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Language Ideologies in Deep South Korea: Voices of Jeollanamdo English Teachers

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LANGUAGE IDEOLOGIES IN DEEP SOUTH KOREA: VOICES OF
JEOLLANAMDO ENGLISH TEACHERS

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THESIS
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A thesis submitted in partial fulfillment of the
requirements for the degree of Master of Arts
in Linguistic Theory and Typology
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at the University of Kentucky

By
Ian Schneider
Lexington, Kentucky

Director: Dr. Jennifer Cramer, Professor of Linguistics
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ABSTRACT OF THESIS

LANGUAGE IDEOLOGIES IN DEEP SOUTH KOREA: VOICES OF
JEOLLANAMDO ENGLISH TEACHERS

Language ideologies serve as shared beliefs and key frames that link language and society, mediating both macro-level social forces and micro-level interactions. Through this lens, this thesis compares the ideological perspectives and experiences of expatriate and local English teachers working in secondary-level schools in the rural province of Jeollanamdo, South Korea. Through thematic analysis of semi-structured interviews, this study argues for complexity and nuance in how language teachers from distinct backgrounds perceive and negotiate dominant English language ideologies in Korean society. Moreover, these ideological perspectives differ between teachers of local and expatriate backgrounds, or teachers working in urban and rural areas. This study aims to challenge notions of metronormativity and unified ideological marketplaces by sharing the voices of English teachers in an understudied province of Korea. Furthermore, this thesis provides a comparison between macro-level theories of language ideology and linguistic political economy and the micro-level experiences and perspectives of individual educators.

KEYWORDS: Language Ideology, English Education, Sociolinguistics, South Korea, Linguistic Anthropology

Ian Schneider

April 26, 2023

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DEDICATION

To all the teachers who reach their students by reaching themselves.

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While this thesis is an individual project, and all errors are my own, I owe a debt of gratitude to a community of scholars and supporters throughout this intellectual journey.

First, I would like to thank my advisor, Dr. Jennifer Cramer, who provided critical insights to improve the quality of this work while also giving me the space to make this project my own. Dr. Thomas Clayton provided invaluable feedback to keep my analysis focused on my research question and fill important gaps in terms of qualitative methodology. Dr. Rusty Barrett helped me develop more well-rounded theoretical insights into language ideology and guided me through challenging yet illuminating readings to better ground my participants' stories.

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And finally, thank you to Karene and John Schneider for their love and support over my past 31 years of life. Your boy wrote a thesis!

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CHAPTER 1. INTRODUCTION

Excerpt 1.1. [Bevan, GET]

And it's just, you know, once you kind of wrap your head around that you might be wrong on [one aspect of working in Korean culture], and you have to start to wonder what else you might be wrong about.

1.1 Overview of Topic

While working as a conversational English teacher in a South Korean high school, I experienced a creeping sense of dissonance between the job I was hired to do and the incentives and motivations of my students. As someone born and raised a mostly English-speaking environment, I internalized notions that English was a default medium of communication within a diverse society. I was blind to the idea that English could serve different purposes other than sharing ideas and stories. I remember sitting in my office and teachers approaching me, asking me to read and stress-test multiple-choice test questions written from excerpts of scientific articles. Most importantly, I had to reassure teachers that there was only one possible correct answer because ambiguity could cause a student-parent uproar. The basic conversation skills I taught through drama-inspired activities varied wildly from the test-taking skills drilled into students as they crammed for high stakes standardized tests. Like Bevan, there was a lot I had to learn about Korean culture and the English language. I lacked precise terminology at the time, but I was struggling and striving to acclimate to an ideological landscape different from my hometown Sacramento, California.

At the heart of language ideology research is a tension between shared notions (Woolard & Schieffelin 1994) and individual subjectivities. As Irvine & Gal (2000:36) point out, "There is no 'view from nowhere,' no gaze that is not positioned." So where do

shared notions end and subjectivities begin? How do researchers navigate the tightrope between macro-level social forces that inequitably distribute opportunities and micro-level social negotiations that imbue social actors with sparks of agency? By comparing micro-level perspectives of on-the-ground educators against the backdrop of macro-level language ideologies, this project aims to shed one small ray of light on this enduring methodological disjunct.

This thesis started with questions about expatriate English teachers (GETs) who work in rural secondary schools in South Korea (Korea). Korea has hired GETs as conversational English instructors (Korean: *hoeeui gangsa*) since the mid-1990s, when policies of globalization and the acceleration of Korea's export-oriented economy (ostensibly) necessitated Koreans to improve their communicative language skills (Ahn, 2013). However, this push for communicative language teaching (CLT) collided with entrenched practices of standardized testing dedicated to raising educated, globally competitive citizens in math and science (Seth, 2002). This testing culture coupled with the limited need for English in most Koreans' day-to-day life raises important questions about English education in Korea: Why are GETs hired to teach communicative English in classrooms where most students seem to neither need nor desire English speaking skills? What societal forces drive students in Korea to study English beyond its (purported) communicative or economic benefits? How do GETs understand or misunderstand "English fever" (Korean: *yeongeo yeolpung*) (JK Park, 2009), the unquenchable drive for English education that Song (2011) called a "social malady?" How can local Korean English teachers (LETs) and local education officials better educate GETs on the ideological landscape of English in Korea? As Bevan says in Excerpt 1.1, what might GETs

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be wrong about when it comes to understanding the English language and its position within Korean history and society?

To consider these questions, this study begins with a macro-level framework: three dominant English language ideologies in South Korea as identified by Joseph Sung-Yul Park (2004; 2008; 2009): *necessitation* (English as essential to compete in globalizing neoliberal markets), *externalization* (English as a language irreconcilably separate or threating to Korean identity) and *self-deprecation* (Koreans as incapable English users regardless of their efforts). Through qualitative analysis of semi-structured interviews, this study aims to add nuance to these ideologies through the voices of GETs and LETs who live and work in the rural province of Jeollanamdo, a province that receives scant attention in the English education literature (JY Lee, 2021). This thesis argues that LET and GET perspectives on dominant English language ideologies are various, both within groups and between groups. By gathering the voices of teachers working in Jeollanamdo, this thesis aims to address the following question.

1. How do GETs and LETs working in the Jeollanamdo province in South Korea affirm, resist, or negotiate dominant English language ideologies?

By comparing and analyzing the voices of LETs and GETs in one of the most rural provinces in Korea, this thesis argues that dominant English language ideologies may attenuate over geographic space, wielding less influence over teachers and students in the most remote, rural parts of the country.

1.2 Overview of Thesis Structure

Chapter 2 introduces background information on language ideologies, English as a global language, English language and education in Korea, the recruitment of GETs to

Korea, and Joseph Sung-Yul Park's (2004; 2008; 2011) three dominant English language ideologies. Chapter 3 describes the methods of recruitment, interviewing, and qualitative analysis employed to address the research question. Chapter 4 is the first of three analysis chapters, focusing on how LETs and GETs negotiate the ideology of necessitation. Chapter 5 discusses how LETs and GETs navigate ideologies of externalization, while Chapter 6 focuses on LETs' and GETs' perceptions of the ideology of self-deprecation. Finally, Chapter 7 summarizes key findings, discusses limitations, and posits future research avenues.

CHAPTER 2. BACKGROUND LITERATURE

Excerpt 2.1. [Arizwel, LET]

And also, after [students] get into the university, if they want to get a job, they should take a test like TOEIC, TOEFL, every English exam. I don't know why.

Excerpt 2.2. [Joon, Participant in Cho & Kinginger (2022:6)]

One mother complained to the teacher, who later told the class that he had replied, 'They're not studying for the CSAT; the CSAT is not everything, right?' I could not understand the conversation and still don't. We memorize English vocabulary to do well on the CSAT. What other goals do we have?

2.1 Introduction

This chapter covers segments of the literature germane to the scope of this thesis and concludes with the thesis research question. This project examines the ideological perspectives of LETs and GETs living in Jeollanamdo. Many ideological studies done in Korea (e.g., Park, 2006; JSY Park, 2008) employ Silverstein's (1979:193) definition of language ideology as "any sets of beliefs about language articulated by the users as a rationalization or justification of perceived language structure and use." Part of that definition also entails notions of language so entrenched that speakers articulate them as self-evident "common sense" (Rumsey, 1990). These notions of self-evidence and commonsense beliefs about English appear in Excerpt 2.2 as Joon speaks with incredulity about the value of learning English vocabulary beyond doing well on the CSAT and in Excerpt 2.1 as Arizwel explains the importance of English exams for young professional employability without providing any corresponding rationale. Therefore, this chapter will trace the history of English as a global language and object of status and power in Korea, and how English and its entailing neoliberal ideologies have embedded within Korean

English education. Or as Cho (2021:142) puts it, "English fever is not a recent phenomenon but has its roots in historicity through which the seeds for the ongoing phenomenon of 'English fever' were planted in Korean society."

