? Part of the reason why culture is so close to child development is explained in my efforts to define what culture is. Culture defines and determines how children integrate into society; it suggests to children that they will have to learn certain patterns of socialization in the acceptable ways of communication with other members in the society to connect with other members who share the same cultural customs and values.

For children, classrooms are usually the first place that they learn such patterns outside of families. They learn language(s), how to socialize, how to display manners,

how to appropriately address issues, and so on in a bigger group, so that they successfully connect to others. In a sense, classrooms become a place for children to see themselves and their culture in comparison to others'; children meet other children who grew up differently from one another. They compare, and they start drawing the lines between "me" and "non-me." They also see "different culture" in teachers as well.

Despite the importance of the culture, the efforts to define what culture is and discussions of cultures are hard to find in classrooms. From my current teaching career as a middle school teacher, I observe that many children learn American history, but without much discussion of the meaning of "American." From my schooling experience as a learner in America (the United States of America), it seems to me that there are vague underlying assumptions about American culture. One is that people in America know what "American culture" is; and the other is that they commonly accept that "American culture" was built upon European heritage and some contributions that immigrants made followed by European pioneers. Such assumptions, however, cause ambiguity and confusion when students first learn that Europeans stole American land from indigenous people, and that non-Whites,¹ mostly Black, are forced to move to the American continent from their homes to become a source of labor as slaves.

The side effects of such assumptions also include a missing sense of belonging of a group of American people in America such as immigrants, Asian Americans, Latinx Americans, and Americans with (generally non-White) races. Like myself, such groups of Americans have been neglected in the mainstream conversation of American history.²

¹ In this thesis, I capitalized White and Black when referring to races. I believe that White or Black should be capitalized in the same way that Asian, Latinx, etc. are capitalized.

² Women is another category that should be included in the list as well, but this paper will mostly focus on racial groups.

After living in this country for a little over twelve years now, I still find it hard to define what American culture is, let alone who can be considered as an American. I have felt that I do not belong here; I rarely resonated with even a part of so-called “American culture.” However, if America is a country built by immigrants and its culture is shaped by immigrants, why do I feel that I am not a part of America? “An immigrant” means a person who moved to live in the land to which he or she moved. An Asian immigrant, therefore, I work, I pay taxes, and I live here. Yet, I am a foreigner and a stranger. How can I be an immigrant, the very founding idea of what American is, but still a foreigner in this country that I live in? Why am “I” missing in this generally accepted assumption of what “American” culture is?

I am not just “American,” but “Asian American.” Being born in South Korea gives me “Korean” ethnicity, and that means I am an “Asian” in this country. “Asian” is often used to distinguish me from Americans who live here. It is also a word used to refer to people who look like me—features like black hair, rather pale skin, and eyes without double eyelids. “Asian Americans” is most often used to describe people with Northern Eastern Asian ancestry, like Korean, Chinese, and Japanese. While Asia is such a huge continent, people in this country, including myself, forget that countries like Russia and India also should be categorized as Asia and people from such countries also should be considered as “Asians.” What is unique about “Asian Americans,” the term, is that it is so contextual that the word, “Asian” is flexibly chosen to replace the ethnic heterogeneity of people who are categorized as “Asian Americans.” Asian American, therefore, the term and its use are never accurate. It is the term to include all, yet fails to include even one.

Despite its inaccuracy, in this thesis, I will be using “Asian Americans” as a term to address “Northern-Eastern Asians living in the United States,” referring individuals with Korean, Chinese³, and Japanese ethnicities for the lack of the better word. The use of this term should be justified because there are no other words to replace; it is not to essentialize people with various Asian ethnic backgrounds under this singular term.

This identity crisis of immigrants like myself is not new. I just cannot find the word to describe myself in this country; I am not entirely American, but “Asian American” does not feel like I belong to the term. It is hard for me to describe myself as a Korean as I lived here long enough to say that I am only made out of Korean values. I am a creature of American influence as well. For some time, I thought if I were born here, then maybe I could describe myself as “Korean American” without any confusion and hesitation until I interacted with Asian American students born in the US who thought that they were not Americans. A sense of belonging is fundamental to defining culture and identity to anyone, and it comes across as a surprise to me that they do not consider themselves “Americans.” However, they are American citizens born in the United States.

Then, “who is American, and what is American?” and “what makes them say that they are not Americans?” Or, what makes some people say that they are Americans? “American” is the word whose idea is either too big, too broad, or too foreign that it leaves some Americans feeling alienated. They rather choose to use some modifiers to fill that gap, by identifying themselves according to their ancestry, race, ethnicity and use terms like “Korean Americans,” “Italian Americans,” and “Japanese Americans” to describe themselves. It almost seems like the word “American” is used like a suffix

³ Chinese in here is used to include Taiwanese and Cantonese as well.

whose meaning is limited to “people who live in the geographical boundary of the United States,” while their identities which give them a sense of belonging are associated with the modifier in front of “American.”

However, I believe that the word “American” should be more than a mere suffix, if “American” is the word that is true to its national ideologies, such as “country of immigrants,” “all men are created equal,” or “diversity.” I believe the American identity should be defined as “multicultural,” before anything else, and America is the place where diverse cultures can and should coexist, yet, fused simultaneously. Therefore, the word, “American” carries so much potential, and can be used as an inclusive term to describe one’s identity.

Classrooms, being the place in which all individuals bring a piece of who they are, can realize such potential by discussing the innumerable cultures that “American” can include. Classrooms also become places for immigrants to learn about “America.” This is aligned with the goal of education as “democratic equality” (Labaree, 1997, p. 42). Labaree (1997) argues that “strong ideological tradition in American history that sees schools as an expression of democratic political ideals and as a mechanism for preparing children to play constructive roles in a democratic society” (p. 43). Based on this argument, I reckon that the ultimate purpose of education should be empowering and training children as future citizens of the United States. Such purpose is to enable each and one of the children to achieve the best possible happiness in their lives by realizing their lifelong goals while they make meaningful contributions to society as citizens who understand civic virtues shared in that very society—the culture.

This specific purpose makes schools social institutions where children learn “a fully developed sense of civic virtue” and gain the ability to make sensible judgments on what qualities should be considered as “virtues” (Labaree, 1997, p.43). Therefore, I believe that children should be learning what “American” means, and how that is relatable to themselves.

The issue arises when children cannot relate themselves to such virtues and meaning of American, and this occurs because the classrooms fail to present the histories of all people who live in America. “Master Narrative of American History,” according to Takaki (2008), notes that classrooms have been presenting the United States as “our country . . . settled by European immigrants, and Americans are white” (p. 4). As a result, “‘Race,’ . . . has functioned as a ‘metaphor’ necessary to the ‘construction of Americanness’: in the creation of our national identity, [therefore,] ‘American’ has been defined as ‘white’” (Takaki, 2008, p. 4). The harm it brings to the classroom is that children who are not White but learn this narrative will remain feeling ostracized. Children who do not relate themselves as “White” get the messages like, “you do not belong here,” and “you are not an American.” Soon enough, “you do not belong here” becomes “I do not belong here” in children’s minds.

“Master Narrative” has cultivated a culture in school as well as in society that it is okay for such children considered to be “minorities” to experience “I-do-not-belong-here” side effects from generation to generation. Their very own ethnicity, the culture they grew up with becomes the very reason that they are not Americans. It makes them feel and think that they are not included in this “Narrative,” making “American” omitted

from the list of words they would use to describe themselves. One child who feels alienated in the classroom, means one less American.

Paris and Alim (2017) state that the purpose of “Master Narrative” has been “to forward the largely assimilationist and often violent White imperial project, with students and families being asked to lose or deny their languages, literacies, cultures, and histories in order to achieve in schools” (p. 1). The result of keeping the education as-is, using the “Master Narrative,” is destructive. The purpose of education, which is to foster future citizens of America, results in losing citizens.

Dissonance of “home/ancestral culture” and what is taught as “American culture” at school results in people living here, working, paying taxes, yet, thinking that they are not a part of this country, thinking that they are not Americans. This is a failure of education, and the only way to respond to this failure is to teach and educate children in a “culturally sustaining way” to show how “American” is an inclusive word, rather than an exclusive one.

Culturally Sustaining Pedagogy (CSP) seeks to perpetuate and foster—to sustain—linguistic, literate, and cultural pluralism as part of schooling for positive social transformation. This is why I believe the culture matters in classrooms.

CSP positions dynamic cultural dexterity as a necessary good and sees the outcome of learning as . . . critically enriching strengths rather than replacing deficits. (Paris & Alim, 2017, p. 1)

Therefore, discussing culture in classroom is so much more than just learning about each other; it matters because it fosters positive social transformation.

Culture is a collection of many ideas, and language has a special place in discussing it. Language gives shapes to ideas. Abstract concepts like culture cannot be communicated without language. Dissemination of “Master Narrative” ideas was possible through the medium called English language. For example, more and more people are getting educated that “ching-chong,” “chink,” and “gook” are racial slurs. These words also have existed for quite some time since the immigration of Chinese people to the United States without being explicitly advertised as racial slurs. The racist idea behind these words existed for a long time, and it proves a point that “[l]anguage is both the medium through which we obtain a great deal of our data concerning culture and cognition and, according to some theories, the major determinant of our thought process.” (Cole & Scribner, 1974, p. 39).

The fact that English language has some words that distinguish “Asian Americans” as “foreigners” with negative connotations, like chink, mirrors that America has been preserving “White America” narratives, and has participated in the perpetuation of the idea behind “White America.” One of the interviewees from New York Times’ short documentary video about the term, “Asian American,” also echoes this idea:

When my parents talked about Americans they clearly meant white Americans, when they meant any other type of Americans they named them, they said Black people, or Latinos, or Native-American Indians was the language they would use for Native people, so I understood early on that a real American was a white American, everybody else had to be qualified. (Gandbhir & Stephenson, 2016, par. 1)

Languages used for a long time in this country passed this idea that America is for “Whites” from generation to generation.

In addition to this definition of language, the thesis will also view language, especially English language, from the perspective of language of power. While America is a country with people with various cultural backgrounds as well as linguistic backgrounds, those who speak English language, its de facto language, can exercise so much power, compared to those who cannot. The power coming from the ability to use English language extends beyond knowing legal terms or medical terms that brings a great deal of benefit when people live day-to-day life. Even among those who can speak, when spoken with foreign accents, the level of power shifts towards those who speak English with proper accent. English spoken in Asian accents, including inability to pronounce certain letter sounds, becomes a barometer that measures “Americanness” of “Asian Americans” in the United States. The less spoken with accent, the more assimilated to “American”—White American. The variety of idiosyncrasies found in spoken American English language of Asian Americans not only sound different, but also get treated differently by Asians and non-Asians alike. The proper use or pronunciation of English language has been the most significant factor that distinguishes what is American or not for Asian American immigrants. (Or, even used as a factor to tell the first generation immigrants apart from the second or more n-th generation immigrants.) This is something that I experienced as an Asian American personally, and verbal and written records produced by other Asian Americans also support that. These were records retrieved from a short documentary film published by New York Times referred to in the

previous paragraph of this thesis. Asian Americans were asked to share what it means to be an Asian American in this country.

I think the conversations I had about race with my family were primarily led by my dad, and it would just be in little lessons. Like I'd pick up the phone and I'd say hello, and he goes, 'I can tell you're Korean over the phone,' and I was like, 'It's because I am Korean, and I'm on the phone with you,' and he goes, 'No, no one should be able to tell you're Korean on the phone, people should just think you're American'. (Gandbhir & Stephenson, 2016, par. 1)

My dad used to run a small business and I remember people coming in who weren't Korean and just white customers coming in, and they would just tell my dad to go back to his country. And this was before my dad had a full grasp on the English language and I remember seeing my dad's hands like being balled up in fists underneath the counter but my dad just saying, "Ok thank you, come back soon." (Gandbhir & Stephenson, 2016, par. 1)

From a New York Times daily podcast transcription that included the interview with Jiayang Fan, a staff journalist for The New Yorker magazine, I also found:

Like, I remember going to the mall for the first time with my mother. And my mom's favorite pastime was window shopping, just looking at things that she couldn't afford. And I remember one time someone trying to hand her maybe a flyer for some store, and she said, no, thanks. But she couldn't pronounce it correctly, so this young man said "No sex? Did you say no sex? No sex?" And I think I was like 11 or 12 at the time. I remember that my mother actually just in

this embarrassed way laughed, like out of anxiety, like she wanted it to be OK. She wanted to respond in a way to indicate that she was not offended. But I remember the way that my cheek just felt hot and red, they grew, and how I felt so humiliated on my mother's behalf. And that experience feels seared into my brain, not just because of the insult, but because my mother had to swallow her own humiliation. (Garrison, 2020, par. 45)

Amy Tan, in her essay, "Mother Tongue," describes "the kind of English [her] mother speaks" is considered to be 'broken' or 'fractured'(n.d.)

Amy continues:

I heard other terms used, "limited" English," for example. But they seem just as bad, as if everything is limited, including people's perceptions of the limited English speaker. I know this for a fact, because when I was growing up, my mother's "limited" English limited my perception of her. I was ashamed of her English. I believed that her English reflected the quality of what she had to say. That is, because she expressed them imperfectly her thoughts were imperfect. And I had plenty of empirical evidence to support me: the fact that people in department stores, at banks, and at restaurants did not take her seriously, did not give her good service, pretended not to understand her, even acted as if they did not hear her. (n.d.)

As for the recent Asian American immigrants like myself, English language becomes the necessity required to survive in America. As I learn English language, I realize that I not only struggled to pronounce English sentences and words perfectly, but also made myself conform to the ideal, perfect English language speaker (or user). As I still find myself

incapable and diffident in using the English language in the United States, I always wondered if that was due to the cultural differences that I did not have a chance to get exposed to while growing up. If only I had grown up here, speaking in English, I might have been able to speak in English language perfectly, and people would not be able to tell whether I am from South Korea or not, just from listening to me, and I might have been able to be considered as an American.

Therefore, I agree mildly with the theory of language relativism⁴, not to an extreme extent, as my experience tells me that the world is differently experienced in different language communities. For example, I grew up in South Korea, and the word, “sea,” (that would be when sea is translated into 바다) would bring me certain images of South Korean sea. Whereas the same word would bring a different image to those who grew up near Jones Beach on Long Island. To communicate precisely, both I and those who grew up on Long Island would have to communicate clearly what those images are. I wondered if the source of my insecurity towards English language would be coming from the gap of this precision in communication, and wondered if it was my cultural background that hindered me from acquiring proper English language as well as developing it.

As I explore these ideas, observations, experiences, questions, and readings that fueled my study, I noticed that relatively few studies were conducted on the interrelations among culture, language, and education of Asian Americans and I will discuss them next.

⁴The relativity of language hypothesis: One of the preliminary statements of this hypothesis is “Linguistic Influence on Thought: The structure and lexicon of one’s language influences how one perceives and conceptualizes the world, and they do so in a systematic way.” Retrieved from: <https://stanford.library.sydney.edu.au/archives/spr2015/entries/relativism/supplement2.html>

Lo and Reyes (2004) point out, in their summary of the Association of Asian American Studies conference, the lack of research that focuses on Asian American English speakers and their discourse in linguistic anthropology. Such a trend is consistently addressed in the book, *Representations: Doing Asian American Rhetoric*. Mao and Young (2008) also highlight that:

we have seen little work that focuses directly on how Asian Americans use the symbolic resources of language in social, cultural, and political arenas to disrupt and transform the dominant European American discourse and its representations of Asians and Asian Americans, thus re-presenting and reclaiming their identity and agency. (p. 2)

On the other hand, I was able to locate a relatively larger number of studies that focus on the incorrect use of English use among Korean English learners, and how to address them in the field of English education. Such incorrect use included commonly found errors that Korean English language learners make, such as an article omission, and how linguistic differences between Korean and English like ditransitive construction become a challenge for Korean English language learners to achieve proficiency in English language. (Iris-Wilbanks, 2013; Kim, 2006; Ko, Ionin & Wexler, 2009; Nam, 2010; Year & Gordon, 2009). Most of such research appeared to focus on “correcting” such errors by changing English language education for Korean English language learners. Out of these studies, one of them ascribed Korean words with English etymology currently used in Korea as one of the reasons for poor English performance of Korean English learners, accusing that such words are linguistically incorrect products of English education.

For example, in an article written by Iris-Wilbanks (2013), Korean words with American English roots are described as mis-placed English words, mentioning the author herself should have been more cautious when she was teaching English language in Korea, regretting not correcting her ESL students when they used such Korean words (Iris-Wilbanks, 2013). One of the examples that was identified to be misplaced was “수퍼/su:-pə:/.” This word came from “supermarket,” which is an English word. The word “Supermarket” can be written as 슈퍼마켓/su:-pə:-ma:-ket/ in Korean written language, approximating the sounds of the word, “supermarket.” This specific word, 슈퍼마켓, was shortened to 수퍼, and then it became one of the nouns that represent grocery stores in Korea. From the perspective of users of this word, as I have been using this word while I was growing up, this is not a misplaced word. The Korean word, 수퍼, is used in everyday context, and this should be considered as a localized Korean word with American English etymology. While there may be another discussion about how such words influence the learning of Korean ESLs or EFLs, the perspective that views a certain usage of English language as “correct,” therefore, the rest of the usage of English language should be repaired, is simply wrong as sociolinguists agree that languages change and transform after the different languages contact each other (Winford, 2020). As Winford mentions: “most languages have been influenced at one time or another by contact, resulting in varying degrees of transfer of features from one to the other”.

Therefore, I would like to argue that Korean words like 수퍼/su:-pə:/ has to be considered as a transformed form of the Korean language after its contact with the English language. The languages are not static, as they always change, and the cultural values reflected on languages also change. I wonder if the writer of this paper had an

adequate understanding of Korean culture, despite her living experience in South Korea, because I had a quite different point of view when the writer claimed that such words with English etymology completely assimilated to Korean culture are “linguistically misplaced words.” To me, it was because this writer overlooked the cultural context of how English has evolved in Korea.

On the other hand, there were studies which focus on race, ethnicity, and language that view dialects as well as certain pronunciation distinctively appearing in certain demographics as “cultural phenomenon,” instead of viewing such English language as deficit (Driffill, 2017; Rosa and Flores, 2017; Alim, Rickford, & Ball, 2016). Such studies accept the unique English language use of certain ethnic groups as cultural, and linguistically developed use English language, and try to analyze the relationship between race and languages.

Such research shows that the language—especially, American English language—is multi-layered, and its use is closely connected to race as well as culture of those who speak the language. Therefore, the diversity of English language should be considered in the discussion of language education. Driffill introduced dialects like Irish English and Singlish (English localized in Singapore) as “linguistic influence and evolution” (2017). Driffill continued, “There is interest and joy to be had not only in learning the languages of other cultures, but also in appreciating the effect they might have had on English” (2017).

Such a view is also labeled as one of the sociolinguistic branches, raciolinguistics, and introduced and shared in the works of Rosa and Flores (2017) and Alim, Rickford, and Ball (2016). Raciolinguistics considers language as a racialized subject (Alim,

Rickford, & Ball, 2016, p. 1). While such studies have been largely focused on African-American and Latinx communities, it is still meaningful to apply such perspective to language learning and usage of Asian American communities in the United States. A different perspective from Asian race should be included in linguistic and language education studies as well. Teachers who interact with students with Asian ethnicity should be more sensitive to the growing population of this minority group of children. Therefore, my study could be found meaningful by those who interact with Asian Americans, Asian American parents, and Asian American children.

The thesis, in part, is my memoir, in part, is a literature review, and, in part, is an observational record with my analysis based on literature review. All such components are intermingled, and all memoir sections are presented in chronological order. My personal vignettes were used as I am multilingual and I had opportunities to explore where my language development process intersects with my own understanding of culture, and where it intersects with what I saw in classrooms as a novice teacher.

Where I am from

I was born in South Korea and grew up there until I turned 19 years old. Most of my schooling was done in South Korea, until I moved to New York for my college education. After graduation, I moved to Japan to start my post-college career. Thanks to all the fortunate circumstances, I was exposed to different cultures after adequate schooling, on top of the education on multiple languages. Adequate schooling as well as high-level of education are some factors that helped me to navigate through different cultures. Freeman and Freeman (2002) argue that the instructions for English as a New Language Learners (ENLs) should consider the level of schooling that the students had

received prior to coming to the United States. They found that the ENLs with inadequate or inconsistent schooling struggle more to achieve academically than those with adequate schooling. This was also the case for me, as I experienced relatively low language barriers, thanks to the education that I had received before coming to the United States and before working in Japan.

Languages carried me to many intersections: a Korean in American cultures, a Korean in Japanese cultures, an English speaker in Korea, a Japanese speaker in the United States, an English speaker in Japan. Such intersections were sometimes very specific to the context, such as working environments, schools, and home.

On the other hand, speaking English, Japanese and Korean in different settings, in academia, at home as well as at work, occasionally made me wonder if I was communicating in a way that a listener would understand without much confusion. This confusion is not far from the confusion I had with my identities. I almost thought as if I was developing three different identities when I was multilingual. Identities are formed, however, not with the uses of languages, but with the cultural context where the languages are used. Concepts that borrow the forms of language exist with the culture. For example, there is a saying in Korean that “when a crow flies, a pear fall.” No English translation can represent what it means, let alone explain what a crow has anything to do with a pear. It means that two events happened concurrently by coincidence. But some people started to think of this situation as very suspicious as they happened at the same time. In other words, when they see the pear falls, they start to blame the crow which flies by. In Korean culture, a crow can mean bad luck. When the concepts in one language are to be presented in other languages, the cultural context where the concepts are used are

not necessarily aligned with cultural contexts that fit to the other languages. My friend taught me that there is an expression, “correlation does not imply causation.” In this, this phrase does not have carry any cultural context of pear or a crow. The subtle nuance between these two phrases is perhaps why I could not bridge my identities to each other, leaving myself confused. Maybe, it is inevitable for cultural misunderstandings and miscommunications to occur, as it is for the clash amongst my identities. Often, I felt as if people misunderstood me, or as if I was misunderstood by others, and I found that misunderstanding arises from communication was partially from misunderstanding of culture, if not entirely. I always was curious to know how my culture that I grew up in impacted my English language (L2) communication, as well as Japanese language (L3) communication in the cultural contexts, respectively.

My next question is, then, about how can I teach children, knowing that such mistranslations will occur? What about children who moved to the United States in early childhood, yet grew up and are educated in the English language? If I had moved to the United States earlier, would the chance of being misinterpreted have been lower? What does it mean to be bilingual or multilingual for Northeastern Asian (American) students in the United States? How are they being perceived in America? How about their identities? Will they experience the mixed feelings of confusion?

This project is part of my efforts to answer some of these questions. In this thesis, therefore, I will be the subject of my research, hoping that my endeavor to answer these questions can provide different perspectives to view Asian Americans in this country and in classrooms.

Part 2:**Chapter 1: 2007, Can you speak English?**

It might have been my pronunciation. Often, my customers asked me if I could speak in English as soon as I had asked, “what would you like to drink?” It was Orlando, 2007, and there were not many Asians living in the neighborhood. My restaurant was located on Kirkman Road, close to the Universal Studio. International House of Pancakes, IHOP, was a popular weekend brunch restaurant for locals, and a safe-bet restaurant for visitors. Favorite questions of my customers were not about the pancakes that I was serving, but whether I could understand what they were going to order, or simply, where I was from. Of course, my answer was always: “Yes, I can speak English.” In fact, I had learned the English language in South Korea, in the Korean language, before I moved to Florida.

I was nineteen when I first landed at Orlando International Airport. Growing up in South Korea, I had learned the English language as one of the academic subjects from my K-12 schooling. The English language has been taught, independent of the cultural context of its origin. Occasional efforts to integrate subject matter with its cultural context were made through singalongs, watching movies, interpreting lyrics, and analyzing conversations from the movie scripts. The conversations and song lyrics were to be memorized for me to prepare English language proficiency tests performed every half a semester at schools. I had been taught by some non-Korean teachers to speak and listen as well as some Korean teachers to read and write in the English language. The classroom to learn language had over forty students with one teacher. The learning methods consist of memorizing words and their definitions translated in the Korean

language, reading short, nonfiction passages, solving reading comprehension problems related to those passages, and writing short responses to them. The syntactic, morphological studies of the English language were taught independently from their cultural context where the language could be used.

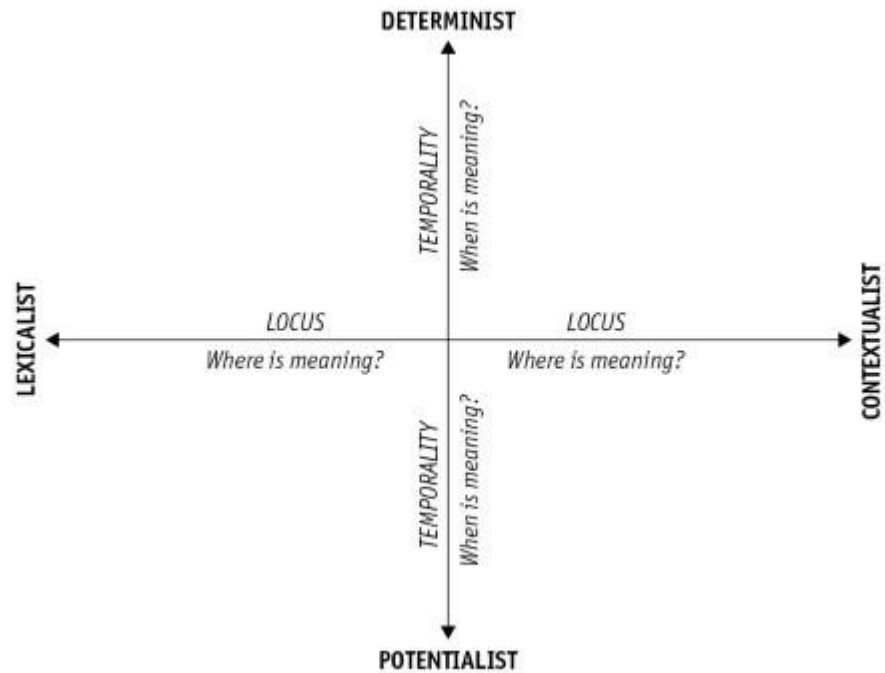
Therefore, my answer to most of my customers' questions was—yes, I could speak English. In fact, I just spoke to you in English, when I asked, “what would you like to drink?” How odd. My efforts to rationalize such seemingly odd questions from my customers, at that time, led me to come up with a couple of theories; maybe it was my pronunciation, maybe it was something else. After a while, I thought, my pronunciation was not clear enough, or my soft volume of voice could have been something that blocked this simple chain of conversation. What else would it be?

Then, I wondered, maybe it was because of how I looked. I look Asian. There had been a couple of occasions when I got unwanted attention because I was an Asian. More than twice, I heard “ching-chong” from the cars that passed me by. Or customers could magically know that I was “fresh off the boat.”

According to Chun (2016), my theories and possible explanations to the questions could have been analyzed differently. According to Chun's work to analyze “Ching-Chong,” the condescending phrase that is aimed at Asian Americans, “two basic axes” can be used to determine whether the communication carried racist assumptions; and two axes are locus, and temporality. (Chun, 2016).

Figure 1

Two axes of language meaning (Chun, 2016, p. 83)



The use of language always has its purpose, the pragmatics of the language. The question, “Can you speak English?” had some pragmatic purposes when my customers asked. Therefore, “Can you speak English?” can be analyzed with two axes, “locus” and “temporality” (Chun, 2016, p. 83).

In Chun’s work to analyze the meaning of “ching-chong,” Chun analyzes the Youtube video posted by a UCLA student who commented how Asian students speak on the phone in the library, using the phrase “ching-chong.” This particular phrase was interpreted as a racist comment by many viewers of this video. Chun first starts with the question whether there was any racism meaning in “ching-chong,” and moves on with “where was racist meaning” in the usage of “ching-chong.”

Some of the examples that Chun analyzed to answer the question “where is racist meaning” were multiple discourses posted by commenters of the video. The discourses that these commenters addressed “the ‘foreignness’ of Asian race.” (2016, p. 87). Some

examples used in this study address Asians foreigners and mention that: “. . . Foreigners need to learn and practice OUR ways. They are fortunate to be here show it by respecting our culture,” and “. . . Foreigners who come here NEED to learn to respect the American culture!” (p. 87).

Based on such analysis from Chun’s paper, the question from my customers can be interpreted as a question that addresses “foreignness” of my appearance—Asian race. If that is the case, racism was communicated in the question. Yet, I admit that I accepted that question at its face value because I acknowledged and viewed myself as a foreigner. This idea of foreignness was clearly shown in the usage of the word, “our.” “OUR” stood out as I was reading these examples. The idea of “foreignness” sometimes draws the line between “us” and “them,” and these words are almost synonyms used as “Americans” and “foreigners.” The idea of “us” was striking—as this word, the choice of this word displays the worldview of the person who uses this word. The idea that the world is divided into two separate groups, two different qualities, and two different values is very common, but quite monstrous.

Hans Rosling (2018) starts the first chapter of his book, *Factfulness*, discussing the instinct called “Gap instinct.” He records a short conversation he had with one of his students from his class when he was teaching about statistics and how the statistics show the changes in the world. He and his students were looking at some statistics on how the countries around the world were successfully decreasing child mortality. He talks about how “tribal societies in the rainforest and among traditional farmers in the remote rural areas across the world” increasingly have better survival rates of children. He goes on, saying that:

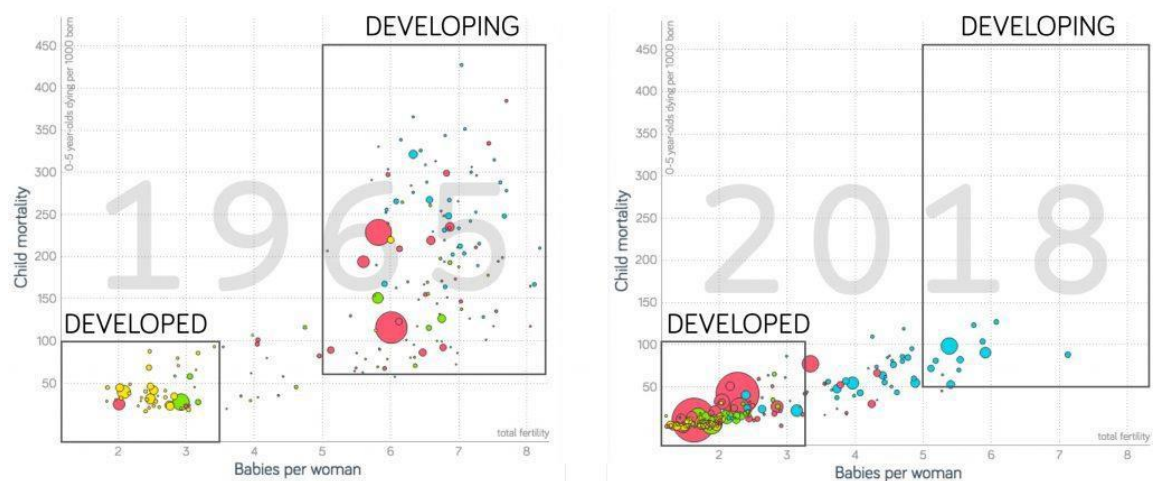
[T]he people you see in exotic documentaries on TV. Those parents struggle harder than anyone to make their families survive, and still they lose almost half of their children. Fortunately, fewer and fewer people have to live under such dreadful conditions. (Rosling, 2018, p. 22)

Then, one of his students said, “(but) They can never live like us.” (Rosling, 2018, p. 22).

This lecture was being held in Sweden, with students who lived in one of the most developed countries in the world. Hans Rosling asked this student what he meant by “they.” The student answered with more detailed explanation, “the Non-Western countries,” and added, “They can’t live like us.” Rosling continued and showed the data below and pointed out how this divided world view of his student’s was not true anymore—the data that supported his worldview was from 1965.

Figure 2

Children mortality rate in 1965 and 2018 (Gapminder Foundation. n.d.)



Surprisingly, the same worldview still applies to the logic behind these commenters made about Asian race in the United States: Asians (“they”) are foreigners, and “we” are Americans. This worldview is what essentializes where racism was in the usage of “ching-chong.”

Rosling continues in his book how such a worldview—the binary view, developed and developing—is no longer working to categorize countries around the world anymore. There are more countries that are at different economic levels, somewhere in between. He, therefore, suggests using 4 different levels to analyze economic development of countries, Level 4 being the countries most economically developed, that have rich and privileged cities such as New York City.⁵ At the end of this chapter, he writes how people who live in Level 4 countries view all the other Levels the same, poor. “When you live on Level 4, everyone on Levels 3, 2, and 1 can look equally poor, and the word *poor* can lose any specific meaning” (Rosling, 2018, p. 44). This captures the essence of the underlying idea of viewing Asian as foreigners, I believe. Level 4, culturally, has been the White culture in America as well as the White population. The rest of “levels” has been considered as “them,” not “us.”