The rest of this chapter follows 11 subsections. Section 2.2 broadly discusses theories of language ideologies. Section 2.3 discusses various perspectives on English as a global language. Section 2.4 provides a history of the English language in (South) Korea. Section 2.5 connects that history to the history of English as a codified subject of study in the Korean national curriculum and Section 2.6 outlines how language learning methodologies tie into the dynamic Korean sociohistorical context. Section 2.7 more specifically discusses language ideology research in Korea and Section 2.8 discusses the three dominant English language ideologies identified by Joseph Sung-Yul Park. Section 2.9 presents perspectives on the guest English teacher (GET[1]) and local English teacher (LET) teacher dichotomy and describes these ideologies within GET programs in various countries (including Korea). Section 2.10 provides sociohistorical background on the Jeollanamdo province, and Section 2.11 outlines several studies closely related to this thesis, identifies a literature gap, and concludes with a research question.

2.2 Language Ideology

Language ideology has accrued many definitions since garnering substantial scholarly interest in the 1990s. Rumsey (1990:346) neutrally defines language ideology as

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[1] Scholars and institutions use a myriad of terms for expatriate L1 English language teaching professionals including (but not limited to) native English teacher (NET) (Lee & Yin, 2021), native English-speaking teacher (NEST) (HS Lee, 2022), native-speaking English teacher (NSET) (Jeon & Lee, 2006), and guest English teacher (GET) (Ahn, 2013). Emerging ideological critiques challenge the ethics and usefulness of the term "native speaker" (Cheng et al. 2021). Therefore, this thesis will use the terms "expatriate" or 'guest' English teacher (GET) to describe native-speaking English instructors and 'local' English teacher (LET) to describe Korean English instructors.

"shared bodies of commonsense notions about the nature of language in the world."

Silverstein operationalizes this definition to discuss the connection between micro and macro-level social worlds by defining language ideologies as "sets of beliefs about language articulated by users as a rationalization or justification of perceived language structure and use" (1979:193). Others adopt more critical approaches by describing language ideology as a "distortion" or "mystification" of language beliefs "traced to the legitimacy of social domination" (Woolard & Schieffelin, 1994:57). Irvine (1989:255) explicitly links politics and macrosocial structures in her definition of language ideology as a "cultural system of ideas about social and linguistic relationships, together with their loading of moral and political interest" while Barrett, Cramer, & McGowan (2022) discuss language ideologies as a mediating link between language variation and social structures, often contributing to prejudice and discrimination (see Figure 1 for diagram borrow from Lippi-Green, 2012:71). While definitions of language ideology vary in their level of criticality, all tend to describe ideas shaped in a cultural setting under the influence of particular social interests (Irvine, 2012).

Figure 1. Language ideologies are a mediating link between language variation and macrosocial structures (Lippi-Green, 2012:71).

Silverstein (2000, 2003) provides theoretical accounts of language ideologies as a dynamic relationship between macro-level structures like partitions of social space, values

associated with partitions, essentializations, and authorization from ritual practice established and micro-level pragmatic presuppositions and entailments. Speakers enact this dynamic relationship through *n*th-order indexicalities that are parsed, entextualized, and recontextualized in interactional real time. To put it another way, macro-social acts of enregisterment (Agha, 2005) saturate micro-social interactions with ideological meaning.

Building off Silverstein's theories, Irvine & Gal (2000) describe three processes in the formation of language ideologies: iconization, fractal recursivity, and erasure. First, iconization involves speakers establishing an essential or iconic link between language features and an identity, group of people, or social characteristic. For example, as the U.S. installed English-speaking Koreans into positions of power, English language skills became iconized as upper-class, upwardly mobile, global, cosmopolitan characterological figures (CH Lee, 2021).

Next, fractal recursivity reproduces these iconized links in a dichotomy that reproduce oppositions either inside the initial dichotomy or along analogous or disparate planes (Gal & Irvine, 1995). For example, as English became iconized within a stratified Korean society, public discourse reproduced a dichotomy between English and Korean: English as an index of global competitiveness and Korean as an index of nationalistic self-preservation. In the global export of popular music, English comes to index a modern, sociolinguistic breathing space for young South Koreans while the Korean language indexes the backward censorship of what at the time were stifling government media regulations (Lee, 2005). Upper class Korean Christian churchgoers contrast a Western-trained "clean" choir voice (Korean: *kaekkeuthan sori*) as an index of a modern future with traditional Korean vocalization (Korean: *pansori*) as an index of a sorrowful, traumatic

past (while professors code-mix English into their university-level voice courses) (Harkness, 2014). These processes graft iconized language or language features (along with the ideological loadings found therein) onto other domains of society, reifying myths of essentialization.

Finally, through erasure, examples that do not conform to dominant ideologies are silenced, ignored, or otherwise rendered invisible (Irvine & Gal, 2000). For example, descriptions of Korea as a monolingual country (Park, 2004, 2008) or self-deprecatory ideologies of Koreans as bad speakers of English (Lee, 2018) erase bilingual Korean citizens who acquire fluent English skills. Park (2010) further writes about how the conservative press highlights the success stories of English learners in Korea while consequently erasing the countless Koreans who achieve strong English skills and yet do not reap commensurate economic spoils. Kathleen Lee (2014) also describes how discourses of erasure divide Korean society between high-proficiency English "haves" with incompetent "have-nots", thereby glossing over a wide range of proficiencies of Korean students and jobseekers (and by limiting the scope of Korean English learners to students and jobseekers).

2.3 English as a Global Language

In a postcolonial, globalizing world, English is an official or administrative language in over 70 countries (Crystal, 2003) (see Figure 2). While it is difficult to estimate the total number of speakers, Crystal (2003) estimates between 1.1 billion and 1.8 billion speakers of English worldwide, and projects over 2 billion speakers by 2050 (Crystal, 2008). Scholars further estimate anywhere between 350 million (Crystal, 2003) and 508 million (Graddol, 1997) of the worldwide English-speaking population to be L1 speakers.

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These estimates strongly indicate that English is more likely to be used between two L2 speakers than L1-L1 or L1-L2 pairings (Ahn, 2013), a pattern that is expanding today.
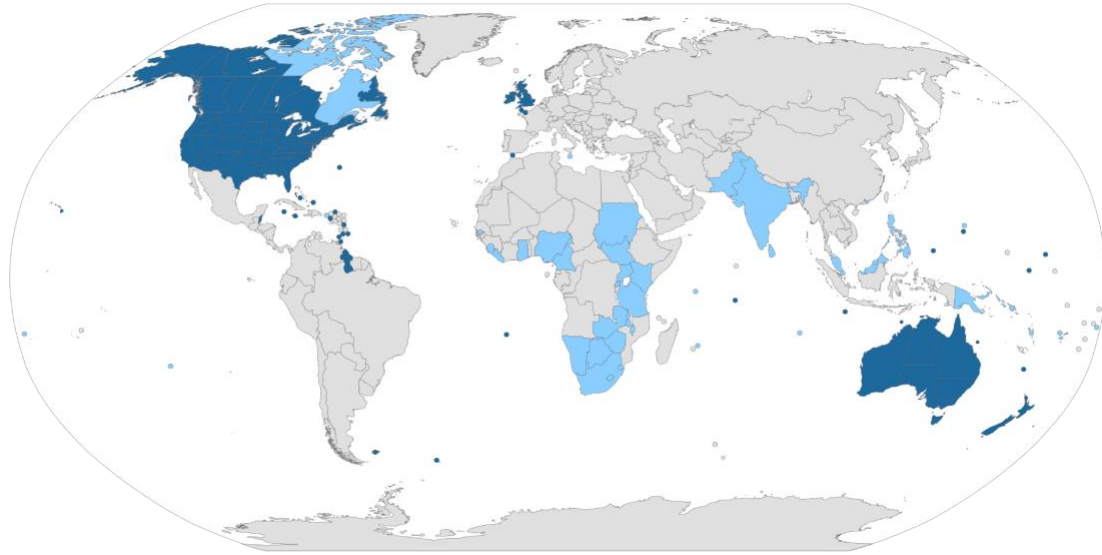
Figure 2. Map of countries where English is either the most widely spoken language (dark shading) or countries where English is an official language but not the most widely spoken language (light shading) (Wikimedia Commons, 2020).