However, the idea of what is American is supposed to be fluid because it is a very broad term. The word, “America(n)” includes certain groups of people, while it excludes the others. It includes “us,” but it excludes “them.” If the cultures could be categorized according to power each of them carries, just in the way Rosling categorized countries according to the economic power, where would “Asian” rank? This worldview, the one

⁵ New York City also has a population with poverty, and those who struggle with homelessness. This book merely talks of the “statistical” data with averaged income information.

that Rosling calls “Gap instinct,” explains why one of the commenters wrote, “They are fortunate to be here[.] show it by respecting our culture” (Chun, 2016, p. 87). Asians are fortunate to be here. Therefore, the question, “Can you speak English?” becomes a common question to ask of Asians, because I am not one of “us” who live in America; I am one of lucky Asians, while the rest of Asians in Asia are *poor*. This framework, according to Rosling, is so strong that he named it as “instinct.” In other words, racism is not only a framework, but it is so strong that it is almost an instinct. That is why the use of the word, “us,” caught my attention and sounded monstrous to me.

To continue analyzing “Can you speak English?,” I should take a look at when this question was asked, was there any racist meaning in it? This is according to the second question “when is racist meaning?,” the second axis of Chun’s framework. The timing of this question was typically after I asked a commonly used question, “Would you like to drink something?” Answering a question with another question is an odd way of conversation. Analyzing this particular “when does racist meaning occur” requires a specific perspective.

Chun (2016) defines such perspective:

A second axis of meaning concerns when racist meaning takes place . . . debates about whether [someone’s] act was racist focus on linguistic and contextual dimensions that have contributed to shaping the act’s meaning . . . While a linguistic act’s meaning can be complex because of multiple sources of determination, such as the simultaneous presence of relevant linguistic, situational, personal and cultural factors, each linguistic act is defined by

determinable, preexisting realities. Discussions that focus on whether a racist act 'is' or 'isn't' racist take this perspective." (p. 88)

According to this perspective, I have to focus on the "potential effects of language use as part of its meaning" (Chun, 2016, p. 88). Why does the question, seemingly irrelevant to the question just asked, come as if it is a start of a new conversation? The question itself sounds benign, yet, this question would not be an option for my customers under very similar circumstances.

When the other servers approached the same customers as their waitress, the question, "Can you speak English?" was never an option as an answer to the question, "What would you like to drink?" Therefore, by examining the effect of this question, this benign question, can be racist, because of the circumstance where this specific question is placed. This question serves one purpose: it is for me to answer "yes, I speak English" to my customers so that my answer fulfills the purpose of assuring my customers who were not strongly convinced whether I would be able to take their orders in or not. Funny enough, for me to answer this question, there is not much choice left for me, because even if I had liberty to say "No, I cannot speak English," that would not be a satisfying answer to my customers.

I cannot recall how I felt when they asked me that question, because I just had too many of them. All I can recall is that some of them were great tippers.

There is another possibility that this question carried, however. If this question carried any underlying meaning that I clearly did not comprehend at that moment, for example, if the question meant if I could fluently speak English that is culturally and linguistically appropriate at all times, then my answer would have been no. My ability to

communicate in English in 2007 was at a very functional level. I was able to fill out a police report when I was robbed; I was able to explain the details of the accident to my banker and get my money back from the insurance company; I was able to explain to my phone company all the details of how I lost my phone, yet, I am not sure if I was a fluent speaker that my customers wanted me to be.

Nonetheless, from a language development perspective, IHOP was my first classroom where I could nurture and learn the English language, with the cultural context, with people who live and think in the English language, and this classroom was very effective. And, in my culturally responsive classroom, at first, I was very silent. My silent period (Krashen, 1982) lasted about a month after I started working as a waitress. However, my silent period was not so silent. I recall the vivid image that I had in my mind for a while. It was as if my body and head were a vessel filled with all the English alphabet, waiting to spill out. The inside of the vessel was full and noisy. During this period, I was still able to say some important phrases required for me to do my job, like “Welcome to IHOP, how may I help you?” or “What would you like to drink?” I was able to understand what the customers said, 9 out of 10 times, and I was able to make correct assumptions of what they were referring to, but I could not make conversation beyond the topic of ordering food. My head was always full of many scenarios that I would be able to speak to all the possible questions, but when some of the customers asked about “floats” as in “float drinks” I was not even able to picture it in my head, until I saw the one made by another server.

One of my colleagues later told me that she thought that I was a quiet person, and we laughed together, because after the period, I was quite loud. Unlike my English

language classroom back in South Korea, the IHOP “classroom” was full of surprises, and where I was able to put many words and phrases I memorized in context.

Chapter 2: 2009, Language of Power

Growing up, speaking up to share my opinions was an idea that was so foreign that I never thought of speaking in public. The idea of “not speaking up” is deeply embedded in the culture that I grew up in as well. The idioms commonly used and stated were related to the use of languages, especially spoken language.

빈 수레가 요란하다. /bin-su:-le-ga:-jo:-la:n-ha:-da:/ (Literal translation: An empty cart makes more sounds.)

말 많은 집은 장맛도 쓰다. /ma:l-ma:nun-dzi:-un-dza:ŋ-ma:n-do-ʃu-da:/ (Literal translation: The household with more words makes bitter *jang* (Korean traditional spice commonly used in daily cooking).)

낮말은 새가 듣고 밤말은 쥐가 듣는다. /not-ma:l-un-se:-ga:-du:t-go:-dzy:-ga:-du:t-nun-da:/ (Literal translation: Birds listen to words said during the day, and mice listen to the words said during the night.)

말이 많으면 쓸 말이 적다. /ma:l-i:-ma:n-u-mə:n-ʃul-ma:l-i:-dzə:k-ta:/ (Literal translation: When you speak too much, you have fewer words to use.)

These idioms carry one message: watch what you say and how much you say. The first two idioms particularly highlight the negative connotation of talking “too much.” “An empty cart” from the first idiom indicates that a person who talks a lot sounds like an empty cart; his/her ideas are not worthy of sharing and unintelligent. Intelligence is strongly correlated with “talking” in this idiom, and the message is that talking less

means more intelligence. The second idiom also carries the same message; talking too much does not bear any good results. The third idiom sends a message, “be careful what you say,” because you never know who would be listening. All idioms not only emphasize how careful the speakers should be, but also talking is generally something that should be done with caution.

Talking was never encouraged in my schooling experience; talking out of turn, talking over when the teacher did not finish speaking, or raising hands even to ask questions in front of class were all out of norms. “One-sided teaching style” is very common in Korea, even in universities. (University Professor Team, 2015). This is partially due to the large size of the classes in schools in Korea. Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) learning environment report shows that on average, there are “30 or more students” in one classroom in South Korea. (2010). From 1990 to early 2000, I grew up with over 40 students in one classroom. Classroom sizes matter for the effectiveness of teaching. It is highly difficult for teachers to be attentive to individual requests and preferences in classrooms with more than 30 students. (NCTE, 2014; NICHD, 2004; Whitehurst & Chingos, 2011). Although it is not the direct evidence that learning is passive, teaching tends to be only lectures. Additionally, in such classrooms, students also have to think of others and how others would think of them (Tian et al. 2017). Talking in front of others may benefit the entire classroom, but it may interfere with the entire class as well. If 40 students all want to share what they think, the teacher cannot lead the class. Therefore, the opportunities to ask questions are not initiated from the learners, but from the teachers.

On the other hand, such classrooms not only foster the culture of listening, but also reinforce it. Active listening is at the heart of Asian culture. The culture of listening is rooted deep in Asian philosophies. Li (2012) records that:

none of the three major spiritual traditions – Taoism, Buddhism, and Confucianism – emphasizes speaking. Taoism regards as infinite wisdom human harmony with nature, fitting into the seamless unity without the need to speak, as expressed in the well-known phrase by Lao Tzu: “[T]hose who understand are not talkers; talkers don’t understand.” Buddhism pursues meditation as a means to quiet down the mind and to be rid of worldly desires in order to achieve personal enlightenment. Furthermore, East Asia never had a comparable (to the Greek) political or legal system that promoted public speaking. (p. 296)

Culture of listening is also a part of parenting. Li (2012) also finds that there is empirical evidence that supports Asian parents emphasizing listenership over speakership in comparative studies of parenting styles of European-American parents and those of Taiwanese parents (pp. 314-315). It is important to note, however, such culture does not necessarily mean that Asians are passively learning; it merely highlights that listening is mostly used as means to learn in the culture that I grew up in. With 12 years of schooling in such an environment with cultural values that emphasize talking only when necessary, the college education, as well as its academic culture that promotes talking in the United States, were extremely foreign to me.

In 2009, I was a sophomore in college, studying business. All the business classes seemed to have a strong belief that learning was associated with talking. The class discussion was a part of the final grade, often ranging from twenty to forty percent of the

entire grade. One of the required courses that all the sophomores of the program had to take was called “Organizational communication and its social context.” The course objective was to focus on evaluating the intricate relationship between social contexts and how business management reflects them. In other words, we were learning how companies’ public relations operate and what impact they could bring to the business. Therefore, a huge emphasis of the course was placed on how companies represent themselves to the society. Groups were assigned to all students in the course and each group had a company to present as if each group was a PR team of the assigned company. Each group had to perform at least three group presentations in front of the class.

The day before my team’s first presentation on how Daimler progressed as one of the most prominent German car-manufacturing companies, I panicked. I vividly recall the night before the presentation that I failed to say my part numerous times while my teammates and I were practicing the presentation over and over again; I failed and failed and failed. I could not speak one complete sentence from my script that I had for this presentation, not a single one. I researched how this Stuttgart-based company had a powerful brand like Mercedes Benz, and how this company was trying to implement environmentally friendly strategies. The company was also investing in educating female engineers in the Middle East region. Not only that, I was also able to come up with the reasons that this company will perform better in the future. The members of the team were flustered and confused as to why the words would not come out of my mouth; while I was able to do all this research on my own; I made all the slides streamlined; I already wrote the scripts—all I had to do was simply to say them, but I couldn't. It was not like I had any issues communicating in the English language. They thought they could help me

out by trying to calm me down, and they tried. Around 9:30 PM, I suggested we stop, I felt beyond sorry for everyone in my team. I came back to my dorm room and started practicing again, but all I thought was how embarrassing it would be in front of others when I would freeze the next day.

Speaking in front of the class was extremely stressful throughout my college experience. I not only had to ask questions in front of the entire class, risking that my question may sound irrelevant, and I also had to care about the other team members, afraid that my failure would impact other team members' grades. I thought, "as if anyone is interested in what I think! Where is the educational purpose and reasoning behind mandatory participating? Why is "verbal" participation so important and forced when I submit all the other written works and tests?"

On many occasions, I received feedback from many professors that I had to speak up in class and participate more. Such participation was strongly focused on "verbal expression," and "spoken language." Many research find classroom discussions as one of the effective learning strategies. (Dallimore, Hertenstein, & Platt, 2017; Fisher, Frey & Rothenberg, 2008; Sedova et al, 2019). Sedova et al. (2019) find the theoretical background of such pedagogy from Vygotsky's works:

The interest in how students participate in classroom talk is grounded in sociocultural theory, especially as it was presented by Vygotsky. Vygotsky (1978) postulated that each psychological function appears twice in a child's development – first on the social level (i.e., as the child interacts with other people) and only later on an individual level (in the form of internalized psychological processes). He believed that speech and thought are closely

interlinked and that children can internalize and integrate what they have been able to talk about. (Vygotsky, 1978, as cited in Sedova et al., 2019, p. 1)

The assumption that speech is related to thought or that speech can stimulate thinking processes is not aligned with the cultural values that I grew up with, however. Besides, the highest academic achievement that I had seen in my schooling experience never seemed to be positively related to talking. The size of the classroom, one of the most important factors that influence classroom discussions (Whitehurst & Chingos, 2011), was found to be irrelevant to students' learning in some studies. (Li & Konstantopoulos, 2017; Pong & Pallas, 2001). Pong and Pallas (2001) find that only the result from the United States shows the benefits from a reduction of the classroom sizes, whereas other countries did not. This study makes me wonder if the benefits from classroom discussions are independent from the cultural assumption that talking promotes thinking.

Kim (2002) also questions this assumption and the findings from her research support that talking does not necessarily enhance the cognitive processes; this assumption is only cultural practice and belief shared in "western cultures." Kim mentions that "[t]he results support the hypothesis that talking would not interfere with European American participants' cognitive performance whereas talking would interfere with East Asian American participants' performance" (p. 832). This is aligned with what Nisbett (2003) mentions in his book, "a long tradition in the East of equating silence rather than speech with knowledge," just like the Korean idioms (p. 211).

Therefore, I question if some teaching strategies like "thinking aloud" work for all learners. While I can see the values of such pedagogical strategies in certain settings, I

cannot stop wondering what if this is a strategy that is only found to be relevant and effective in American cultural context?

Twenty to forty percent of participation grading also benefited many non-Asian students who grew up with American cultural backgrounds who shared the same cultural assumption that talking was associated with learning, because they were trained to speak up, and they knew how to speak. I often overheard other students, saying, “you get good grades if you just talk,” and felt as if my efforts were less visible to others, especially to professors. I made more office visits, just to make sure I was visible to them. Many other Korean international students also shared that “just be the first one who raises your hand in every class, then you get good grades” (regardless of the quality of your comments and questions). With my Korean perspective, the frequency of verbal participation was not related to the level of learning. There were some moments that this mandated participation made me alert to what was going on in class. Still, the high level of pressure and stress coming from the idea that I must participate overruled the benefit coming from most of those moments. I was always overly conscious of what I was saying, not being able to listen to others’ conversation or even teaching at times.

It did not feel right, but I rationalized that such a part is also the learning process—the process of assimilating to American culture. After all, I was learning American culture and the English language during that time. Even now, I believe it is a process of me, an Asian immigrant, assimilating to the culture of the United States, though I still yearn for the classes that I do not have to participate verbally. As I stayed in the United States for a longer time, I became more outspoken; the fact that I wanted to become a teacher, a job that makes me speak in front of many native English language

speakers shows that I have changed over time. Yet, the butterflies in my stomach never completely disappeared. I examine, scrutinize, and confirm my own English language discourse on a daily basis. I have doubts in the phrases that I have spoken over and over again, and rely on Google search, online dictionary, and other native English speakers, to check if my verbal discourse makes sense. The enormous pressure that I felt the night before my presentation in college still is inside me, and I doubt, as a learner, if that was the most effective way to teach how public relations work in the business world.

After tossing and turning all night, I went to school. The weather was terrible. The weather forecast that morning said that there was a blizzard warning. I went to school anyway, as the school did not make any announcement of cancellation at that point. I thought over and over of calling in sick but missing one team member would not look great on my team. I felt an impending doom covering my head. The Organizational Communication class was in the afternoon. I was silent all morning in other classes. I pulled out my script and tried to practice, but words did not come out from my mouth. My heart was getting heavier and heavier as time went by. As soon as I walked into the art history class, a professor walked in and announced that the school was closed for the rest of the day; all afternoon classes were canceled. I went back to my dorm room and was able to catch up on some sleep that I lacked from the night before. The presentation that haunted me—it went just fine when we did it the week after.

Chapter 3: 2012, はじめまして (*/HA-JI-ME-MA-SHI-TE/*:Nice to meet you in Japanese)

Unlike my English language (L2) acquisition process, my Japanese language (L3) acquisition process started with culture. While I specify that Japanese is my L3, labeling second language or third language is still very vague for me. If I consider when I was first introduced to each language as a criterion to decide which one is my L2, then I should label the English language as my second language as I was introduced to it a little earlier than I was to the Japanese language.

My first exposure to the English language was when I first watched music videos called “Kidsongs” when I was five years old. “Kidsongs” was the collection of music videos featuring songs like “Seasons Come, Seasons Go by Faron Young,” and “Hokey Pokey.” Many kids sang the songs together, and I sang along. My first exposure to Japanese was from a couple of words that my grandmother used to refer to a nail clipper(爪切り/*tsume-ki-ri*/), or a backpack(リュックサック/*ryukku-saku*/). My grandmother was born in 1932. While the Korean peninsula was colonized by Japan, the Japanese government forced the Korean people to learn and speak in Japanese until 1945. My grandmother, due to such influence, learned Japanese and substituted some Korean words with Japanese words in her spoken Korean language. Since I was not even aware that such words were Japanese words until my mother taught me so a lot later, I thought I should label English as my L2. I used to think those words were Korean dialects. (To clarify, these words that my grandmother used are not Korean words with Japanese etymology; they were pure Japanese words.)

Structured English language education also started earlier than that of the Japanese language to me. Structured English language education started when I was eight years old at the elementary school that I was attending. Structured Japanese language education started when I was in middle school. If the timing of education matters more than the timing of exposure when deciding which language should be L2 or L3, the English language should be the second language of mine, although I always “felt” that my second language is closer to the Japanese language.

I have a more sentimental attachment to the Japanese language. This must be because the Korean language and the Japanese language are phonetically as well as morphologically similar, but also, it was the first language that I wanted to learn more voluntarily when I was a teenager. The learning process started with *Manga*, Japanese comics. I first started reading the comic books translated in Korean language (L1), also called Manwha. Many Manwha books were translated from Japanese Manga books. Through internet searches, I learned that there are some parts of translation that had different nuances from the original books. I started looking for more “original” content from Japan, which led me to learn about Japanese pop culture. I started reading magazines that introduced Japanese pop culture, including Japanese animation, pop songs, TV shows, and TV stars. What I watched and read were my Japanese teachers. I mimicked what I heard, trying to sing the songs as close to the original pronunciation as I could. I memorized the entire context of where certain phrases were used, certain words were used, and looked for culturally appropriate ways of saying them. I genuinely liked what I heard, what I watched, and I could not have enough—I enjoyed the learning process so much.

I loved the entire learning process and the outcome of it, and I longed for the day that I could finally use the ability to communicate with Japanese people in Japanese. When I was able to visit Japan with my mom and my sister, I was thrilled. My mom was also surprised that I was able to communicate with Japanese strangers. Culture of Japan played an important role in motivating me to learn. Not only that, but I also used my first language environment as my reference to learn more about the Japanese language. As I watched more Japanese TV shows, I tried to understand why certain types of TV shows were very popular among Japanese people, while the different types of TV shows were more popular in Korea. I also read some articles written by authors who were bilingual in Korean and Japanese, and the articles were published in both Korean and Japanese languages. For example, many Japanese TV shows' motifs were from Manga. The original contents, including characters and plots, were originally published in manga forms, and then they were re-produced in the TV format. Whereas in Korea, the Manwha genre was always underrated; it was an “only-for-children” genre. Most adults in Korean looked down on reading Manhwa or Manga, thinking that they are only for leisure, and only children younger than 10-11 years old should enjoy it. Manwha or Manga, to equate in American culture, can be also described as graphic novels or cartoons. Such a comparison of the two cultures eventually led me to compare the languages. Some expressions existed in one language but did not in the other. Common Japanese phrase, like “すみません。/su-mi-ma-sen/” (sorry) could be translated into many other Korean phrases, depending on the context. But, I should come up with different Korean words that match to the context where it is used. These little private studies ceased while I was studying business in New York, until I graduated from college in 2012.

In 2012 Summer, I was able to land a job in Tokyo. I was interviewing with an American investment bank for an analyst position. One Japanese manager asked me if I was willing to live in Japan, and I said “yes” without hesitation. It was my dream to live in Japan. My interviewer asked what I liked about Japan, and I answered with what I knew and understood about Japanese culture. That was what I had studied during my entire teenage times. After 30 minutes of conversation, I had the position and I started living in Japan in 2012.

The professional life in Japan, however, was very different from what I had expected. Japan is known as the country with the longest working hours. Moreover, the professional Japanese language that matches business etiquettes was different from what I had used and spoken as well. I took formal lessons to learn professional Japanese. For example, I had to teach myself how to answer phone calls from Japanese clients. Doing things in Japanese ways, observing Japanese people in the street, talking like a Japanese person, and listening to the conversations were all the strategies I used to teach myself Japanese manners. It was also a way for me to connect to my Japanese colleagues and Japanese society that I had entered into as an expat.

Similar to the way that I had to teach myself how to participate more in my college classes, I had to teach myself how to be like a Japanese person. This learning experience gave me a third identity associated Japanese language. When I answered the phone, I tried to make myself appear and sound like a Japanese person to Japanese clients. They would have been able to tell that I was a foreigner from my accent and my name, but I tried. That was the way that I expressed and showed to Japanese people that I was making an effort to understand the Japanese standards and to behave according to

them. Visible efforts like learning language, more proactively speaking in Japanese helped me socialize more with Japanese colleagues at work.

Also, as an Asian, I had to appear more like Japanese so compared to ‘White’ colleagues. By appearances, they are “forever foreigners,” but I was not. One day, I went to a restaurant to grab lunch with a colleague who was White. He was Italian American. His Japanese language was far better than mine; his wife was Japanese; he understood more difficult Japanese business news without any difficulties. When the server arrived, she turned her body to me and asked if we were ready to order. My colleague started ordering food, but she did not turn to him, while I did not say any words. Later, he spoke to me in English, “they think I am gaijin (meaning a foreigner in Japanese).” By appearance, some Japanese people expected me to act like a Japanese and talk like a Japanese, but I was still one of those “forever foreigners.” It was very similar to the experience that I had in the United States, conforming myself to the mainstream culture and language of the country, yet a sense of belonging was somewhat lost.

This power of mainstream culture also existed in Japan, and even amongst the Japanese people. I learned, spoke and worked in the most standard form of Japanese, which is Japanese used in Tokyo. Whenever I visited other cities, I could hear different dialects. Some of the dialects were impossible to understand, and such dialects were never considered to be ‘standard.’ Most of my colleagues from different areas of Japan knew how to use two languages: standard Japanese and dialect from their hometown.

During this period, I started reading books in Japanese and developed the initial understanding about the history behind the languages that I knew. Some dialects of Japanese were shunned and associated with stereotypes casually expressed in Japanese

culture. Japanese spoken and used in the Tokyo area was called “Kanto-ben.” Japanese spoken and used in the Osaka/Kyoto area was called “Kansai-ben.” “Kansai-ben” sounded like it had a stronger accent and included some unique local phrases only used in the Osaka/Kyoto area. People from Kansai regions were often characterized as strong headed, less sophisticated, and funny in many Japanese TV shows. It has some historical background; Tokyo became the capital of Japan in 1868, and the capital before that was Kyoto. Since 1868, the power that was centered in Kyoto has slowly moved to Tokyo. (Spacey, 2012). This also meant the political power shift from Shogun to Emperor. I observed that the specific values admired or shunned in Japanese society were mirrored in the languages and how dialects were interpreted in Japanese society. Overall, my stay in Tokyo gave me a great chance to compare Japanese, English, and Korean culturally and linguistically.

Thanks to such experience, I particularly enjoyed reading some works that addressed comparative studies while I was studying at Bank Street. One of the course readings was *Patterns of Narrative Discourse: A Multicultural, Life Span Approach* (McCabe & Bliss, 2003). I read the discourse analysis of Asian American English and the analysis of European American English Analysis with a strong interest. For example, some of the observations found in the book was a partial confirmation of what I had observed in Japan. For example, McCabe and Bliss (2013) found that Asian Americans tend to show reticence, compared to European American speakers. My theory to explain such a trend is that they do not want to appear to be rude to the listeners by taking so much time talking about too many details. While I was reading it, I came up with many

theories that explained the possible “whys” behind their findings that I could not prove, but I enjoyed the thinking process.

I also read these types of articles with a hope to find out how Asian Americans appear to European North American speakers, because I always wanted to ask, “whether I was American/Japanese enough to the eyes of Americans/Japanese.” Even now, after spending a third of my life in this country, I still ask this question. I probably had picked up this question when I moved back to the United States for work.

When I moved back to the United States to work at the same American company from Japan, I was more sensitive to how standard English is represented as the language of power in the company. That was thanks to all the cognitive leisure that I had in Japan. Just like how I built another identity associated with the Japanese language, I had to rebuild the one associated with the English language. (I would call it rebuilding, because language used in school settings was different from language used in work settings.) this time, I was an “Asian immigrant who used to work in Japan, but not Japanese, but Korean, used to study in New York,” and categorized as an “Asian American.” The Asians in the company represented Asian Americans in the United States, particularly in the New York/New Jersey Area.

In company, most people of Asian descent used the silence tactic when they talked to people from the higher management, including myself. It is not surprising that they mostly used the silence tactic as none of the Asians were in senior management. When I walked into the senior managers’ offices, I saw people of European descent. In many department-wide meetings, Asians were very quiet; in fact, Asian Americans had a reputation for their quietness and had a program to promote them to speak up. Also, the

term, “Asians” was used to include many different cultures and nationalities, including people from the Middle East, South Eastern Asia, and India. It was a very confusing term, because Asians from different nationalities did not really interact with each other. Korean colleagues talked to other Korean colleagues in Korean; Chinese colleagues only talked to Chinese colleagues.

This was not an “Asian” phenomenon—many of my colleagues were also close to only those who were from the same ethnicity; Black affinity group members were only close to those in the same group; Latinx affinity group members were always together. Each group spoke different languages, and although we communicated in English when we were working together, I could not interpret them. Some context-specific words were only shared and used within certain affinity groups. I also hung out with Asian colleagues, Korean colleagues, in particular. To this day, it still makes me wonder if that was a truly cooperative working environment. Were we really a singular group of people? Was there really teamwork? The company based in New York with 30,000+ employees around the world advertises itself as a global corporate that promotes diversity. Nevertheless, what I saw there were bubbles of segregation. There were glass walls between people, and they were thicker than the ones that I saw in college. Ethno-segregation was not new to me; it also existed in schools. But at work, with the hierarchy of the organization strongly attached to race and ethnicity, I felt like I would not be able to progress there. Asian affinity group was the smallest out of all affinity groups. There was none for the White. I was speaking in English, but I was silent. I spoke, but my words seemed to be not going anywhere. I was powerless in that organization.

This frustration was very similar to the experiences described in the first few pages of the *Silenced Dialogue*. (Delpit, 1995) The *Silenced Dialogue* discusses five aspects of power. Delpit says that “there are codes or rules for participating in power, that is, there is a “culture of power” and the rules of the culture of power are a reflection of the rules of the culture of those who have power” (Delpit, 1995, p. 25). The dominant culture at my company was very much centered on White males. My department in the New Jersey office had zero African American managers, one woman manager, zero Latinx American managers, and zero Asian managers. They also had their own Sunday outings, wine parties, and weekend meetings at beach houses. That was only for certain people.

Delpit concludes that members of any culture transmit information implicitly to co-members. But she also adds that when implicit codes are attempted across cultures, communication frequently breaks down. When I read this, I reflected on my behavior back in the company in Japan, in the United States. This was why I kept questioning myself if I was American/Japanese enough, because I felt there were some codes that I was not invited to interpret. What was it that I was missing? By the time that I left the company, I started to ask a different question. What does it mean by being American/Japanese in the first place?

I concluded that languages are highly associated with where the ‘users of this language’ associate themselves, based on my experience which serves as empirical evidence. And language becomes a part of self-image. I examined, scrutinized, and sized myself using the measure of culture of power and language of power. It led me to the same conclusion over and over again that I was the one who had to change and conform

more to obtain such powers. My English was not enough, I was not American enough, my Japanese was not good enough, and I was not Japanese enough. But it may not be true. Maybe it is no longer a matter of my efforts to assimilate or to learn culture; maybe it is the question itself. What does it mean to be an American and what does it mean to be a Japanese? After all these years, I think of all the possibilities that the words like “American” or “Japanese” could entail without excluding anyone—anyone like me. After I started working at schools, I realized that it is hard to have a conversation about the power of culture in language with my students, but it is an important one. This is why I dedicate Part 3 to what I experienced at school.

Part 3:**Chapter 4: 2019, What does it mean to be a teacher? Smile!**

“Perception is everything.” The first time I heard this was when I was working at the Tokyo office of an American investment bank. My manager was not able to recall where she heard this phrase for the first time, but she told me this phrase so that I could be more aware of how others perceive me. I had to come up with my own ways to build a positive perception of myself, so that I could be successful in the corporate that I was working then. This phrase lingered in my mind for some time because it came across as a surprise. Before I entered the corporate world, I was unconcerned by how people would perceive me.

Perception is a subjective, cognitive action. To me, it seems like it is a collection of all the visual, aural, verbal, and contextual information processed with a few judgment calls and beliefs. As I discussed in the earlier Chapter 2 from Part 2, the belief that “learning” is associated with “speaking” can cause a person to develop a negative perception of someone who fails to demonstrate speakership. Such perception, however, is not independent of the cultural context. Silence is perceived to be ignorance in American culture; silence is perceived as modesty and knowing in a different part of the world. I kept what she said in my mind, because that maxim helped me navigate my career in that company. I carried the same idea even after I left the company, to my graduate school, applied the same to language, and to race.

A while ago, I was talking to my friend about how insecure I feel about my English language, yet I no longer share this with anyone. I explained to her, this was

because I noticed that some people started correcting my English pronunciation and giving me free, small English lessons as soon as they learned that I moved to this country when I was 19 years old. The topics of those free lessons are varied from “do you know what American expression, “an apple does not fall far from its tree?” to “Months, do not add /s/ at the end of “months,” when you say it.” I genuinely appreciate such lessons, especially when they cover words and phrases from urban dictionaries that I don't really know. Interestingly, such lessons start without my consent, out of context. In the worst cases, it builds a negative perception of me in others' minds that I do not speak English well.

What surprises me, though, is that people start giving me fewer lessons when I do not share that I am not from the U.S. Such empirical evidence made me come up with my secret theory that what they know about my status influenced their perception of my ability to speak in the English language. Or, perhaps, me being an Asian American might have influenced the perception of my spoken English language, making them feel more willing to teach me the English language with an assumption that I would not know it. Whenever such small lessons start, I wonder if they would do the same to non-Asians who speak English less fluently.

This theory remained covert until I received this research from my mentor, “Does seeing an Asian face make speech sound more accented?” by Zheng and Samuel (2017). The paper starts with Rubin's study from 1992.

In Rubin's (1992) study, American undergraduates saw a picture of a face (either an Asian or a dark-haired Caucasian, matched in physical attractiveness) while hearing a passage that had been recorded by a native speaker of American

English. After the passage, the participants were given a listening comprehension test, and were asked to give judgments of how accented the speech was, the potential teaching competence of the speaker, etc. Rubin found that when the photograph had been of an Asian face, students reported hearing an accent that did not exist. Moreover, participants' listening comprehension performance was poorer in the Asian face condition than in the Caucasian face condition. (Zheng and Samuel, 2017, p. 1841)

Rubin, along with other researchers, designed and conducted similar tests, and “stated that ‘when students perceived—whether rightly or wrongly—high levels of foreign accentedness, they judged speakers to be poor teachers’” (Rubin & Smith, as cited in Zheng and Samuel, 2017, p. 1842). They also noted that such “perception” of listeners towards Asian Americans who speak English language may give unfair disadvantages to Asian Americans, due to their appearances. “The phenomenon that certain beliefs about the speakers (e.g., non-native speakers) could affect how their speech is evaluated (e.g., accentedness, intelligibility), has been called ‘reverse linguistic stereotyping’” (Kang & Rubin, 2009, as cited in Zheng and Samuel, 2017, p. 1842).

Such stereotyping also occurs with non-verbal communication. Right after the demo lesson as a student-teacher at the urban public school, my head teacher gave me some feedback. I had just taught a lesson on the properties of water, a science lesson for first graders. My lesson went a little over time, and it was never easy to deal with 28 first graders in a crowded room. It was quite a precious time, as my head teacher was always loaded with so much work. She had to execute her social studies curriculum-based projects, on top of parent-teacher conferences, along with assessments. Her school also

made her come to work early to help 5th graders prepare for state performance tests.

Before this lesson, I tried to ask questions, and tried to be amicable as much as possible, but I always felt a little hesitant to ask her questions. She told me that she would like me to leave her alone for lunch, and we never had lunch together during my assignment.

Besides, I was already very overwhelmed, doing lunch duty every day and adjusting to the first-grade classroom. First grade was overly energetic, and my head was spinning around with new curriculums, public school systems, and graduate school classes. Since we did not have enough time together, I was looking forward to hearing her feedback. It was finally the time we could actually have some conversation.

As she continued giving me some feedback on my lesson, she mentioned a couple of things about classroom management and pacing of the lesson. She also gave me some comments on how to stir up students-driven discussions, and at the end of the feedback, she added: “Maybe it comes with experience, and you may get better as time goes by,” she paused, then “I don't know, you don't look excited.” I was so taken aback by the comment and I immediately looked down, trying not to show my face to her, and asked, “I don't look excited?” “Teacher's job is teaching, but the teacher also should model some enthusiasm for learning. “After that was a kind of a blur, but I clearly remember that I thought to myself, “this must be about smiling.”

Probably, I knew that it was about smiling right away, because many people gave me comments about my facial expression before. In 2008, when I first went to college, some people would ask me if I was angry or had something bad going on, and I would say that there was absolutely nothing going on. I was probably thinking of what to eat for dinner. Then they would go, “how come you are not smiling?” Then, I would ask, “why

do you have to smile?” The answers were never convincing enough for me. In fact, it always made me wonder why everyone smiles so much all the time in this country? They must be very happy people, I thought. Smiling never occurred to me as something that I must do until I was getting ready for job interviews. While I was preparing for the job interviews, other Asian-American friends who already went through the process would say, “just smile when you go there. That is what they do.” Smiling, as I recall, was something that I had to learn when I was learning the English language in Korea. Particularly, the teachers from the United States or Canada told students to smile when they say hi.