While Crystal takes a neutral (if not optimistic) stance towards English as a globalizing medium of communication, other scholars are more critical of English as a worldwide lingua franca (Pennycook, 2002; 2017). Critical applied linguists tend to characterize English as a force that reproduces colonial inequalities through dominant-dominated power relations (Phillipson, 1992), while more extreme stances describe English as a worldwide linguistically genocidal threat to indigenous languages (Skutnabb-Kangas, 2000). Together, Phillipson and Skutnabb-Kangas (1986:380-385) identify three common arguments (or one might say *ideologies*) that "sell" English worldwide including an innate "being-power" (English as an intrinsically rich, superior language), "resource power" (English as a proxy for power and control), and "positioning-power" (English as a medium of access to status and resources).

To organize the spread of global English into a legible typology, Kachru (1986) organized countries into three categories which Kachru (1992) later visualized into three concentric circles. The inner circle (IC) includes Western countries where English is either an official language, a medium of instruction in school, or the dominant language of government and administration including the United States, the United Kingdom, Canada, Ireland, Australia, New Zealand, and South Africa. The outer circle (OC) includes countries previously colonized by English-speaking countries where English remains as an official or commonly used language like India, Nigeria, Singapore, and the Philippines among others. Finally, the expanding circle (EC) includes countries where English is not a common language of administration or medium of instruction in schools but is a common foreign language of study. Such countries include Korea, Japan, Mexico, and Brazil among others. Figure 2 represents this concentric circle model of World Englishes.
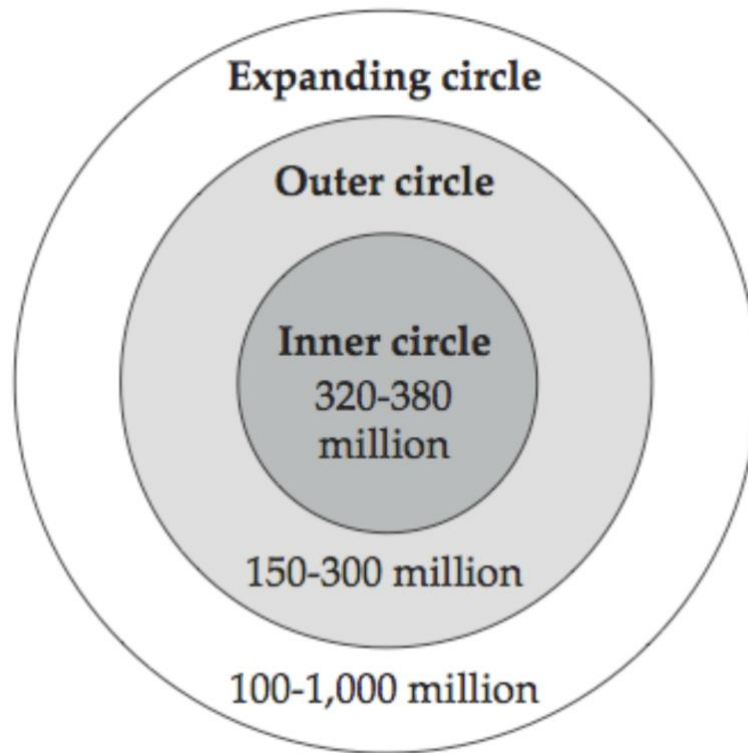
Figure 3. Kachru's (1992) model of World Englishes (as reproduced in Birkby 2013).

Mufwene (2010:50) credits Kachru for creating a foundation for understanding variation in English style, use, and functionality within different local contexts, and argues that rather than pushing the world towards monolingualism, English is "substituting in a new kind of linguistic diversity." However, Kachru's model has also received substantial criticism. For example, using three concentric circles stabilizes ideologies of native-speakerism or the privileging of L1 speakers as the rightful "owners" of English by theorizing inner circle countries as legitimate speakers and thereby legitimate exporters of English language pedagogy to the periphery (Holliday, 2006). Others argue that Kachru's model is too simplistic in a globalizing era where exponentially increasing mobility creates contexts of *superdiversity* (Blommaert, 2010) where citizens of inner-circle, outer-circle,

and expanding-circle countries increasingly form diverse permutations of social interaction (Ahn, 2013) (see Figure 4).
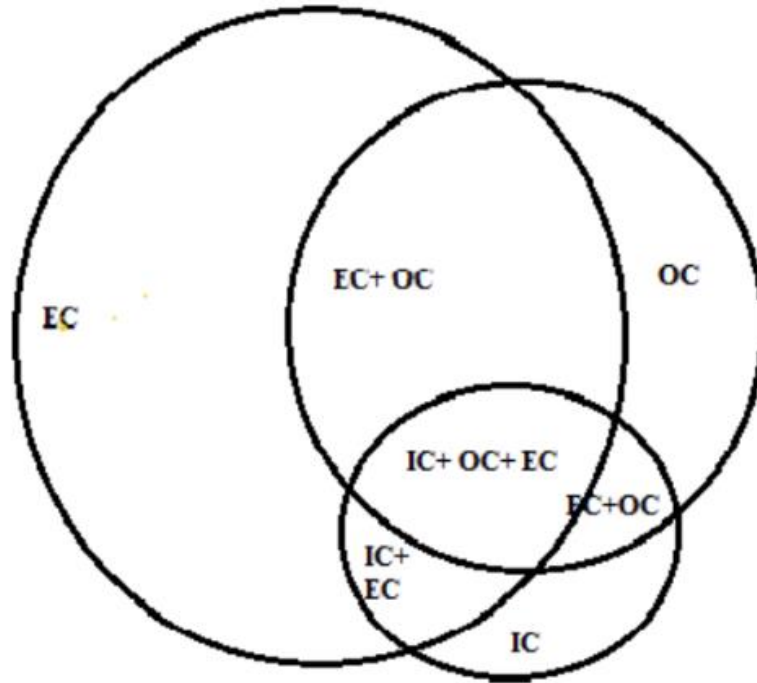
Figure 4. Expansion of Kachru's model that incorporates permutations of interactions between mobile speakers from inner-circle (IC), outer-circle (OC), and expanding circle (EC) countries (Marlina & Ahn, 2011).

While most English Language Teaching (ELT) scholarship positions English on a spectrum between a positive asset for cross-cultural communication and a begrudgingly essential, indispensable skill for citizenship in a globalizing world, Pennycook and Makoni (2006) advocate for questioning not only the *realpolitik*, but also the *realinguistik* of language planning and policy. Such questioning entails a focus on "not only the political contexts in which [language] operates, but also on the nature of the concepts of language that underpin the different policy (Pennycook & Makoni, 2006:29-30)." Canagarajah (2005:xiv) makes a similar call for increased attention to the local conditions of language use and how global forces either enhance or hinder the "rich practices and values of a

human community." Though not inherently connected to English, scholars point to translanguaging, or "the ability of multilingual speakers to shuttle between languages, treating the diverse languages that form their repertoire as an integrated system" (Canagarajah, 2011:401) as an emergent teaching strategy for more localized, ethical, and equitable language teaching (García, 2009; Cenoz & Gorter, 2020).

2.4 The English Language in South Korea

Most historiographies of the English language in South Korea begin around the late-19th century when United States diplomats established relations with the late-Joseon Dynasty. At the time, English was considered only a benefit for high society (Chang, 2017). At the turn of the 20th century, Japanese colonization (1910-1945) coupled with unsuccessful appeals from Korean envoys to recruit U.S. intervention prior to 1941 led to limited English use and education on the peninsula. U.S. and Korean relations resumed (and grew increasingly strategic) after the end of the Pacific War in 1945.

In the intervening years between Korea's liberation from Japanese colonial rule and the establishment of the Republic of Korea, the United States Military Government in Korea (USAMGIK) (1945-1948) sewed the neocolonial seeds of the English language as a store of symbolic capital (CH Lee, 2016, 2021) and the solidification of an upper caste of Western-educated English-speaking Koreans (Cho, 2016). Chung (1992) collected official USAMGIK documents that rationalize the critical importance of the English Education for the Korean people:

a. To get a systematic idea of the 20th century world.

b. To be an effective citizen in the world.

c. To be the most useful tool in having access to the greatest number of people and books (translated in Lee 2021:90).

Conversely, the documents considered the Korean language insufficient to accomplish the above tasks. Such ideologies and policies held by U.S. officials in the USAMGIK exemplify what Phillipson (1992:15) calls *linguistic imperialism*, or a relationship between dominant and dominated cultures mediated through English language education, or an imposition of the innate "being-power" of English (Skutnabb-Kangas, 1986).