However, smiling was not a thing for me, just like the high-pitched voice tone and short puppetry my head teacher did at the beginning of her lessons. This head teacher used a high-pitched voice and a doll, sometimes, to bring attention from students to her lessons, and that was just not who I was. While I was teaching in the class after that feedback, I tried to mimic her a lot. I started using the puppet and I tried to smile more. She was a successful headteacher in all measures; her teacher rating was high, her organization skills were perfect, her communication was clear, and her execution of the projects was thorough. Many times, I knew she was not excited, but she made efforts to smile. However, the teachers that I experienced as a learner rarely smiled. The seriousness of the matter was expressed with a stern, quite stiff facial expressions on teachers’ faces. The more important the topic was, the more serious the teachers’ faces would be. Teachers and adult-figures rarely smiled in my memories, unless they were extremely happy.

Krys et al. (2016) conducted experiments on smiling—whether smiling would mean differently in other cultures. They found that smiles can be perceived differently, depending on the social contexts.

[T]his cross-cultural study illuminates surprising nuances of up-to-now seemingly clear and obvious processes of smile perception. Although numerous studies suggest that smiling individuals are perceived favorably, we document that the same person may be judged as less intelligent when smiling than when posing a neutral expression in some cultures . . . Our study underscores the importance of the cultural framework in understanding nonverbal communication process and reveals that although positive traits are usually attributed to smiling persons, perception of this common nonverbal signal may have unexpected negative implications in some cultures. (Krys et al. 2016, pp.113-114)

Therefore, from both verbal and non-verbal communications, I was being misunderstood. I was perceived as a not-so-enthusiastic student teacher in my classroom. However, such perception is highly influenced by the culture of those who make that judgment call. In other words, sometimes the concepts that I try to get across get lost when my listeners try to understand me with their own cultural frameworks, and this process is totally subconscious. The problem is that it is hard for me to go into their minds. The question is whether those who make such interpretations, including myself, are aware and conscious of it when they make one to avoid such misperception.

More research that uses brain scanning presents more evidence to support the disconnect of communication, especially between Eastern thinkers and Western thinkers. Goldberg from the New York Times (2008) wrote an article about the list of research

focused on “East-West differences.” In several experiments, Easterners—mostly Korean, Chinese, and Japanese—and Westerners, mostly Americans, are given some cognitive tasks such as finding lengths of strings. The way Easterners find the length and the way Westerners find the length is different; Easterners find the length of a string by comparing it to the square, whereas Westerners find the length by estimating. This experiment highlights the difference between Western culture, where people “think of themselves as highly independent entities” and “East Asian cultures [that] stress interdependence” (Goldberg, 2008, par. 2). “When looking at scenes, Westerners tend to focus on central objects more than on their surroundings . . . Easterners take in a scene, they tend to focus more on the context as well as the object” (Goldberg, 2008, par. 3). All this research says one thing: there are cultural differences that profoundly impact cognitive activities including perception and interpretation. Gabrieli, one of the researchers cited in this article, says: “[c]ulture is not changing how you see the world, but rather how you think and interpret” (Goldberg, 2008, par. 20).

The consequence of such interpretation was me being misinterpreted by my headteacher during my lessons. Despite my appearance, in my mind, circumstantial evidence supports my enthusiasm; showing up every morning at 8:15 AM for a non-paid student teaching position, giving up a very well paid job as a corporate worker to become a teacher, standing next to 28 first grade students covering lunch duty in cold weather, and spending 3-4 hours to prepare just one lesson time per day. Lacking enthusiasm was the last phrase that I would have thought to hear in my feedback. Furthermore, in my Korean cultural context, enthusiasm does not equate to smiling—quite the opposite!

Serious face is what signifies enthusiasm. I decided to accommodate, and I started to smile more, while feeling dejected inside.

When in Rome, do as the Romans do, they say. Well, I am in Rome. I smiled more in my next placement at a fourth-grade classroom. I had far better teaching experience, but not sure it was all because of the smile. I guess perception is, indeed, everything. However, I wonder if that should be the case when it comes to children I teach. That led me to observe Ethan.

Chapter 5: 2019, Child Study of Ethan: On being understood

I met Ethan (pseudonym) at a public school when I was a student teacher. This 6-year-old child was physically smaller compared to the rest of his other 27 classmates. Out of 28, five students were Asians: one Korean student, one Japanese student, Ethan, and two Chinese ENL students. His voice was not loud but had a high-pitched tone, which made his voice distinctively audible. Almost everyone could hear his whisper (which Ethan had thought to be a whisper) in his classroom. Ethan had black, short hair, neatly cut. His skin was fair complexioned. Racially, he was identified as Asian by his looks. He was of Taiwanese descent.⁶

While Ethan was not able to speak fluently in Mandarin, he claimed that he could, and many observed him speaking intently and intensely to two ENL students from Shanghai, China, trying to communicate to them in Mandarin Chinese. His efforts to get along with other Chinese speakers often did not come to any fruition. Often, the

⁶ Ethan (pseudonym) is of Taiwanese descent. While he will be addressed later as Chinese. This is not to equate Taiwan and China—I am merely copying language Ethan used to describe himself.

exclusivity of these two students' friendship left Ethan with no responses. This led Ethan to choose different methods to communicate to them, which made them feel annoyed. Ethan would poke one of them, or bump into them.

Besides these two students, Ethan's teacher, my head teacher, was the person about whom he cared the most. Ethan enjoyed writing and was good at math. He produced his writing in many pages of a "book." The concept of a book in his mind was almost identical to that of letters or journal entries in a diary. Ethan would write pages and pages with only one particular audience in his mind: his headteacher, Tina (pseudonym). He would write stories like about his father taking him to a sports game and would drop that book on Tina's cabinet. The pages were colored, and pages were neatly stapled. Sometimes the pages were bound by stripes of duct tapes. During my short assignment, I observed at least twice that Ethan wrote books, pages, and cards to Tina. He seemed to be writing to communicate with others, but mostly, with his teacher, Tina. Ethan's teacher, Tina, made tremendous efforts to emphasize social justice, a community-centered social studies curriculum in her classroom of 28 students where she was the only teacher. She was a great classroom manager, too. She utilized a glockenspiel, call-and-response, and other sensory classroom management tools constantly throughout the day.

In my second week of student teaching, Ethan did something very interesting. My head teacher had to be outside of school for her professional development. I was teaching a math lesson about measuring. After the mini-lesson, I sent students from the rug area to their individual working spots at tables, except for a few students who needed to work more closely with me. Ethan was one of them, and he had been paired up with one of the students in the group. While I was talking to one of the students in the rug area, Ethan

decided to sit on a teacher's chair and started calling out "STOP, LOOK, and LISTEN." This was one of the classroom management tools that my head teacher often used, which utilizes call and response style. When the teacher called, "stop, look, and listen," then students responded "okay," and they would locate the teacher.

Ethan, once noticing that students were getting confused, did not stop and continued to call "stop, look, and listen" over three times. His voice was not loud, but his consistent calls made more than half of the students in the classroom look where he was. After that, Ethan laughed as if it were funny. His laughter seemed to be a mixture of amusement and embarrassment, but the reason behind his laughter was quite unclear. This particular moment that Ethan pretended as if he were a teacher made me wonder what Ethan got out of the situation by doing so. What was it that he really wanted? What jumped to my mind was that it could be Ethan's desire to share some of the power that teachers had to control the class or get attention from everyone in the room. What surprised me was why I interpreted his behavior in such a way. What made my mind to interpret his behavior as his desire to be an authority figure in class? The reaction from other teachers to this observation and his behavior was completely different from mine, after all, they had a long history with Ethan—Ethan had a reputation as a troublemaker.

Unlike four other students of various Asian ethnicities in his class, Ethan often called out in class and exhibited challenging behaviors. Stereotypical images of the characteristics of Asian children, such as diligence, self-sacrifice, and passivity (Pettersen, 1966; Wong et al., 1998; Yoon & Gentry, 2009), often demonstrated by the four other Asian students, were seldom observed in Ethan. Such characteristics were also often praised by Tina, in front of the class as well as individually. Tina would call out the

Japanese student and praise her during dismissal for how she helps out Tina so often without any prompting. Another (Korean) student would often be called on to give the right answers by Tina, period after period. The other two ENL students were still learning the English language, so they were praised whenever they spoke English words. However, Ethan was not passive, but assertive; Ethan was not self-sacrificing but self-promoting. He wanted to stand out. This tendency made his social interactions with his classmates difficult. Whenever he got frustrated in social situations, he smacked his lips, and he would glare at others. Often his efforts to solve problems caused more troubles. From Ethan's perspective which was situated in an Asian family cultural context, the adult figure in the classroom who had the most power who could resolve any issues was Tina.

Adults and adult figures play a key role in Asian cultures⁷. The parents tend to stay with children for a longer time, compared to Western parents (Nisbett, 2003). East Asian parents tend to stay with their babies for a longer time when they are infants, including sleeping together in the same bed. Parents, especially mother figures play an important role in what children choose or think (Iyenger and Lepper, as cited in Nisbett, 2003, pp.58-59). Western parents tend to emphasize the objects and supply information about the objects like asking names of objects or telling them what they are. (Nisbett, 2003, p. 59). Asian parents, different from Western parents, also emphasize the feelings of others as they parent their children. They even ask children to walk in the shoes of objects. "Japanese mothers are likely to use feeling-related words when children

⁷ Asian cultures in this context refer to Northern Eastern Asian cultures collectively: Chinese, Korean, Japanese cultures.

misbehave: . . . ‘The toy is crying because you threw it.’⁸” (Nisbett, 2003 p. 59).

“Focusing on feelings and social relations as Asian parents tend to do, helps children to anticipate the reactions of other people with whom they will have to coordinate their behavior” (Nisbett, 2003, p. 59). Such a difference in parenting fosters children to accept authority figures differently as well as themselves. Children learn how to view themselves as a part of others, and consequently, authority figures or parents tend to carry more significance as they spend a lot of time with them. Children also see that adults provide security for the same reasons.

Van Campen and Russell (2010) write that Asian American parents may appear stricter and lacking in warmth, compared to Western parents. While their interpretation itself is based on a Western concept of “what warmth is shown and represented,” such observed strictness reflects Asian immigrant parents’ belief that control is not only necessary, but a key responsibility for parents. To these parents, strictness is an attempt to protect children, not inhibit them. In other words, control and warmth are defined differently for Asian parents, so authoritarian parenting would be culturally interpreted differently.

The below figure shows how different cultures perceive authority figures show both China and Japan are marked in a very hierarchical end.

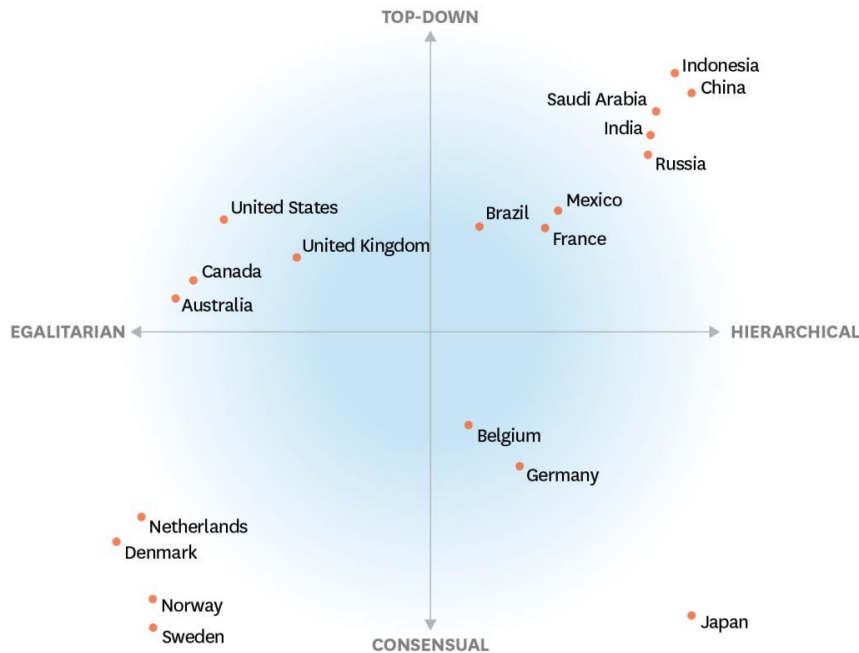
Figure 3

Attitude towards “authority”

⁸ I personally believe that this has something to do with religious practice in Japan. Shin-to believes that objects like trees and rocks have spirits.

Mapping Leadership Cultures

Attitudes toward decision making can range along a continuum from strongly top-down to strongly consensual; attitudes toward authority can vary from extremely egalitarian to extremely hierarchical. The positions for the 19 countries shown on this map were determined from interviews conducted between 2003 and 2016.



SOURCE "BEING THE BOSS IN BRUSSELS, BOSTON, AND BEIJING," BY ERIN MEYER, JULY-AUGUST 2017

© HBR.ORG

The cultural values permeate Asian people's social life. In Asian cultures, individuals have their own places in the context of the group to which they belong. These places can be perceived to be permanent, but when an individual wants to shake up such placement, including the hierarchy, to get what one wants, that individual has to act differently, even if that means that he or she has to challenge authority by asking questions, like Ethan.

While asking questions to authority figures is generally accepted in Western culture, it is not common for Asian children to ask questions to authority figures. Authority figures, on the other hand, hold power to change the group members' situations. Ethan wanted to effect change by acting like a teacher, and that was why I

interpreted his “misbehavior” as “his efforts to change the current situation: Ethan was willing to be perceived as a troublemaker to get what he wanted.”

Culture not only impacted his interaction with Tina, but his interaction with peers. Research finds that many Chinese American families raise their children differently from White, European American parents. “In Asian American culture, parents support their children and regulate their behavior, but in very different ways than white American parents” (Van Campen & Russell, 2010). These cultural differences impact many aspects of socialization of children as their main social interactions have been built with their family members. The Research Link article from University of Arizona mentions that:

Chinese parents are not necessarily driven to control their children; instead, they are expected to teach their children how to maintain harmony with others. For example, emotional expression is considered harmful to one’s health and relationships, and children are encouraged to avoid it. Such practices create the context for “saving face.” This value or behavior is related to shame because it rewards conformity to society’s expectations for propriety and harmony. (Van Campen & Russell, 2010, par. 7)

This cultural value of maintaining harmony with others also seemed to be playing a key role in his play pattern as well. Ethan’s play choice during recess was always soccer. In his group, he always took his role as a goalkeeper, and this group seemed to be a small society for him. He was not happy with it. His facial expressions were not excited because he could not chase the ball like other children. Yet, he accepted this role every day to maintain the harmony of his group of friends who play soccer, and his friends praised him for taking this role, which reinforced him assuming the same responsibility

every day. However, he did not speak about this matter to his friends verbally while his frustration was often observed in his face: Ethan's lips making a straight, horizontal line, and his cheeks getting tense. During my observation he said, "oh, man. I hate it" (that he, Ethan, had to play a goalkeeper all the time)" only once. Ethan wanted to play other roles. He could not take his eyes off from the ball even when his shoelaces were loose. He conformed and conformed but there was no reward for him from this small hierarchy. I cannot recall one day that he played a role other than a goalkeeper. He was never the first choice from his peers during the choice time. This was not the "reward" that he was expecting to receive for "the conformity to society's expectations for propriety and harmony" (Van Campen & Russell, 2010, par. 7).

Such non-verbal expressions would mean a lot if Ethan were with a group of other Asian children. An emphasis on "others and the feelings of others" in Asian cultures is to create harmony. This results in an accurate awareness of the feelings and attitudes of others (Nisbett, 2003, p. 59). Nisbett points out that "the relative sensitivity to others' emotions is reflected in tacit assumptions about the nature of communication" (2003, p. 60). While Westerners teach children to communicate clearly, Asians teach children to listen well. "It is the hearer's responsibility to understand what is being said" in Asian cultural context (Nisbett, 2003, p. 61). If there were many more other Asian children, they might have noticed that Ethan was very unhappy about his situation, and Ethan might have shown such expressions, expecting others to understand his feelings. He might have wanted others to acknowledge how self-sacrificing he was to maintain harmony with others. The cultural differences might have created mutual incomprehension in his social interactions with peers, which consequently resulted in

Ethan's frustration, and the sociogram of his class supported it. To create the sociogram, I asked all students in class "who would you like to have lunch with?" Ethan's first choice was Tina. When I told him that you cannot pick teachers, Ethan chose one of his peers who had a great relationship with Tina. On the other hand, out of 27 students, no one picked Ethan as a first choice. Ethan seemed to be isolated in the class.

Ethan, therefore, had to do something to feel connected, and chose to write to Tina. The only adult figure in the classroom whom Ethan believed to be controlling the situation. He wrote a picture book for Tina with pages and pages of the stories and would leave them on Tina's desk.