As an anticommunist U.S. military regime facilitated the establishment of the Republic of Korea (1948), U.S. officials endorsed English-speaking, American-educated Koreans for high positions in the new government, including Syngman Rhee, the first president of South Korea[2]. As the U.S. backed the South Korean government through the Korean War and ultimately established military bases that remain to this day, U.S.-educated English-speaking Koreans reproduced privileges and inequalities between upper and lower classes of Korean society. Such class reproductions contributed to language ideologies privileging Koreans with degrees from U.S. universities and fluent English skills. However, over generations, sociohistorical roots often give way to iconized common sense (Irvine & Gal, 2000) where English transforms into a gatekeeper of the powerful classes (Lee, 2020) and an ostensible vehicle for upward mobility for the middle and lower classes (Park & Abelmann, 2004). This illusory shared national linguistic imagination constitutes what Silverstein (2000:136) calls a "regime of language."

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[2] See Cho (2016:89) for a more detailed list of U.S. and U.K.-educated Korean cabinet members during the Syngman Rhee administration (1945-1960).

2.5 English Language Education in Korea

English education in Korea has existed in lockstep with the history of Korean-United States relations. The earliest English language schools aimed to train Korean-English translators in the late 19th century (Kim-Rivera, 2002). And while Japanese colonialism (1910-1945) and the Korean War (1950-1953) curtailed formal civilian-based English education, English has been a mandatory subject of study in Korean secondary schools since the First National Curriculum of 1955. In future iterations, the Sixth and Seventh National Curricula introduced policy changes including increased emphasis on oral and practical English communication skills (Korean: *silyong yeongeo*) (Ahn, 2013) and mandatory English education starting in the third grade of elementary school. The Ministry of Education places deep emphasis on English education although English is not an official or oft-used public language[3]. Hyunju Park (2006) found that Koreans of various age groups rarely use English in their daily life.

Regardless, English has become a language of high priority among education officials, parents, and consequently students. Jeon (2010) estimates that Korean students receive a total of 204 class periods of English instruction in elementary school, 340 periods in middle school, and 408 periods in high school. Normalized across 60-minute classroom hours, Korean students receive 730 hours of instruction through compulsory public education (Jeon & Paek, 2009).

On top of that, lessons with private tutors or cram schools (Korean: *hagwon*) are a common feature of Korean students' lives. KK Kim (2010:302) estimated that 88% of

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[3] See Park (2004), Park (2006), or Song (2010) for further discussion on Korea's 'English Officialization Debate' during the early 2000's.

elementary students, 73% of middle school students, and 61% of high school students enrolled in private English education in 2008. Collective family expenditures for private education (what policy scholars label "shadow education") approached 80% of the national government's budget for public education (Bray & Lykins, 2012).

Furthermore, such expenditures show high inequality along socioeconomic dimensions. For example, only 18.6% of households with a monthly income of $1,000 pay for private English education, versus 76.9% for households with a monthly income of $7,000 or more (Oh, 2011). Regionally, rural families spend nearly 60,000 Korean won (~50 USD) per child per month less than urban families on shadow education (Chang, 2010). Such gaps in private education contribute to gaps in opportunity and ultimately reproduce social class divides (Lee, 2014), what some call an "English divide" (Jeon 2009; Jeon & Lee 2017). Crookes (2017:5) takes a stronger stance by identifying this English divide as an "insidious cancer eating away at the heart of Korean democracy and social development."

While the Sixth and Seventh National Curricula have proposed greater emphasis on English communicative competence (Jeon, 2010; Ahn, 2013), most English education in Korea focuses on standardized test preparation, especially at the high school level (Seth, 2002; Ahn, 2013). This emphasis on standardized tests force teachers to place outsized instructional emphasis on receptive reading and listening skills in lieu of productive speaking and writing skills. Standardized test performance substantially influences high school students' university admissions and university graduates' job applications. As Crookes (2017:5) puts it, "English tests are a chokepoint through which almost all middle-class Korean students and job applicants must pass."

English has been a core compulsory subject of secondary-level examinations (So, 2020) as well as Korea's nationally administered College Scholastic Aptitude Test (CSAT). However, Bastedo (2021) writes that a growing number of Korean students (24.5% of college admittees in 2019) apply through a more holistic process based around school grades and teacher recommendations (Korean: *susi*) as opposed to the *suneung*-exclusive path to admission (Korean: *jeongsi*). Miso Kim (personal correspondence), on the other hand, estimates about 65% of university admissions in the Seoul area involve *susi* rather than *jeongsi*. While (English) standardized test scores have long been the bane of high school seniors' hopes to attend their universities of choice, alternative holistic avenues to admission have gained more traction in the 21st century. This shift, however, doesn't mitigate the importance of English in young Koreans' lives. Universities and top corporations often require English entrance interviews, and some universities require students to take a certain number of English medium instruction (EMI) courses or receive adequate scores on the Test of English for International Communication (TOEIC) or Test of English as a Foreign Language (TOEFL) as a condition for graduation (Kim, 2020; Cho & Kinginger, 2022).

2.6 English Teaching Methodologies in Korea

English education among Korean students and young adults is situated within an overheated test-heavy culture that emphasizes receptive reading and listening skills over productive speaking and writing skills. Therefore, language learning methodologies grounded in audiolingual and rote text translation dominate Korean English curricula. Most secondary-level public-school English instructors use variations of the Direct Method of language teaching in the form of grammar translation and surface-level reading of English

texts (Shin, 2007; Chang, 2009) in lieu of more conversational-focused communicative language teaching (CLT). Tracing the historical roots of Direct Method instruction in Korea to native-speaking English instructors operating from an imperialist perspective (EG Kim, 2011; Charles, 2017, 2019), scholars have criticized the Direct Method as a neoimperial imposition by the English-speaking West (Holliday, 2008). However, more communicative instructional methods also share colonial roots. CH Lee (2021:92) cites Moulton (1963) who presents problematic prescriptions of CLT that continue to resonate today.

a. Language is speech, not writing.

b. Language is a set of habits.

c. The real goal of instruction is to speak the language, not learn about it.

d. A language is what its native speakers say, not what someone thinks they ought to say.

One can notice reverberations of Moulton's theories on communicative language teaching in the hiring criteria, theoretical justification, and pedagogical directives of GETs working in Korea today (see Section 2.10).

While Direct Method instruction remains dominant in Korean English classrooms in the 21st century, amendments to Korea's National English Curriculum have emphasized CLT since the early 1990s. Such reforms stemmed both from the formation of a democratically elected civilian government (Korean: *mwunmincengpwu*) (Ahn, 2013) and a policy-driven push toward globalization (Korean: *segyehwa*) that foregrounded English education as a national priority (Lee & Lee, 2013; Byean, 2015). However, CH Lee (2021:99) challenges the practicality of communicative language teaching in an expanding circle context like Korea. "Korea is caught in-between the ESL ideology and the EFL

context: ESL from the perspective of dynamics of English ideologies; and EFL from the perspective of societal context in which English is not daily used." In this respect, the imperative for English teachers to employ communicative methods in an expanding circle macrosocial context leads to curricular dissonance from the perspective of LETs and perceived methodological mismatches for GETs in the Korean public-school classroom.

2.7 English Language Ideologies in Korea

In the Korean context, ideologies of the symbolic capital (Bourdieu, 1986; 1991) of English precipitate downstream effects that underpin ineffective English education policies at best and inform policies that stratify preexisting inequalities at worst. Ahn (2013) argues that English education in South Korea fails to reach the Ministry of Education's (MOE) professed ideals of cultivating global communicative citizens by marginalizing emergent theories of *world Englishes* (Mesthrie & Bhatt, 2008) in favor of lionizing an illusory dialect of "General American English" (Ahn, 2013).

When ideologies of the symbolic value of English clash with a general fervor for education and self-development, as scholars have observed in East Asian countries, families are liable to invest in English education beyond the material benefits English skills confer. For example, Lamb and Coleman (2008:189) argue that many Indonesians value English "far beyond its actual practical value in daily life." Scholars observe similar phenomena in Japan (Fujimoto-Adamson, 2006), Taiwan (Her, 2007), and Vietnam (Hoang, 2010) among other countries. In Korea, the value of English proficiency extends beyond communicative potential into prerequisites for attending prestigious schools, securing white-collar jobs, and otherwise participating in upward social mobility (Jeon & Lee, 2017). Some call this phenomenon "English fever." (YM Kim, 2002; JK Park, 2009;

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JH Cho, 2021). English language ideologies emerged in Korea in part due to U.S. neoimperialist policies dating back to the establishment of the Republic of Korea (see Section 2.3) and continue to reproduce due to parallel ideologies of the need to communicate and compete in a globalizing world. These discourses, common among conservative media sources (Park, 2006; JSY Park, 2010), form one side of a nationalistic ideological coin that interprets English as both a necessary language for global visibility and soft power abroad and a threat to Korean language and identity at home. To put this another way, English language contact in the early 20th century shapes attitudes and policies of English in the present day as well as how the history of the Korean language serves as "source[s] of linguistic nationalism and reluctance to fully accept English" (K Lee 2014:37).