Out of all the writings Ethan did for Tina, there was a particular letter that was very significant between Tina and Ethan. This card was on Tina's desk on Monday morning. I saw the card placed on Tina's cabinet. It was an apology letter. On the preceding Friday, Tina heard some students whispering, "Ethan put money in his backpack." Soon, one of the children came to Tina and told her that Ethan put coins (real coins) from the classroom's play area into his backpack. Those coins were meant to stay in class. Ethan had to face serious consequences from Tina as well as the principal of the school. Tina asked Ethan to see if Ethan had any explanations. Ethan told Tina that he was going to put the coins into the charity bin in the classroom, but Tina was not convinced, because she found coins from his backpack. Tina, who felt very frustrated at this point, thought that she needed to take some time off from interacting with Ethan, and told Ethan so. He asked, "does that mean you don't want me to be in your class anymore?" This was a highly emotional moment, deeply saddening to hear for both Tina and Ethan. The card from Ethan was an apology letter for Tina. Ethan wrote: "I am sorry

for stealing. I will not lie to you. You will trust me.” This was a very clear, concise letter from Ethan that contained his desire to deliver his ideas about what happened, and his feelings about the incident. “Trust” was a strong word choice Ethan used, and the relationship with Tina mattered a lot to Ethan.

There were better days—Ethan’s positive interactions with adults were observed when adults assigned special responsibilities to Ethan. One day, Tina gave him colored chalks to play with during recess so that Ethan would be able to use them at the school yard when he could not play soccer with other children. Tina mentioned that Ethan would be in charge of these materials. During this recess, Ethan shared colored chalks in a responsible way with his peers and remembered that he had to take the chalks back to Tina. He was very generous; he did not turn down any children from his class who wanted to use the chalks. When Ethan realized he and other children used up all the colored chalks, he asked me to explain to Tina that he behaved in a responsible manner. Adult figures at school often wanted to use “delegating responsibility” or “assigning teacher-like tasks” as strategies to deal with Ethan’s misbehaviors. This, on the other hand, probably made Ethan more desperate to seek help from authority figures in the classroom. I wondered, often, if such strategies are from deep cultural and racial understanding of Ethan, or merely from classroom management tactics—because it became apparent to me that it might have made Ethan more desperate for help from authority figures. It was apparent that he was quite aware of some of the highly problematic ways in which his race and culture were perceived by others in the classroom.

According to *Stages in Children's development of racial/cultural identity & attitudes* by Louise Derman-Sparks, by the age of five and six, children are “aware of and exploring the meaning of the several aspects of their self and/or group identities (racial, cultural, gender,) and the societal messages about them” (2012, par. 22). They also “show evidence of societal messages affecting how they feel about their self and/or group identity, i.e., evidence of beginnings of internalized superiority (IS) or internalized oppression (IO)” (Derman-Sparks, 2012, par. 24). Children of this age “may select to play only with children close to their gender and racial/cultural identities but may also reject members of their own racial/cultural group (e.g. darker skinned African American children, Spanish-speaking Latino children).” When an adult asked Ethan: “Where are you from/who is not from New York?” Ethan raised his hand and said that he was from China even though he knew that he was born in New York. I found Ethan's answer interesting: because it seemed like he was categorizing himself by his racialized appearance, such as skin and hair colors, which is Asian. Then, he categorized himself as Chinese, by ethnicity, that is the closest to his knowledge. It was clear that Ethan was ostracized from his peers, and the relationship that Ethan wanted to have with Tina was not going so well.

Observing Ethan was hard, and I made all the possible efforts to be careful with my own biases towards perceiving Asians in a positive light and perceiving myself as very knowledgeable about Asians because of my own Asian identity. What I observed was that Ethan wanted to be empowered by solidifying his ethnicity, and by connecting to his peers who speak the language of his heritage. However, his peers as well as Ethan are in the place where they have to speak in English, and then get complimented when

they only speak in English. Ethan, however, wanted to speak in Mandarin, the language that he seemed to be connected to. In some ways, Ethan did not have the strong Asian identity that his newly arrived immigrant Chinese peers had, and he wanted to claim his fluency in Mandarin Chinese speaking so that he could connect and socialize in a way that he was familiar with and would connect him to the only other Chinese children in the class. Ethan saw his two Chinese peers receive a lot of attention from his other classmates because they could not speak much English yet and they were intrigued by their Mandarin language use. However, Ethan's desire to speak in Mandarin was useless in the context of a classroom where no one was interested in his ethnic background since he was fluent in English, and where English was the language that was reinforced. I often wondered, "will Ethan feel empowered after he finishes the first grade?"

Ethan stood out in many ways, and I only observed him for about three months. He was an Asian child who did not fit any stereotypes of Asian children, but he was being an Asian in his own way. Ethan's behaviors that were seemingly inappropriate might have been his efforts to gain some power as a human being, as a peer, and as a child. By getting on the chair and telling kids to stop, look, and listen, or by giving out directions whenever a student teacher tried to give instructions, he seemed to be striving to get this power, the valuable resource to change the situation that he was not happy with. This—his efforts to borrow power from the figure of authority, a teacher—told me that his vision of himself in relation to other people was very hierarchical. And in that framework, he wasn't particularly equal to anyone. He perceived himself as someone who had to desire power, and to Ethan, the classroom worked according to Tina. Everyone else followed what Tina told them to do. The power that comes with authority has

multiple channels to manifest power: the statements that teachers make about social events, teachers' judgment calls on disciplinary actions, classroom rules, or the choices that teachers made for read alouds. Ethan gravitated towards Tina, thinking this authority could turn things around for him.

But who taught him that he was powerless? Who taught that Ethan was not equal with his peers in terms of power? Where did Ethan get this idea? Perhaps Ethan's cultural background might have driven him to see the classroom in this way, but cultural clash in the classroom most likely influenced his such worldview, I believe. I was also reminded of my schooling experience, and how I also perceived teachers, adults as authority figures.

As I observed Ethan and looked up all the relevant research related to how Asians view authority, adults, and others, I was reminded of Delpit's *Silenced Dialogue* which I referred to in Chapter 3 of this thesis. When Delpit discusses the concept, power of culture, she mentions that there are five aspects of "the culture of power." One of them is that "if you are already a participant in the culture of power, being told explicitly the rules of that culture makes acquiring power easier" (1995, p.24). This is because of cultural incomprehension when there are two different ways of thinking and perceiving—everything.

In my personal reflection on my observation of Ethan, I wrote:

As I was reflecting on this, I was telling myself that I should find [more] research that backs up my experience [and how I came to such an analysis on Ethan's behavior]. That was when I realized that I was not from the culture of power. The first few pages of "the silenced dialogue," Delpit shows the collection of

nonwhite educators' statements that describe the moments when they were "silenced." Delpit points out that when she published this article, as this article did not have any references and citations, all the white educators asked for proof that support the existence of "culture of power."

I was trying to find a reference on my own personal reflection on Ethan's experience, and I realized I was making conscious efforts to prove myself. ...

Many occasions when Ethan's behavior made sense to me seemed to be not making any sense in his classroom. That is why I chose being understood as a subtitle of this child study. Will there be a time when Ethan will be understood so that he can feel empowered by who he is?

The last question that I wrote is the question that I am asking myself. Will I be able to feel empowered enough to claim that there is a place in America to stand as Asian American here, now? Will I feel empowered enough to claim that I can teach children when I am aware that I have little background from the culture of power?

Chapter 6: 2019, J and J's mom

When I was teaching at an urban, progressive elementary school, I worked with a Japanese student, J. I was thrilled to find out there is a student that I could communicate in one of the languages that I felt comfortable speaking. Japanese was his first language as well as home language, and his mom was more fluent in Japanese than she was in English. J's family moved to the United States for work, and his dad had to move back to Japan for his work. J's mom was essentially a caregiver of two children and was working simultaneously.

One day, J's mom came to school and told me that J was experiencing some interactions with his friends that could be detrimental to J. J's mom's discourse had entailed some serious hurtful behaviors of J's friends, and J's mom found it hard to describe such details in English, so she spoke to me in Japanese. Her language had a tone of urgency, and from what I understood, I immediately knew and felt the seriousness of the issue that she was bringing to school. Unless it is a serious matter that needs attention, it is not common to bring up problems to figures of authority in Japanese culture. She asked if there are any ways that the school could help J and his classmates by stepping into this intricate relationship to mitigate.

As I was familiar with her culture, I understood her message and I let the senior members of the school know immediately. The response was, "so, did she ask us to do anything?" It made me pause for a moment. If I translate what she said in Japanese, literally, then there was nothing she asked. But if I consider cultural context, she was asking the school to step in and help J out. There were some reasons from the school's point of view; the conversation that I had with J's mother was in the Japanese language that other teachers did not understand, therefore it is only a second-person story. One of the comments I received from a colleague was is if she could repeat what she said to me in English. I realized that this was the moment where J's mom's communication got lost. So did mine.

Speaking up is not really common in Asian cultures, to begin with. As it was highlighted in chapter 2 of my work, and as my personal experience resonates, Asian culture trains people as listeners. This is even more so in Japanese culture. *Omoiyari* (akin to empathy) is something that Japanese parenting starts with. It begins with "what

would you feel if you were in that person's shoes, and what would you do to make this person feel better?" *Omoiyari* is also a two-way thinking. This means I will think of your shoes, but I also expect that you would think of my situation when we interact with each other. This is an "unspoken" agreement. In listening culture, there can be "unspoken" agreements between people where even the subtle gesture, changes of tone, and facial expressions are used as communication. Li (2012) points out that "East Asians are known for speaking with circumlocution and vagueness" and "[a]mbiguity in communication is common" (p. 310). Such ambiguity is not a failure of communication, but a preference of communication style to achieve a communicative goal.

East Asians use ambiguity in speech to accomplish many goals. I highlight two common ones here. As many scholars have pointed out, East Asians' speaking leaves much greater room for interpretation in order to achieve their goals. For example, in class, a teacher sees a student talk to a peer, not paying attention to her instruction. Instead of calling out the student's name, which would embarrass the student, the teacher may say, "There are people seeking others out to talk" (有人找別人講話). In fact, in Chinese, the quantity in the phrase "there are people" (有人) is not linguistically marked (owing to lack of morphology for quantity in Chinese). For the whole class, it is not clear whom the teacher is referring to – a particular peer, oneself, or everyone. Hearing this teacher comment, all children become more attentive to the class. The child who actually sought out another to chat is likely to stop. As observed by Agnes He in Chinese language classes, this strategy of speaking is commonly used by teachers

to achieve disciplinary results. It is worth noting that no student would demand clarity in such a situation. Ambiguous speech is appropriately delivered by the teacher and accepted cooperatively by students. (Li, 2012, p. 312).

When I first explained this particular cultural difference to my White colleagues, one of them commented that such society is awfully tiring, just to hear. While seemingly tired, the perception that inferring and thinking for others' would be tiring mental, social work is only the result of cultural assessment. Therefore, the fact that J's mom approached me and shared her concerns with me was not only sharing her concerns, but she was conveying her expectation that I would share the same with senior members of the school, and I did.

This also highlights how Asian American parents perceive schools. J's mom had multiple barriers that she had to overcome when she wanted to communicate with school. Sohn and Wang (2006) find that Asian parents in general, and Korean parents specifically, experience "language barriers," "cultural issues," and "discrimination issues" when they communicate with schools (pp. 128-129). Language barriers are straightforward; Asian moms often do not speak English well enough to communicate with the teachers. That was most likely why J's mom approached me to communicate. She knew she could communicate to me and I would understand her, according to her cultural context. Sohn and Wang (2006) report that "[c]ultural differences tend to have a more substantive impact in building meaningful relationships between parents and teachers" (pp. 127- 128).

Korean parents have cultural beliefs regarding schools, teachers, and parents' involvement that are different from those of most Americans. In Korea, school matters are usually delegated to teachers. Even though Korean parents have their own opinions or suggestions about their children's education, they tend to defer to the teacher, which is regarded as a demonstration of respect for the teachers' authority. (Sohn & Wang, 2006, p. 128)

Such expectations cannot be communicated to American teachers successfully in Asian communication style that prefers ambiguity. Sohn and Wang (2012) conclude that both Asian parents and non-Asian teachers should work together to diminish such gaps in communication.

Such cultural differences should also be considered when teachers communicate with Asian children. Speaking up and directly sharing opinions in class is commonly set as a goal for students with Asian cultural backgrounds. One day, my head teacher and math specialist started talking about how fast J's computation was, yet he never spoke up during math classes. J is a quiet student, he would only give a very short response to the questions that ask his feelings, even the question like how he was doing today.

First of all, as I explained in chapter 5 of part 3 of this thesis, I knew the cultural context that Japanese children would not perceive adult figures as people whom they feel free to talk to. Not only that, Japanese, the language itself—at least, the oral language part—is not an expressive one. They are taught to hide their feelings since their childhood, and adults in house are considered to be authority figures, rather than friends, by children. Despite the various individual characteristics, in all the classrooms I visited, the goals for Asian students included “speaking up in front of the class.”

What if the American culture and the English language used in classrooms make teachers set up learning goals that are seemingly unrelated to children's cultures? Most classroom communications are followed by certain cultural expectations of speaking up. Should the teachers be worried about the English language development that may be hindered because of the cultural background of English language learners? Should the teachers force children to speak up in class? Or should the teachers provide alternative ways to communicate in classrooms?

I believe that teachers should provide different ways to communicate to the students who prefer to communicate differently, because it seems wrong to me to ask students to change who they are to accommodate the cultural norms they do not feel comfortable with, because that makes J, no longer J. J is quiet, but that does not mean that he has to achieve "speaking more." Maybe J has to be in the classroom where J is okay to be J. Bucholtz, Casillas, and Lee (2017) argue that "[L]anguage and culture are not only resources to be sustained, but are themselves forms of sustenance that nurture the identities of young people of color" (p. 54). Since I am multilingual myself, I always had this feeling that I was developing three different identities, depending on which language I speak in which cultural context. Like my story from chapter 2, I had to speak up when I did not want to. I kept practicing it, and I got better, but I long for a classroom where I can be just myself. That might be the same case for J, and if that is the case, I hope J is now learning in the classroom where "speaking more" is not one of his learning goals.

Chapter 7: 2020, Let's talk

Takaki, in his book, *A different mirror*, shares his own “where are you from?” moment from the very first chapter. The “Where are you from?” moment is one of the most common examples that many Asian Americans share as experiencing discrimination, next to “Wow, your English is amazing” moment. Takaki, in his recollection of his memory of a conversation with his taxi driver, had both moments in one car ride.

The rearview mirror reflected a white man in his forties. ‘How long have you been in this country?’ He asked. ‘All my life,’ I replied, wincing. His question was one I had been asked too many times, even by northerners with Ph.D.’s. ‘I was born in the United States,’ I added. He replied: ‘I was wondering because your English is excellent!’ Then I explained: ‘My grandfather came here from Japan in the 1880s. My family has been here, in America for over a hundred years.’ He glanced at me in the mirror. To him, I did not look like an American. (Takaki, 2008, p. 3)

This may make many non-Asians and Asians gasp. Maybe, some others will think: “I asked that exact same question to my Asian neighbor.” Or “I asked the exact same question to my Asian roommate when I was in college.” Or “I said the same thing to my Asian friend, before we became friends.” I believe most of Asian Americans would have experienced moments like this at least once as long as they lived in the United States. In fact, this is so common that even Ken Jeong, a famous actor in Hollywood, has experienced the same. He shares his moment in his Netflix special:

I mean, literally, I just got to meet everybody I've ever wanted to meet (thanks to *Hangover*). I got to meet my favorite actor in the world, Tom Hanks, at the Golden Globes. That was amazing. He's my favorite actor in the world. By the way, did you think that my voice as Mr. Chow was my real accent? Okay. Tom Hanks... I met him, I said hello. And Tom was, like, 'Really? You don't talk like that?' I'm like. 'Really, . . . Forrest Gump? Really? Are you . . . kidding me? Do you walk around carrying a box of . . . chocolates while talking to a Wilson volleyball, you *Cast Away* . . .?' (Scraps from the loft, 2019)

Mr. Chow, the Asian character from *Hangover*, speaks in a certain tone, with a certain accent, which sounds like some sort of Asian accent, but it cannot be associated with any specific ethnicity. Mr. Chow is simply a random Asian character that fits to the "Master narrative" filter of America that Asians are foreigners, do not speak good English, and are very exotic. His communication is very clear, yet, his English sentences are incorrect in many ways; its pragmatics, its sound, its syntax are all wrong. Ken Jeong's Asian appearance makes everyone who watches *Hangover* believe that he is indeed some "Asian," but not necessarily Korean, Chinese, or Japanese. But, it is not Tom Hanks' fault nor Ken Jeong's fault. Ken Jeong acted according to the way Asian Americans are perceived in America. Takaki also claims that "it is not the taxi driver's fault," that he asks such questions (Takaki, 2008, p. 4). "[W]hat had he learned about Asian Americans in courses called 'U.S History?'" He saw me through a *filter* . . . that our country was settled by European immigrants, and Americans are white" (Takaki, 2008, p. 4). Tom Hanks thinking that Ken Jeong would be talking with an exotic accent in real life is simply the result of education that perpetuated this "filter."