2.8 Three Dominant English Language Ideologies in Korea

This sociohistorical legacy of the English language in Korea creates a unique landscape of language ideologies. Joseph Sung-Yul Park (2004, 2008, 2009) presents the most oft-cited dominant English language ideologies in Korea: *necessitation*, *externalization*, and *self-deprecation*.

By *necessitation*, or "English as necessity" Koreans "view English as a valuable resource one must acquire and secure in order to survive in the globalizing world" (Park, 2004:35). This ideology entails both wealthy Korean families viewing English as a class border (C Lee, 2021) (what Park (2006) calls internally produced English hegemony) and middle-class Korean families viewing English as a vehicle for upward mobility (Park & Abelmann, 2004). Park and Abelmann further discuss this as an ideology of "cosmopolitanism," where English serves some practical purposes but also carries

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symbolic value and indexes social class (see also HC Cho, 2017). Park (2006) couples the ideology of necessitation with an ideology of linguistic globalism, which props up English not only as an economic imperative, but also as a response to sociopolitical issues (e.g., Who should get accepted into university? How should we choose the most qualified job candidates?) (See Section 2.4).

Externalization, or "English as foreign", establishes English as a cultural construct apart from (or even threatening) to Korean identity. Park (2004) and Park (2006) both cite examples of externalization in the English officialization debate that captivated the South Korean media in the early 2000s. Hyunju Park (2006:40-43) summarized both sides of this debate in Table 1, which argued whether the Korean government should add English as a co-official language with Korean.

Table 1. Key arguments from both sides of the English officialization debate in Korea (adapted from Park, 2006:40-43). For brevity, only the first four points are listed for both sides.

Pro-English	Anti-English
1. English is necessary for globalization and internationalism.	1. English officialization is suicide for Korean and eliminates ethnic identity.
2. English is a lingua franca of the world, not an ethnic language of a specific group.	2. The acceptance of English results in linguistic and cultural colonization.
3. In the future society, multilingualism is a norm and South Korea also needs to keep pace with this trend.	3. Pro-English policies are evidence of submission to world power dynamics.
4. English makes South Koreans accustomed to world-wide change and enhances the competitive power of South Korea.	4. English skill creates a new stratum between people who have English proficiency and people who have a low level of English ability. This means that Pro-English policies ultimately will bring about diglossia in South Korean society - English for the prestigious class, Korean for the lower class.

While the divide between global competitiveness and nationalistic preservation appears theoretically contradictory at first glance, Park (2006) argues that both ideologies complement each other in actual perception and cultural practices. The Korean government frequently uses English to project Korean soft power on a global stage, a behavior many would interpret as nationalistic. On the other hand, extensive borrowing of English loan words into Korean (Pae, 1967) and a distinct register of heavily transmuted borrowings called *Konglish* (Lawrence, 2012) represents a dynamic relationship between global forces and local practices, what Robertson (1995) calls *glocalization*. As Park (2006:48) goes on to say, "Globalism saturates the local linguistic system, bringing linguistic transformation as well as changes in the formation of identities."

Finally, the ideology of *self-deprecation* or "Koreans as bad speakers of English" views Koreans as incapable of becoming competent users of English no matter how much they study (Park, 2004). One could also interpret this ideology together with externalization through the concept of *linguistic ownership* (Widdowson, 1994), as English speakers (especially in outer circle countries like Japan or Taiwan) often show hesitance to claim English within their linguistic repertoires (Matsuda, 2003; Seilhammer 2015) and thereby also disavow (or as Park (2009) writes, "disclaim") their English language abilities. Scholars have documented self-deprecation among young white-collar jobseekers (Kim, 2020), pre-service English teachers (Lee, 2018), and in-service English teachers in Korea (Lee, 2014). However, Park (2004) also identifies instances of resistance to the self-deprecation ideology through internet *yumeo* (humor) (see Figure 11).

2.9 GET Schemes

GET schemes, or government-funded programs that recruit L1 English speaking instructors from mostly inner-circle countries to work in public schools, operate in many countries around the world, particularly in Europe and East Asia. Mission statements from a sample of these government-funded programs reveal very similar goals:

> To enhance the teaching of English Language and increase exposure of students to English, a Native-speaking English Teacher (NET) Scheme has been implemented in public-sector secondary and primary schools (Hong Kong Education Bureau, 2023).

> The qualities of the native assistant teacher enable them to encourage pupils to develop their speaking skills, to bring a playful dimension to learning, and to discuss socio-cultural themes of interest to children and adolescents (France International Education, 2023[4]).

> Our mission is to enhance the multicultural competence of foreign English teachers, foreign English teaching assistants, and local residents (Taiwan Foreign English Teacher Program (TFETP), 2023).

> The JET Programme was started in 1987 with the purpose of increasing mutual understanding between the people of Japan and the people of other nations. It aims to promote internationalisation in Japan's local communities by helping to improve foreign language education and developing international exchange at the community level (Japan Exchange and Teaching Program (JET), 2023).

While every program is different, most program missions involve recruiting people from inner-circle English-speaking countries to lead speaking-based activities and promote cultural exchange. The term "people" is more appropriate than the term "teacher" in this case because while programs in countries like Taiwan (TFETP) and Brunei (Keaney, 2016) require applicants to have teaching licenses in their home country, many programs like those in Korea (EPIK) and Japan (JET) do not. Keaney (2016) considers this a division

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[4] Translated from French by the author.

between programs designed for career positions, and programs designed for early-career or non-career teachers (what Sung (2012), and others disparagingly call "backpack teachers.") As of 2011, more than 320,000 immersion English instructors work overseas in GET schemes or international schools.

Common rationales for hiring GETs to work in public schools include assumptions about GETs as "experts in their own language" (Keaney, 2016: 129) and GETs as authentic cultural resources (Ahn & Lew, 2017). However, scholars have also pushed back against the hiring of GETs as a reproduction of English linguistic imperialism, as native speaking English teachers often receive preferential treatment in hiring (Golombek & Jordan, 2005) and serve as an idealized source of language and pedagogy regardless of qualifications (Holliday, 2006). Moreover, these privileges grouped under the umbrella of native-speakerism are often racially coded as white, with non-native speakers of English coded as non-white[5] (Kubota & Lin, 2006; Gerald, 2020).

While these criticisms have substantial merit, and racism and native speakerism in TESOL should not go unchallenged, later critical research adds nuance to theories of unmitigated GET privilege. Toropov (2019), investigating the black-market modeling industry in China, describes "white monkey jobs" as positions where fair-skinned foreigners bare their skin and serve as props for a Chinese gaze. Specific to English education, Lan (2022) distinguishes between white supremacy as structural domination in Western societies and white-skin privilege as a balance between privilege and precarity among ELT professionals working in the Chinese mainland. Keaney (2016) and Miyazato

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[5] Though see Charles (2017, 2019) or Seo and Kubota (2022) for discussion on the positioning and identity formation of Black native-speaking English teachers (BTEs) in Korea.

(2009), on the other hand, sum up the complex positioning of GETs as linguistically and culturally powerful at a macro-level, but politically weak as a foreigner in day-to-day micro-level interactions.

2.10 GETs in South Korea

Expatriate teachers began teaching in Korea as early as the late 19th century in order to train interpreters (Kim-Rivera, 2002). And while Japanese colonial occupation (1910-1945) curtailed these efforts temporarily, English education accelerated during the USAMGIK period (1945-1948). From 1966 to 1981, most GETs came to Korea in the form of Peace Corps volunteers, focusing on secondary-level education and teacher training (Lee, 2016).

As Korea modernized through the 1990s, initiatives for more communicative language teaching promoted through the Sixth National Curriculum and *segyehwa* globalization policies (see Section 2.5) led to new programs dedicated to recruiting and placing GETs in Korean public-school classrooms. GET recruitment also aimed to stem ballooning private spending on English education among middle and working-class households (Jeon, 2006; Jeon, 2010). In 1992, Fulbright Korea launched the English Teaching Assistant (ETA) program "for young American college graduates seeking to engage in cultural exchange by teaching English in Korean schools and interacting with their local communities, thereby contributing to U.S.-Korea relations" (Fulbright Korea, 2023).