This “filter” is what I would like to ask educators to keep in mind when teaching Asian Americans and non-Asian Americans alike. Our minds are oblivious to this filter that we are not even aware that we have this filter in our minds when we meet students. Therefore, I would like to ask you to take a step back from the act of teaching, itself. When we teach, being unaware of this filter, we may do more harm to children, and the efforts to be aware of this filter has to be preceded by teaching.

How do we know we are authentic as we believe we are? How do I know if I am fully aware of my internalized racism? I grew up watching TV shows and movies where all the TV stars and movie stars were White; I was made to believe that it is White actors’ jobs to take all the main roles in TV shows and movies. I was groomed and reinforced to not even question what was wrong with children’s picture books with White protagonists. In all the media I consume, Asians are rarely protagonists. That is why I am still hesitant to say that I am American. I still ask myself before I say any word in English, and I keep getting lost in my thoughts pondering whether I belong to this country or not, after living in this country for twelve years, after obtaining a legal document that I can live in this country. I still try to find ways to earn a qualification to be an American. It is hard for anyone, including myself, to escape the filter that Takaki mentions, because this “filter” has penetrated America for such a long time, generation to generation, TV shows to TV shows, and classrooms to classrooms.

Many history classes do not even mention the 1882 Chinese Exclusion Act, Internment of Japanese Americans during World War II, and the fact that many Chinese immigrants built the railroads that connected the west and the east of the United States. It also omits the fact that they were called “chinks” and their home culture was dismissively

labeled as “exotic,” “mystical,” or “barbarian” for a long time. Such a portrayal of Asian Americans still persists today. The ideologies behind such events were intentionally left out, never discussed, and never taught because they are simply quite disturbing.

I see the result of intentional absence and/or extinction of such culturally aware and respectful education at my school in Manhattan. In 2020, I am teaching at a school whose students never learned what “ching-chong” means to Asian Americans, how discriminatory the phrase can be. My students often compliment my English. So, I tell my students what “ching-chong” means; I tell my students how funny that compliment may sound to Asian Americans who were born in America. I try to teach my students that I am just a human, just like they are. They find these conversations interesting.

We have to talk about race and culture. We have to ask questions. We need to ask what it means to be an American. We will be vulnerable. There are too many things about race that we do not know, but we should know, to just let them slip away without talking about it. I, for one, simply looked away from it; but I want to face it. Let’s face it and stop pretending that racism does not exist. It is our ignorance that let the “All Americans are White” filter infiltrate the minds of our students. Let’s teach our students how to ask questions to teachers and to other classmates. Let’s not stay ignorant about race, about us, and about America.

“A dead Chinaman is of little import to us whose awareness of things Chinese is bounded by an occasional dish of chow mein. We grieve only for what we know.” (Leopold, 1985, p. 48). Be curious to know who Asian Americans are, so we grieve less. Ask us questions. You and I, we all may be pleasantly surprised.

labeled as “exotic,” “mystical,” or “barbarian” for a long time. Such a portrayal of Asian

Nager and Shapiro quote Yonemura: ““child empowerment is an outcome of teacher empowerment”” (1986, as cited in Nager & Shapiro, 2007, p. 29). In their article about what progressive education is, they emphasize “the importance of the teacher coming to know her own power as a thinker, doer, and person connected to children as well as the wider world” (Mitchell, 1931, as cited in Nager & Shapiro, 2007, p. 25). This statement not only applies to educators, but also applies to children. We all want each child to have power as a thinker, doer, and an individual connected to the bigger world. That is why we teach so that children gain the social, communal understanding of who they are. This work is accompanied by understanding of who we are, as teachers and as humans.

Times of hardship reveal something about who we are as humans and as teachers—especially the times like now. The entire world stopped operating, due to the pandemic outbreak that started in China. The fact that this pandemic originated from China has been used to fortify the prejudice against Asians, and to rationalize the racist attacks. The racist attacks against Asian Americans are on the rise. The voice of a child with Chinese ethnicity was recorded on New York Times, and the voice said, “It did make me feel different, and didn’t really want to be Chinese because of the coronavirus” (Garrison, 2020, par. 7). The child was on his way from the gym to the classroom, and heard, “China is stupid” (Garrison, 2020, par. 5).

Four years ago, the New York Times published a short film that interviewed Asian Americans, and one of the interviewees said, “Wearing this skin color is a big deal to me, which is why I don’t say I’m just American anymore because America doesn’t see

me as just American” (Gandbhir & Stephenson, 2016, par. 1). After four years, during this COVID-19 crisis, it seems like nothing has changed; rather, it seems things only have gotten worse.

As teachers, we often use the term, “our children,” but when we use it, who is included in “our” and who is not? When we discuss the empowerment of children as a result of education and schooling—who are the people who become empowered after education and schooling? This question should be asked by teachers and considered, especially in the classrooms where various cultures exist side by side, like New York City public schools. When there is diversity in the socioeconomic levels of students, when there is cultural diversity amongst students, we have to talk about what culture is, what “American” means. The contextual information about students’ cultures and backgrounds is necessary for adults in school to make an inclusive environment for children.

Baldwin writes that “one of the paradoxes of education was that precisely at the point when you begin to develop a conscience, you must find yourself at war with your society. It is your responsibility to change society if you think of yourself as an educated person” (1963, p. 19).

But, let’s go back and think of Ethan, who feels excluded, does not seem to be belonging anywhere in class. Consider that interview of a child who no longer wants to be Chinese. It is easy to imagine that someday; Ethan and this child will say “I am not one of the Americans that they say.” They will eventually find themselves at “war” that Baldwin says, but will Ethan be empowered enough from the education to initiate any

change in society? I, to begin with, do not feel empowered. These are the questions that I still struggle with.

In 2020, there are more occasions of anti-Asian assaults being reported in New York City.

It was around evening time, and I had just left my apartment building, and I was on the phone, talking to my mother's health aide in Chinese. And as I was turning around after putting the trash in the trash bin — this is right in front of my apartment. I heard “Chinese, Chinese, Chinese bitch. Fucking Chinese.” But it all — I don't think I fully believed what I was hearing. And when I made eye contact with him, he kept speaking. “You're fucking Chinese.” And I realized that that I was comprehending that what he was saying did not stop him. (Garrison, 2020, par. 63)

Yuanyuan Zhu was walking to her gym in San Francisco on March 9, thinking the workout could be her last for a while, when she noticed that a man was shouting at her. He was yelling an expletive about China. Then a bus passed, she recalled, and he screamed after it, “Run them over.” She tried to keep her distance, but when the light changed, she was stuck waiting with him at the crosswalk. She could feel him staring at her. And then, suddenly, she felt it: his saliva hitting her face and her favorite sweater. (Tavernise & Opper Jr., 2020)

Such visible symptoms are more direct results of the failure of education, failure of “Master Narrative” that persisted in America, that has portrayed the only true America as “White America.” This, however, has to be understood more than just racist attacks

that cannot be tolerated. It is very likely that the very people who were committing such racist attacks did not even recognize that their behaviors were racist. The narratives of culture that accepted that European, White people are the “only” Americans, and other immigrants have to earn their places made it acceptable to view non-Whites as less than human beings. This attitude, in fact, destroys the souls of racists; it teaches them it is okay to attack those who do not look like Americans, making themselves less of humans, ironically.

The beauty of America is, however, the fact that I can write about these to my fellow educators. I dare to suggest this idea to broaden the definition of what American means, and what America can be for *all* people who live in this country. Educators can make choices on what kind of Americans they want to see in the future.

Jiayang Fan, the interviewee of The Daily podcast, after experiencing the racist attack near her mom’s nursing home says:

Because for the longest — I mean, I think my mom and I both lived with this fiction that if we could be perfect versions of ourselves. . [if we were to achieve]. the goal of our American existence, was to somehow bend ourselves to a shape that America could accept. I never dared to believe that I could actually help to make America better. That was something I never dared to think was possible. But in experiencing this, it made me rethink my role as an American and how even me, even someone who is probationary, that I was in some very, very small way contributing to this country by pointing out the ways that it’s failing itself, making clear the way in which this country still makes me feel ashamed, is possibly one way in which I can make it better. And also, that’s the best version

of America. Like in all the conceptions of America that exist in my head, I actually think this ability to call out the worst parts of America to itself, my freedom to do so, this feels to me the most miraculous part of America (Garrison, 2020, par. 85).

This is the conversation that should happen in classrooms, and that is why I started working on this thesis. This is my very, very small way of contributing to America and American classrooms.

References

- Accardo, J. M. (2014). *O-sode no furiawase : the touching of sleeves : an original story based on the early life of a Japanese-American dancer for ages nine to eleven*. New York: Bank Street College of Education. Retrieved from <https://educate.bankstreet.edu/independent-studies/46>
- Alim, H. S., Rickford, J. R., & Ball, A. F. (2016). *Raciolinguistics: How language shapes our ideas about race*. New York: NY. Oxford University Press.
- Baldwin, J. (1963). *A Talk to teachers*. Retrieved from: https://www.spps.org/cms/lib010/MN01910242/Centricity/Domain/125/baldwin_atalktoteachers_1_2.pdf
- Baron, N. S. (1992). *Growing up with language: How children learn to talk*. Addison-Wesley/Addison Wesley Longman.
- Blake, R., & Shousterman, C. (2010). Second generation West Indian Americans and English in New York City. *English Today*, 26(3), 35-43.
doi:10.1017/S0266078410000234
- Bucholtz, M., Casillas, D.I., & Lee, J.S. (2017). Language and culture as sustenance. *Culturally sustaining pedagogy*. New York: NY. Teachers College Press. pp. 43-59.
- Carini, P. F. (Ed.). (2000). *From another angle: Children's strengths and school standards: The Prospect Center's descriptive review of the child*. New York, NY: Teachers College Press.
- Chu, J. M. (2019). KEN JEONG: *You complete me, ho!* [Netflix Special]. Netflix.
- Chun, E. (2016). The Meaning of *Ching-Chong*. *Raciolinguistics Chapter 5*, pp.81-96.
doi:10.1093/acprof:oso/9780190625696.003.0005
- Cohen, D., Stern, V., Balaban, N & Gropper, N. (2016). *Observing and recording the behavior of young children*, 6th edition. New York, NY: Teachers College Press.
- Cole, M & Scribner, S. (1974). *Culture and Thought: A Psychological introduction*. New York: NY. Wiley & Sons.

- Dallimore, E. J., Hertenstein, J. H. & Platt, M.B. (March 27, 2017). How Do Students Learn from Participation in Class Discussion? *Faculty Focus*. Retrieved from: <https://www.facultyfocus.com/articles/effective-teaching-strategies/students-learn-participation-class-discussion/> This article is adapted from: “Creating a Community of Learning Through Classroom Discussion: Student Perceptions of the Relationships Among Participation, Learning, Comfort and Preparation,” by E.J. Dallimore, J. H. Hertenstein, and M.B. Platt (2016), *Journal on Excellence in College Teaching*, 27(3), 137-171.
- Delpit, L. D. (1995). *Other people's children: Cultural conflict in the classroom*. New York: New Press.
- Derman-Sparks, L. (2012). *Stages in children's development of racial/cultural identity & attitudes*. Retrieved on September 10, 2018, from: http://www.uua.org/documents/derman-sparkslouise/1206_233_identity_stages.pdf
- Driffill, R. (2017). *From Seaspeak to Singlish: celebrating other kinds of English*. Retrieved from: <https://www.theguardian.com/media/mind-your-language/2017/mar/11/from-seaspeak-to-singlish-celebrating-other-kinds-of-english>
- Erikson, K.T. (1966) *Wayward puritans*. New York: NY. Macmillan Publishing Company. 11-18. Retrieved from: <http://fasnafan.tripod.com/sociologyofdeviance.pdf>
- Fisher, D., Rothenberg, C., & Frey, N. (2008). *Content-area conversations: How to plan discussion-based lessons for diverse language learners*. Alexandria, Va: Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development. Chapter 1. Retrieved from: <https://www.wccusd.net/cms/lib/CA01001466/Centricity/Domain/1051/Student%20Discourse.pdf>
- Freeman, Y. & Freeman, D. (2002). *Closing the Achievement gap: How to reach limited-formal-schooling and long-term English learners*. Portsmouth, NH: Heinemann.
- Gandbhir, G. & Stephenson, M. (2016, April 5). A Conversation with Asian-Americans on race. Retrieved from: <https://www.nytimes.com/video/opinion/100000004308529/a-conversation-with-asians-on-race.html>

- Gapminder Foundation. (n.d). *Trend for Number of Children per Woman and Surviving Children*. FREE TO USE! CC-BY GAPMINDER.ORG Retrieved from: <https://www.gapminder.org/topics/fertility-child-mortality/>
- Garrison, L. (Producer). (2020, April 10th). I become a person of suspicion [Audio podcast]. Retrieved from: <https://www.nytimes.com/2020/04/10/podcasts/the-daily/racism-chinese-coronavirus-asian-americans.html>
- Goldberg, C. (March 4, 2008). East and West: Seeing the world through different lenses. *New York Times*. Retrieved from: <https://www.nytimes.com/2008/03/04/health/04iht-6sncult.1.10695876.html>
- Iris-Wilbanks, J. (2013). L1 to L2 Transfer of Korean Learners of English. Seattle University. Retrieved from: https://www.academia.edu/6019976/L1_to_L2_Transfer_of_Korean_Learners_of_English
- JTBC. (January 4th, 2015). "백인 강사만 지원 가능"...인종 차별하는 영어 학원. *Joongangilbo*. Retrieved from: <https://news.joins.com/article/16850769>
- Kent, David. (1999). Speaking in Tongues: Chinglish, Japlish and Konglish. Retrieved from: https://www.researchgate.net/publication/305637860_Speaking_in_Tongues_Chinglish_Japlish_and_Konglish/citation/download
- Kent, David. (2001). Teaching Konglish: Selected Resources for Students and Teachers. Retrieved from: https://www.researchgate.net/publication/305637707_Teaching_Konglish_Selected_Resources_for_Students_and_Teachers
- Kim, H. S. (2002). We talk, therefore we think? A cultural analysis of the effect of talking on thinking. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, 83(4), 828–842. <https://doi.org/10.1037/0022-3514.83.4.828>
- Kim, I-S. (2006). Automatic Speech Recognition: Reliability and Pedagogical Implications for Teaching Pronunciation. *Educational Technology & Society*, 9(1), 322-334. Retrieved from: <http://eds.a.ebscohost.com.bankstreet.idm.oclc.org/eds/detail/detail?vid=4&sid=895aa9ac-803e-485d-ab27->

[ce2b6daf2a0a%40sessionmgr4006&bdata=JnNpdGU9ZWRzLWxpdmU%3d#AN=85920328&db=eue](https://www.proquest.com/psychology/ce2b6daf2a0a%40sessionmgr4006&bdata=JnNpdGU9ZWRzLWxpdmU%3d#AN=85920328&db=eue)

- Ko, H., Ionin, T., & Wexler, K. (2009). L2-acquisition of English articles by Korean speakers. *The Handbook of East Asian Psycholinguistics*, 3, 286-304.
- Kobayashi, C., Glover, G. H., & Temple, E. (2008). Switching language switches mind: linguistic effects on developmental neural bases of 'Theory of Mind'. *Social cognitive and affective neuroscience*, 3(1), 62–70.
<https://doi.org/10.1093/scan/nsm039>
- Krashen, S. D. (1982). *Principles and Practice in Second Language Acquisition*. Internet edition. Retrieved from:
http://www.sdkrashen.com/content/books/principles_and_practice.pdf
- Krys, K., Melanie Vauclair, C., Capaldi, C.A. *et al.* (2016). Be Careful Where You Smile: Culture Shapes Judgments of Intelligence and Honesty of Smiling Individuals. *Journal of Nonverbal Behavior* 40, 101–116 (2016).
<https://doi.org/10.1007/s10919-015-0226-4>
- Labaree, D. (1997). Public Goods, Private Goods: The American Struggle Over Educational Goals. *American Educational Research Journal* 34 (1), 39-81.
- Lawrence University, *Developmental Characteristics*. Retrieved from:
https://www.lawrence.edu/mfhe/www_dept_student_dean_sub_volunteer/Everyone/developmental%20characteristics.pdf
- Leopold, A. (1968). *A sand county almanac and sketches here and there*. New York: NY. Oxford University Press.
- Li, J. (2012). *Cultural Foundations of Learning: East and West*. Cambridge University Press.
- Linguistic Society of America. (n.d.). Is English changing? Retrieved from:
<https://www.linguisticsociety.org/content/english-changing>
- Li, W., & Konstantopoulos, S. (2017). Does class-size reduction close the achievement gap? evidence from TIMSS 2011. *School Effectiveness and School Improvement*, 28(2), 292-313.
doi:<http://dx.doi.org.bankstreet.idm.oclc.org/10.1080/09243453.2017.1280062>

- Lo, Adrienne & Reyes, Angela. (2004). Language, Identity and Relationality in Asian Pacific America: An Introduction. *Pragmatics*; Vol 14, No 2&3 (2004). 14. 10.1075/prag.14.2-3.01lo.
- Mao, L. & Young, M. (2008). *Representations: Doing Asian American Rhetoric*. All USU Press Publications. 164. Retrieved from: https://digitalcommons.usu.edu/usupress_pubs/164
- McCabe, A., & Bliss, L. (2003). *Patterns of narrative discourse: A multicultural, life span approach*. Boston, MA: Allyn & Bacon.
- Meyer, E. (2017). Being the Boss in Brussels, Boston, and Beijing. *Harvard Business Review*, July–August 2017 Issue. Retrieved from: <https://hbr.org/2017/07/being-the-boss-in-brussels-boston-and-beijing>
- Nam, H. (2010). Konglish, Korean L2 Learners' unique interlanguage: Its definition, categories and lexical entries. *Korean Journal of Applied Linguistics*, 26(4), 275-308. Retrieved from: <http://www.alak.or.kr/>
- NCTM: National Council of Teachers of English. (2014). Why Class Size Matters Today. *NCTE Position Statements*. Retrieved from: <https://ncte.org/statement/why-class-size-matters/>
- Nager, N. & Shapiro, E. (2007). A progressive approach to the education of teachers: some principles from Bank Street College of Education. *Occasional Papers*. New York: NY. Bank Street College of Education. Retrieved from: http://s3.amazonaws.com/bankstreet_web/media/filer_public/2012/09/26/occasional-papers-18.pdf
- NICHD Early Child Care Research Network. (2004). Does class size in first grade relate to children's academic and social performance or observed classroom processes? *Developmental Psychology*, 40(5), 651-664. doi:<http://dx.doi.org/bankstreet.idm.oclc.org/10.1037/0012-1649.40.5.651>
- Nisbett, R. E. (2003). *The geography of thoughts: How Asians and Westerners think differently... and why*. New York: NY. Free Press.
- OECD (2010), "How many students are in each classroom?", in *Highlights from Education at a Glance 2010*, OECD Publishing, Paris. DOI:

https://doi.org/10.1787/eag_highlights-2010-30-en Retrieved from:
https://www.oecd-ilibrary.org/docserver/eag_highlights-2010-30-en.pdf?expires=1579542256&id=id&accname=guest&checksum=8BC4F7129774BE00AE57B212227940B2

Paris, D., & Alim, H. S. (2017). *Culturally sustaining pedagogies: Teaching and learning for justice in a changing world*. New York: NY. Teachers College Press.

Park, H., Coelleo J. A., and Lau, A. S. (2014). Child socialization goals in western versus east asian nations from 1989 to 2010: Evidence for social change in parenting. *Parenting: Science and Practice* 14.2. 69-91.

Pettersen, W. (Jan 9, 1966). Success Story, Japanese-American Style. *New York Times* ProQuest Historical Newspapers The New York Times (1851 - 2006). pg. 180
Retrieved from:
http://inside.sfuhs.org/dept/history/US_History_reader/Chapter14/modelminority.pdf

Pong, S., & Pallas, A. (2001). Class Size and Eighth-Grade Math Achievement in the United States and Abroad. *Educational Evaluation and Policy Analysis*, 23(3), 251-273. Retrieved January 20, 2020. Retrieved From:
www.jstor.org/stable/3594152

Quintana, S. M., Chao, R. K., Cross, W. E., Hughes, D., Gall, S. N. L., Aboud, F. E., ... Vietze, D. L. (2006). Race, ethnicity, and culture in child development: Contemporary research and future directions. *Child Development*, 77(5), 1129-1141. <https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1467-8624.2006.00951.x>

Rosa, J. and Flores, N. (2017). Do you hear what I hear? Raciolinguistic ideologies and culturally sustaining pedagogies. *Culturally sustaining pedagogies: Teaching and learning for justice in a changing world*, 175-190. New York: NY. Teachers College Press.

Rosling, H. (2018). *Factfulness*. New York: NY. Flatiron Books.

Scraps from the Loft. (2019, February 17th). Ken Jeong: You Complete Me, Ho (2019) – Full Transcript. <https://scrapsfromtheloft.com/2019/02/17/ken-jeong-you-complete-me-ho-transcript/>

- Sedova, K., Sedlacek, M., Svaricek, R., Majcik, M., Navratilova, J. Drexlerova, A., Kychler, J., Salamounova, Z. Do those who talk more learn more? The relationship between student classroom talk and student achievement. *Learning and Instruction* (63), October 2019, 101217. DOI: <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.learninstruc.2019.101217>
- Shalaby, C. (2017). *Troublemakers: Lessons in freedom from young children at school*. The New Press.
- Sohn, S. & Wang, X. C. (2006) Immigrant Parents' Involvement in American Schools: Perspectives from Korean Mothers. *Early Childhood Education Journal*, Vol. 34, No. 2, October 2006 (2006) DOI: 10.1007/s10643-006-0070-6
- Spacey, J. (August 26, 2012). Is Kyoto Capital of Japan? *Japan Talk*. Retrieved from: <https://www.japan-talk.com/jt/new/is-kyoto-the-capital-of-Japan>
- Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy Archive. (Spring 2015). The Linguistic Relativity Hypothesis. Retrieved from: <https://stanford.library.sydney.edu.au/archives/spr2015/entries/relativism/supplement2.html>
- Takaki, R. T. (2008). *A different mirror: a history of multicultural America*. 1st rev. ed. New York: Back Bay Books/Little, Brown, and Co.
- Tan, A. (n.d.) *Mother tongue*. Retrieved from: <http://theessayexperiencefall2013.qwriting.qc.cuny.edu/files/2013/09/Mother-Tongue-by-Amy-Tan.pdf>
- Tavernise, S. and Oppel Jr. R. A. (March 23, 2020). Spit On, Yelled At, Attacked: Chinese-Americans Fear for Their Safety. *New York Times*. Retrieved from : <https://www.nytimes.com/2020/03/23/us/chinese-coronavirus-racist-attacks.html>
- TED Talks. (November 2017). Lera Boroditsky-How Language shapes the way we think. Retrieved from: https://www.ted.com/talks/lera_boroditsky_how_language_shapes_the_way_we_think?language=en
- Tian, Y., Bian, Y., Han, P., Gao, F., & Wang, P. (2017). Class Collective Efficacy and Class Size as Moderators of the Relationship between Junior Middle School

Students' Externalizing Behavior and Academic Engagement: A Multilevel Study. *Frontiers in psychology*, 8, 1219. doi:10.3389/fpsyg.2017.01219

UNIVERSITY PROFESSOR TEAM [koo.yurim@joongang.co.kr]. Sept 14,2015.
University classrooms in Korea lack discussion. *Korea Joongang Daily*.
Retrieved from: <http://mengnews.joins.com/view.aspx?aid=3009146>

Van Campen, K. S., & Russell, S. T. (2010). *Cultural differences in parenting practices: What Asian American families can teach us* (Frances McClelland Institute for Children, Youth, and Families ResearchLink, Vol. 2, No. 1). Tucson, AZ: The University of Arizona

Whitehurst, G. J. & Chingos, M. M. (2011). *Class Size: What Research Says and What it Means for State Policy*. Brown Center on Education Policy. The Brookings Institution. Retrieved from: https://www.brookings.edu/wp-content/uploads/2016/06/0511_class_size_whitehurst_chingos.pdf.

Wikipedia. IPA Korean Chart Retrieved from:
<https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Help:IPA/Korean> Retrieved on Jan 19, 2020

Winford, D. (n.d.). *Languages in Contact*. Linguistic Society of America. Retrieved from:<https://www.linguisticsociety.org/resource/languages-contact>

Wolfram, W. (n.d.). *Sociolinguistics*. Linguistic Society of America. Retrieved from:
<https://www.linguisticsociety.org/resource/sociolinguistics>

Wong, P., Lai, C. F., Nagasawa, R., & Lin, T. (1998). Asian Americans as a Model Minority: Self-Perceptions and Perceptions by other Racial Groups. *Sociological Perspectives*, 41(1), 95–118. <https://doi.org/10.2307/1389355>

Wood, C. (2007). *Yardsticks: children in the classroom, ages 4-14*. Turner Falls, MA: Northeast Foundation for Children

Year, J. & Gordon, P. (2009). Korean Speakers' Acquisition of the English Ditransitive Construction: The Role of Verb Prototype, Input Distribution, and Frequency. *The Modern Language Journal*. 93. 399 - 417. 10.1111/j.1540-4781.2009.00898.x.

Yoon, S. Y. & Gentry, M. (2009). Racial and Ethnic Representation in Gifted ProgramsCurrent Status of and Implications for Gifted Asian American Students.

Gifted Child Quarterly - GIFTED CHILD QUART. 53. 121-136.
10.1177/0016986208330564.

Yoon, M (August 9th, 2017) [단독] “흑인 No! 백인만”...인종차별 여전한 한국 *Korea Herald*. Retrieved from:
<http://www.koreaherald.com/view.php?ud=20170809000679>

Weale, S. (2017). Britons 'should learn Polish, Punjabi and Urdu to boost social cohesion'
<https://www.theguardian.com/education/2017/jan/18/britons-should-learn-polish-punjabi-and-urdu-to-boost-social-cohesion>

Zheng, Y. & Samuel, A. (2017). Does seeing an Asian face make speech sound more accented? *Attention, perception & psychophysics*. 79:1841–1859 DOI:
10.3758/s13414-017-1329-2.

Appendix

Permission Letters

Appendix 1. Permission granted by the publisher for Figure 1



PARTIES:

1. Oxford University Limited (Company No. 01748118) (Incorporated in England); and
2. Oxford University Press.

Thank you for your request. Some of the information used in this document is derived from the Oxford University Press database.

Set out in this licence are the terms and conditions for the use of the licensed material (as defined below) to the licensee. The terms in this licence are subject to the attached General Terms and Conditions, which will constitute the licence agreement (the "Licence") between licensor and licensee as regards the licensed material. The terms set out in this licence shall take precedence over any conflicting provision in the General Terms and Conditions.

Licence Terms

Effective: 03/02/2020
RefNo: 33061

The Licensor

Company name: Oxford University Press
Address: 1 Wellington Square
Oxford
OX2 601
GB

The Licensee

Licensee Contact Name: John Doe
Licensee Address: 417 East 90th St.
10028
United States

Licensed Material

ISSN/ISSN: 9780190625696
Publisher: Oxford University Press
Title: Radolinguistics - Language Shapes Our Ideas About Race

Figure number & title / Question
pogonumber

Figure + I. Two . . . ollaroguogo
83

— . Jo<fl-., **Or-**

usage type

For Use In Licensee's Publication(s)

"-..-ll1051S

language

English

publication title

ol de\olopcoiOiiil (Tontat\oo)

type of document

■

Rights Granted

Exclusivity:

Non-Exclusive

Format

THES15JWIIIT5>APER(X)NUI.TATION ooaJMENT

Language:

English

Territory:

USA

Author:

ol t.c:enseo's-

Author's Name Attribution:

T-: ■ ex>pies

Additional Terms:

U at some h.W"e dale,...loesis is publisloed I will be
necessary to re-deiJr Itis permissiorL
-also IfCiteI l>ot W the mot- to be U5ed is
act<nc>Modged to Mrf- SOURCE, you MI need to dear
peor- .o with the rights tdder andfor oroy eled10nic
wrsion the Oline m.Jst appear on the same page as the
OUP-and the OUP -mould not be
lonod<d u a - - Comrnons - ____ ,or toiO'f-
. , , , . . . _ _ _ . g . . . & .

Payment Details

Fee Payable:

£0.00 [+VAT (OIPible)]

Payment Terms:

Strictly 30 days from date of

GENERATED TERMS AND CONDITIONS

S. DrflndUont tML InttnnSIdon

1.1 CaptJllJecl word! **and** Inrt'ftl Geneffl TmMancl hiYe: iPe mMI'W19J gto
them In the Ucenor Co4 Sheet.

1.1 In INS Uccnet fr'f1 rtIftrus < _ - .cjf II>- "' . , , ID ' ' -
IttoQf Or proy.. amtdld o1 tHniQid l'fom II ≥ Tht'''''' Mducl,.,, will be <DnlICUid
MnSrat ve, w\mout lmltin9 tNMMt or ICDPt oJ mewonK prtJJDeclng it. A rtiMnOa to lft writing or
...ton _ Ind

 **Van Morrill** (Harvard Business Publishing)

Jan 26, 9:02 AM EST

Dear Danielle,

Thank you for your inquiry. To include graphics or text excerpts from Harvard Business Review in a masters thesis or dissertation that will not be published outside the college, formal permission is not required; it's actually a common type of "fair use".

Please be sure to give proper citation to the HBR article, noting that it's from the July-August 2017 issue, and for a webpage link, this URL:
<https://store.hbr.org/product/being-the-boss-in-brussels-boston-and-beijingR1794D>

Let me know if there's any further questions or assistance needed.

Van Morrill
HARVARD BUSINESS PUBLISHING
Customer Service & Permissions Dept.
20 Guest Street, Suite 700
Boston, MA 02135
1-617-783-7587
permissions@harvardbusiness.org

 **Danielle Seung Youn Kim**

Jan 27, 11:23 PM EST

Dear Sir or Madam:

I am a graduate student at the Bank Street College of Education in New York City. As part of my graduation requirement, I am preparing an Integrative Master's Project and would like to request permission to include some figures shown in the following material:

"Mapping Leadership Cultures" visual graph appeared in the below article:
<https://hbr.org/2017/07/being-the-boss-in-brussels-boston-and-beijing>

The Integrative Master's Project will be shared as a PDF with the Bank Street community in a password-protected searchable database and may also be submitted as a PDF to the Bank Street Library where it would be catalogued as part of the Library collection and entered into an international database for wider circulation.

Sincerely,

Conversation CCs (if any):

Visit our FAQ: <https://help.zendesk.com/hc/en-us>

This email is a service from Harvard Business Publishing. Delivered by **Zendesk** | [Privacy Policy](#)

Appendix 3. Permission email from the publisher for Figure 2

Re: Permission Request for "Babies Per Women graph" 

Gapminder Foundation

to me

Mon, Apr 27, 5:25 AM (1 day ago)



Dear Danielle,

Thank you for your email and for using our material. Please find all information about permissions and citation [here](#)

Let me know if you have any further questions, many thanks again!

Best regards / Med vänliga hälsningar

KLARA ELZVIK
Project Coordinator

GAPMINDER FOUNDATION /
STIFTELSEN GAPMINDER
Box 38025 | 100 64 Stockholm
Mobil: +46 (0)70 229 9983
Email: info@gapminder.org
Webpage: www.gapminder.org

On 27 Apr 2020, at 02:05, Danielle Seung Youn Kim <skim2@bankstreet.edu> wrote:

Dear Sir or Madam:

I am a graduate student at the Bank Street College of Education in New York City. As part of my graduation requirement, I am preparing an Integrative Master's Project on Language and Racism in classrooms, and would like to request permission to include "Babies per women" from 1970 and 2017. found from below link.

<https://www.gapminder.org/topics/fertility-child-mortality/>

Use: To be used as illustrative material

The Integrative Master's Project will be shared as a PDF with the Bank Street community in a password-protected searchable database and may also be submitted as a PDF to the Bank Street Library where it would be catalogued as part of the Library collection and entered into an international database for wider circulation. I would be grateful if I could get the permission to include these figures in mywork.

Sincerely,

Appendix 4. Sample Permission Letter

Sample Permission Letter requesting the Use of Copyrighted Images in an Independent Study

Permissions Department
Museum, or Publishing Company Name
Address
City, State, Zip

Dear Sir or Madam,

I am a graduate student at the Bank Street College of Education in New York City. As part of my graduation requirement, I am preparing an independent study on _____ . Independent studies are catalogued as part of the library collection and are downloadable via a live link on the catalog entry, making them accessible to Bank Street faculty and students as well as beyond the college. They will also be entered into an international database for wider circulation.

I would like to request permission to include a reproduction of the following image(s) to supplement my thesis text:

[complete the following information for each image from this source]

Artist's Name:
Title of Painting/Photograph/Sculpture/etc.:
Title of Publication from which the image will be reproduced:
Author of above publication:
Page Number(s):
Year of Publication:
Copyright Holder:
Type of Reprint: Color or Black & White Photocopy
Use: To be used as illustrative material

Additional sample text:

The image(s), in the form of color copies from the online collection, would be included only in the appendix, and serve as a point of reference for the reader.

I have enclosed a self-address envelope for your convenience. Thank you in advance for your prompt attention to this request.

Sincerely,