This program places over 100 graduates of U.S. universities in underserved Korean primary and secondary schools each year. In order to recruit more teachers, the Ministry of Education (MOE) launched the EPIK program in 1995 with the goals of "improving the

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English-speaking abilities of Korean students and teachers, developing cultural exchange between Korea and abroad, and of introducing new teaching methods into the Korean education system" (EPIK, 2023). Jeon & Lee (2017) argue that the priority of recruiting GETs rests on the assumption that NETs serve as an authentic language resource from a different cultural background, lending authenticity to in-class activities and discussions. While the Fulbright program limits applicants to U.S. citizens, EPIK's criteria includes the following:

1. Be a citizen of the following countries: Australia, Canada, Ireland, New Zealand, United Kingdom, United States, and South Africa[6]

2. Hold a minimum of a bachelor's degree from an accredited university[7]

3. Be mentally and physically healthy.

4. Have a good command of the English language.

5. Have the ability and willingness to adapt to Korean culture and life.

(EPIK, 2023)

Scholars have criticized EPIK's eligibility criteria as a reification of native speakerism (Holliday, 2006; MH Jeon, 2009; Choi, 2022). JK Park (2008) argues that EPIK's recruitment criteria places too much focus on being a native speaker at the expense of being a professional teacher. Others have criticized the disparity between the educational and pedagogical training required of native speaking teachers compared to non-native speaking Korean English teachers (HS Lee, 2022; GS Lee, 2022). While GETs recruited

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[6] Note that South Africa violates the alphabetical order of this list as South Africa was added to the list of eligible countries after EPIK struggled to recruit enough GETs. South African and Quebecois applicants must also submit documentation that verifies English-medium instruction from 7th grade through university (EPIK, 2023).

[7] Applicants who do not have a teaching license, B.Ed., M.Ed., or who majored in Teaching, TESOL, Second Language Studies, or any other Education-focused major (Physical Education, Math Education, etc.) must also have a TEFL/TESOL/CELTA certificate (EPIK, 2023).

into EPIK must meet the five requirements outlined above, local Korean English teachers must earn a bachelor's degree in English, English Education, or other related field, pass a competitive licensure exam, and pass an even more competitive recruitment exam within the metropolitan or provincial region they wish to work[8]. Prospective Korean English teachers often take these annual exams multiple times before securing a position in a metropolitan or provincial office of education.

Finally, Teach and Learn in Korea (TaLK) started in 2008 to provide ELT support to rural areas of Korea where educational access is more limited (Park & Kim, 2014). The eligibility requirements were similar to EPIK by limiting applicants to seven inner circle countries but TaLK also admitted (and gave preference to) undergraduate students with at least two years of post-secondary education (ROK Consulate, Montreal, 2023). However, due to complications precipitated by the COVID-19 global pandemic, the TaLK program was closed in 2022 (CKEC, 2022). While scholars often feature the TaLK program in the literature, no participants in this study worked through the TaLK program, so I will not discuss this program further.

While scholars often criticize GETs at the macro-level as recipients of unearned privilege due to ideologies of native speakerism (see Section 2.9 GET Schemes), micro-level qualitative studies show a complex phenomenology of privilege and marginalization among GETs working in Korea (MH Jeon, 2009; SH Kim, 2012; Choi, 2022, Lee & Jang,

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[8] Ahn (2018:5) also describes the requirements for Korean teachers as follows. "In Korea, once a college graduate holds a national teacher certificate, he or she is eligible to work at private or public schools. However, a teacher candidate who passes the teacher's exam is eligible to work as a tenured full-time public-school teacher."

2023). For example, Choi (2022) outlines how two white male GETs were slow to reckon with advantages conferred by their first language as well as the idealization of GETs as white. On the other hand, GETs in Korea also report feeling excluded from their wider school community (Ahn & Lew, 2017; Choi, 2022), feeling reduced to a "performing monkey" (MH Jeon, 2009), and struggling with lingering feelings of "never completely fitting into the Korean culture" (SH Kim, 2012:46). Privileged outsiders are still outsiders.

In Jeollanamdo, the province under study in this project, EPIK serves as a recruiting service rather than a direct office of administration. In lieu of direct oversight, most GETs in Jeollanamdo work in the provincial-level Jeollanamdo Language Program (JLP) or city and county-sponsored regional language programs (RLPs). However, salaries and benefits are commensurate with EPIK's published salary schedule and therefore GETs living in Jeollanamdo often use terms like EPIK and JLP interchangeably. As of 2022, over 300 NETs work in elementary schools, middle schools, high schools, and English Villages (Korean: *yeongeo maeul*) (Lee, 2011) throughout Jeollanamdo (Gwangju News, 2023).

2.11 Jeollanamdo[9]

This project focuses on LETs and GETs living and working in Jeollanamdo, a province on the southwestern coast of Korea. Among Korea's 17 municipal and provincial governments, Jeollanamdo ranks 3rd in land size and 10th in population (2020 Census), making it one of the most sparsely populated and rural administrative regions of the country. The province's population continues to decline as the children of farming families

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[9] Common English translations of 전라남도 (Hangul) include South Cholla and South Jeolla. A shortened form 전남 (Jeonnam or Cheonnam) is also common. This thesis uses the transliterated term *Jeollanamdo* as it is the most common province title shared by participants.

(with their parents' blessing) often opt to relocate to cities rather than continue working in

the agricultural sector (Chang, 2010).
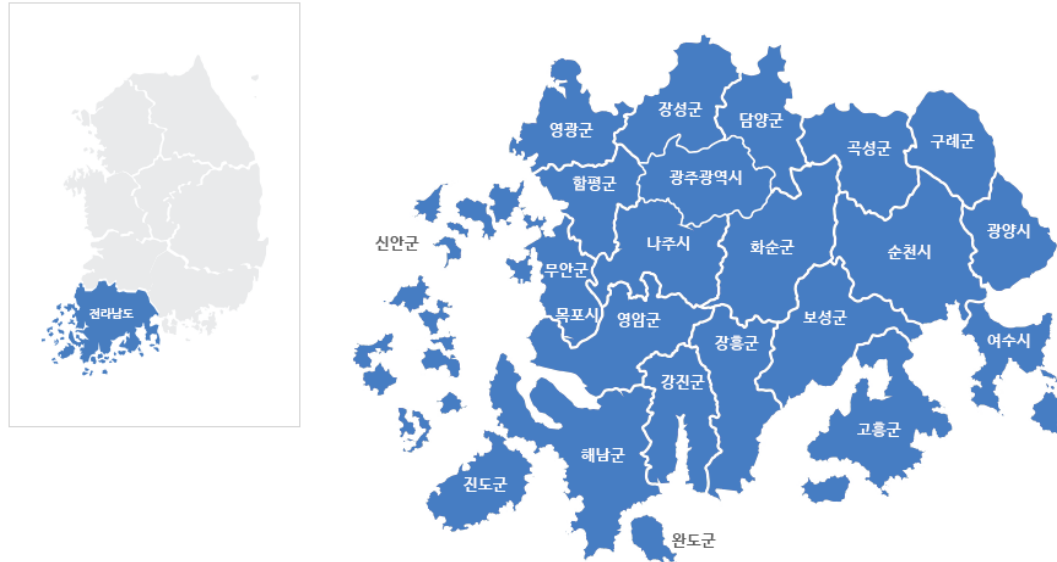
Figure 5. Map of Jeollanamdo in the context of South Korea (left, highlighted in blue) and Jeollanamdo subdivided into its county and metropolitan administrative regions (right) (jeonnam.go.kr)

In addition to its rurality, Jeollanamdo is famous for its left-leaning anti-

authoritarian politics. In 1948, about 2,000 soldiers led a short-lived uprising (which others

term an incident) in the coastal cities of Yeosu and Suncheon in resistance to the election

of President Syngman Rhee (DC Kim, 2004). In 1980, Korean troops under orders of

unelected dictator Chun Doo-hwan violently put down pro-democracy student protests in

the Southwestern city of Gwangju, a turning point in Korea's movement toward

democratization (Ch'oe & Choi, 2006). This historical legacy of government resistance

contributes to wariness of the national government in Seoul among Jeollanamdo residents

as well as regional mistrust of Jeollanamdo residents among urban-dwelling Koreans (WB

Kim, 2012). In 2008, the city of Gwangju developed into a metropolitan administrative

region, transferring the provincial seat to the rural village of Namak, further ruralizing the

province. This move further exemplifies the progressive depopulation of Jeollanamdo and ongoing urbanization in the whole of Korea. Patterns of migration and political tensions also contributed to Jeollanamdo's relative exclusion from economic initiatives during Korea's state-enforced economic growth as government support focused on heavy manufacturing and export-oriented development through the 1980s (Koo, 1984).

This political and urban-rural divide also contributes to the stigmatization of the Jeolla dialect of Korean. Jeon (2013) conducted a perceptual dialectology study (Preston, 1989; Cramer, 2014) of Korea, asking Koreans to draw and label dialect boundaries on an empty map. Participants often rated the Jeollanamdo dialect of Korean as "non-standard", indexing "negative manners", and having a "strong accent" - especially among participants identifying as Seoulites.

In terms of education, Chang (2010) and Byun (2014) show discrepancies in private education spending between Korean urban and rural families while Kim & Byun (2014) report a significant achievement gap in English between rural and urban students. Burt & Park (2008) also note that Jeollanamdo has one of the highest educational gini coefficients [10] among Korea's administrative regions, while Seo (2009) notes Jeollanamdo's exceptionally high number of grandparents who are the primary caretakers of school-aged children. On the other hand, Jeollanamdo's rurality also leads to lower average student-to-teacher ratios and higher per-pupil spending due to more recent national-level resource redistribution initiatives (Alexander & Kim, 2017).

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[10] The gini coefficient is a metric between 0 and 1 designed to calculate income inequality. A measurement of 0 represents "total equality" while a measure of 1 represents "total inequality" (Gini, 1921)

All these factors contribute to Jeollanamdo's relative marginalization relative to Korea's metropolitan centers (particularly Seoul). The current affairs program *Chang* (KBS 2021) describes the hollowing out of Korea's rural provinces in terms of a "southern boundary line" (Korean: *nampang hangyeysen*) where company recruiters will only accept applications from prospective employees from the northern half of the country. Cho & Kinginger (2022) describe how this metronormativity or city-centric perspective (Green, 2013) creates a sense of pressure for prospective Korean university students to move north to Seoul from southern but still sizable cities like Daegu or Daejeon to maximize their job prospects in a neoliberal economy. Jeollanamdo's lack of a major city center, population decline, and accelerating school closures (Im, 2009) make the analogy of "Deep South Korea" in the title of this thesis appropriate, as the Deep Southern United States has a similar sociohistorical (Clark et al., 2011), economic (Shepard, 2007), and even linguistic (Preston, 1996; Cramer, 2018) situation. The analogy breaks down, however, under consideration of the province's left-leaning politics. The title also contextualizes LETs' and GETs' ideological perspectives to an environment where dominant metronormative language ideologies are likely attenuated over geographic space and possibly distorted due to juxtapositions of "urban as modern and progressive" and "rural as antediluvian, disconnected, and regressive" (May, 2014:231).

2.12 Literature Gap and Research Question

While studies on GET identity have gained traction since the 2010s (see Section 2.10 GETs in South Korea), studies on co-teaching relationships between GETs and LETs also provide robust comparative examples of cross-cultural (mis)communication among teachers in Korea. While research conducted in rural Korean provinces like Jeollanamdo

is limited, JY Lee (2021) and Lee & Yin (2021) explored co-teaching relationships among GETs and LETs working in Jeollanamdo. They found that GETs and LETs often struggled to communicate their needs and expectations for classroom roles and often settled into roles neither were completely satisfied with. Many LETs expressed hesitation to take an active role in class or provide feedback to GETs out of fear of "interference" (Lee & Yin, 2021:373) yet also expressed frustration in their relegated role as a "human translator" (JY Lee, 2021:21). GETs, on the other hand, often harbor desires to receive more feedback from their co-teachers (Choi, 2022). But JY Lee (2021) also notes that GETs in her study do not express much awareness or concern regarding LETs frustrations regarding role relegation. Furthermore, LETs and GETs seem to express varying views of student engagement and lesson effectiveness, with GETs often sharing more positive, optimistic appraisals (JY Lee, 2021). These disparate roles and disparate qualifications at the curriculum and policy levels contribute to disparate appraisals of lesson outcomes at the classroom level. As this thesis will discuss, mismatched curricular duties and pressures between GETs and LETs may also be a major source of friction as GETs often lead more fun, game-based speaking activities while LETs take on the less glamorous tasks of student discipline and test preparation.

Lee (2016) presents one of the few studies that compares perceptions of English language ideologies between LETs and GETs. Most of her project provides a historical survey of English language ideologies during the USAMGIK (1945-1948) and pre-democratic (1966-1981) periods, her third chapter explores English language ideologies in the 2010s by focusing on the role of English in Korean society. At a university on Jeju

Island, Lee conducted semi-structured interviews with two GET instructors, two LET instructors, and two Korean college students. One of Lee's major findings was:

> While all the participants were aware of the meaning of the English language within the global context, the [GETs] did not fully comprehend to what extent the English language functions ideologically within Korean society. On the other hand, all the Korean participants were clearly aware of what English meant in Korea (Lee, 2016:157).

Root (2007:264) examined differences in ideological perspectives between GETs and Korean students at a small private university, and found that "the ideology of English is also operating to some degree in the area of intercultural communication." Ahn (2018:174) studied reflexivity among GETs and LETs and reinforced Lee's (2013) conclusions with a more optimistic growth-oriented perspective, saying GETs and LETs "who live and interact with learners in a particular sociopolitical context over time have a strong understanding of the particular social context and the issues with which learners would face difficulty."

Taken together with research on co-teaching relationships and the complex sense of privilege and marginalization experienced by GETs, the above studies suggest that perception and negotiation of English language ideologies is a major source of misunderstanding between GETs and LETs, but also that these misunderstandings can be mitigated through experience and critical awareness. To put it another way, cross-cultural communication among ELT professionals in Korea can improve if stakeholders develop a shared understanding of English's position within the ideological landscape of Korea.

As a result, this thesis aims to fill several potential gaps in the literature. First, by focusing on educators in a single rural Korean province, this thesis aims to add nuance to Park's (2004, 2009) English language ideologies by exploring how ELT professionals affirm, resist, and negotiate these ideologies on a local level (Canagarajah, 2005). Second,

while most English language ideology research in Korea has focused on unified, national-level discourse (Park, 2004; Park, 2006), or cosmopolitan locales like Seoul (Lee, 2014; Kim, 2020) and Jeju Island (Lee, 2016), few (if any) studies have applied the lens of language ideology to a rural Korean area, especially Jeollanamdo (JY Lee, 2021). While Lee (2016) and Root (2007) explored variation in ideological perceptions between GETs, LETs, and Korean students at the university level, few (if any) studies have focused on GET-LET ideological variation among instructors in public secondary schools (grades 7-12).

To shed light on these literature gaps, this thesis is guided by the following question:

(1) How do GETs and LETs working in the Jeollanamdo province in South Korea affirm, resist, or negotiate English language ideologies?

The next chapter outlines the methods used to address this exploratory question, including participant recruitment, interview methods, and methods of qualitative data analysis.

CHAPTER 3. METHODOLOGY

Excerpt 3.1. [Brandon, GET]

I've gotten more and more serious about trying to make sure, things are kind of valid… I think I've gotten more and more into kind of like fine-tuning stuff. Trying to make sure that the lessons I'm doing are actually- the students are practicing what they're supposed to be practicing.

3.1. Introduction

This qualitative study approaches the above question through semi-structured interviews, thematic analysis, and stance analysis from the starting frame of Park's three English language ideologies (see Section 2.7). More specifically, this analysis adopts an interpretivist position, which allows researchers to better understand social contexts through participants' perspectives (Bryman, 2016; Hulstijn et al., 2014; Howard, 2019), or as put by Schwartz-Shea and Yanow (2012:46), interpretive research "seeks knowledge about how human beings…make individual and collective sense of their particular worlds." Such qualitative methods are well-suited to this research question because it allows for a comparative analysis of how two groups of teachers from distinct cultural orientations (LETs and GETs) navigate similar social spaces (dominant English language ideologies in Korean public secondary schools.)

The rest of this chapter, like Brandon in Excerpt 3.1, outlines how this thesis will answer the question it is supposed to answer. Section 3.1 addresses recruitment and interview sampling, while section 3.2 discusses the interview process. Section 3.3 discusses transcription and section 3.4 discusses data analysis techniques. Finally, Section 3.5 discusses researcher positionality in the context of this study.

3.2 Recruitment

After receiving approval from the Institutional Review Board, I recruited acquaintances through KakaoTalk, a popular Korean messaging application. Participants include acquaintances as well as acquaintances of acquaintances recruited in a "snowball sampling" process (Johnson, 2019). Participants were eligible for this study if they had worked as an English instructor in public secondary-level schools in Jeollanamdo for at least one year. Secondary level includes both middle schools (grades 7-9) and high schools (grades 10-12).

If prospective participants replied with interest in participating, the author directed them to a Qualtrics survey that assessed prospective participants' eligibility and collected eligible participants' contact information. The author then contacted participants via email, shared key consent documents and interview questions if participants wanted to think in advance, and scheduled interviews via Zoom.

3.3 Participants

Participants include local Korean English teachers (LETs) (n = 12), and expatriate guest English teachers (GETs) (n = 14). All LETs were South Korean citizens while GETs had citizenship from the United States (n = 9), South Africa (n = 3), Australia (n = 1), and Canada[11] (n = 1). Table 2 summarizes participant information. At the conclusion of interviews, all participants chose their own pseudonyms.

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[11] While this participant (Bevan) spent most of their life in Canada, they hold dual United States-Canada citizenship by birth.

Table 2. List of participants. LETs = Local Korean English Teachers. GETs = Expatriate Guest English Teachers. EXP = Years of Teaching Experience. HS = Participant has worked in a high school. MS = Participant has worked in a middle school.

LETs					GETs				
Name	Nationality	EXP	HS	MS	Name	Nationality	EXP	HS	MS
Anne	South Korea	9	✓	✓	Amina	South Africa	10	✓	✓
Arizwel	South Korea	7	✓	✓	Andile	South Africa	4	✓	✓
Handsome Potato	South Korea	5	✓	✓	Ben	United States	2	✓	
Jiaenius	South Korea	7	✓		Bevan	Canada	11		✓
Jin-D	South Korea	8	✓	✓	Brandon	Australia	10	✓	✓
Miranda	South Korea	5	✓		Haley	United States	2	✓	
Ninja's Sister	South Korea	8		✓	Hyunsoo	United States	7		✓
Perez	South Korea	9	✓		Isadora	United States	6		✓
Sean	South Korea	7	✓		Jane	United States	6	✓	
Sehyeon	South Korea	8		✓	Jihye	United States	3	✓	
Woongbear	South Korea	7	✓		Katie	South Africa	4	✓	✓
Yeonghyeon	South Korea	4	✓		Nancy	United States	5	✓	✓
					Patricia	United States	10		✓
					Steve	United States	3	✓	

3.4 Interviews

After informing interviewees of their rights as participants, we participated in one-on-one semi-structured interviews on Zoom. Interviews began with simple storytelling questions such as:

- How did you decide to become an English teacher?

- Can you describe the town where you work(ed)?

These questions sought to build rapport and help participants settle into the interview (Tagliamonte, 2006; Schilling, 2013). After some opening conversation, the interview segued into more targeted questions, two of which are listed below[12]. Most sample questions were adapted from Chee Hye Lee's (2016) interview guide including the following:

- Some people say that Korean students are not good at English even though they study for many years. Have you heard this before? What do you think about this argument?

- Do you think English should be a core subject on college entrance exams? Why or why not?

Other questions asked participants to share their experiences teaching English, perceptions of student attitudes toward English, and attitudes toward English language policies in Korea. While I asked both above questions to GETs and LETs, some questions required group-specific alterations such as:

LETs:

- What did you find easy or difficult about learning English?

- When you were a college student, are there certain things your professors emphasized about English?

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[12] See APPENDIX 2 and APPENDIX 3 for complete interview guides.

LETs discussed learning English as a foreign language in university, while GETs did not, so questions were slightly reworded. As many GET jobs in Korea do not require instructors to have teaching licenses or degrees related to English education (see Section 2.9), discussions of English language learning in high school or university were less germane to the primary research question.

In addition to structured questions, semi-structured interviews provide latitude for interviewer and interviewee to explore topics or themes that arise during discussion (Friedman, 2011; Magaldi & Berler, 2020). For example, many participants (both LETs and GETs) shared experiences working in schools located on rural islands as well as coastal cities in Jeollanamdo. This led to discussions on perceived differences between the motivation and temperament of students in distinct geographic regions. They also allow for participants to build nuance into preestablished notions and frame ideological perspectives through their own narratives. As Karatsareas (2022:101) puts it:

> Thanks to their flexibility and relative spontaneity, interviews can not only corroborate or challenge knowledge that the researcher has formed about the topic at hand prior to the interview, but they can also bring to light entirely new information, new topics, or new dimensions to established knowledge (Karatsareas, 2022:101).

While I brought substantial preconceived notions into this project as a result of subjectivities molded through four years of experience in Jeollanamdo educational settings (see Section 3.7 Positionality Statement), semi-structured interviews provided LET and GET participants the space to either affirm or refute these notions, while conducting the interviews independent of other participants lent credibility to similarities in participants' ideological perceptions.

Interviews were conducted in (mostly) English. While LET participants had the language skills to express complex opinions and experiences, sometimes we shifted into short bursts of Korean whenever we encountered challenging words, as in Excerpt 3.2.

Excerpt 3.2. [Handsome Potato, LET]

Handsome Potato: They- On an island the students- they have really good personality. And they are very...naive? Not naive? Very- not I guess- not.

Ian: Do you have a Kor- word, Korean word for this? I've been practicing a lot.

Handsome Potato: sunjinhada[13]? [unk][14].

Ian: Sunjinhada? sunjinhada, oh yeah. See that translates to naive, but it doesn't sound like that's the right word. Naive sounds kinda negative.

Handsome Potato: Yeah, it's a negative.

Ian: But the translation is naive, but it is probably a better word. Yeah, it's sort of like- I don't know, it's almost like innocent?

Handsome Potato: Yeah, innocent would be better yeah. Innocent. Very innocent.

While this repair process helped build rapport and allowed participants who identify as teachers to practice translanguaging to negotiate meaning (Cenoz & Gorter, 2020), the use of English in interviews is also a limitation worth discussion (see Section 7.2 Limitations).

Interviews lasted between 45 and 75 minutes. Zoom recording services saved video, audio, and a rough transcript. This rough transcript served as a basis for a more polished, complete transcript (see Section 3.5 Transcription)

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[13] In excerpts, all Korean words are written using the Revised Romanization of Korean writing system.
[14] [unk] = unknown. This transcription convention identifies utterances that are muffled, inaudible, or otherwise indecipherable during transcription. See APPENDIX 3 for full transcription conventions.

3.5 Transcription

After each interview, I wrote brief field notes to capture first impressions and potential themes in participants' stories and opinions. This allowed me to organize some insights and cross-participant connections that would later inform later thematic analysis (see Excerpt 3.3).

> **Excerpt 3.3. [Post-interview field notes following interview with Ben, GET]**
>
> *[Ben] seemed to side with the necessity of English and more emphasized the cross-cultural communication and being informed on world events. It's interesting that he said that the essential English skills that students should have include basic conversation and being able to read news articles in English. That contrasts with Jin-D's ideas of English as an economic resource, or Yeonghyeon's ideas of English as blurred borders. However, both Ben and Yeonghyeon both employed the term 'globalization' to describe the role of English in South Korea.*

While this does not follow a grounded theory approach in its purest form (Strauss & Corbin, 1997), these field notes helped me document themes when the data was top-of-mind and allowed me to draw connections and revise preliminary themes over time, an iterative process foundational to grounded theory (Charmaz & Thornberg, 2021). For example, as I collected more interviews with GETs, a theme of long pauses and dysfluencies emerged after I asked GETs if English should be a mandatory subject of study in Korea. These observations emerged in post-interview field notes that later informed a closer transcription of GET responses to better note these dysfluencies (see Excerpt 4.14 and Excerpt 4.15).

> **Excerpt 3.4. [Post-interview field notes following interview with Haley, GET]**
>
> *The long pause to consider if English should be a mandatory subject was in full effect. And two times commenting that it was a 'hard question.'*

Excerpt 3.5. [Post-interview field notes following interview with Steve, GET]

Once again, the theme of hesitation over the question of whether English should be mandatory on the [CSAT] cropped up. He hesitated and said 'yes' but only at specific schools.

After data collection concluded, I transcribed interviews broadly, starting with the rough Zoom-generated transcript. Transcription focused on line breaks for turn-taking, quotation marks for reported speech, filler words, and false starts or other dysfluencies (signaled with "-") (see APPENDIX 3 for a full list of transcription conventions). This direct involvement in the transcription process allowed me to become more familiar with the data and to confirm or revise preliminary thematic codes (Howard, 2019). If later analysis deemed a closer conversational transcription more necessary (such as when pauses, hesitation, or filler words directly relate to a theme), a subset of utterances were re-transcribed.

3.6 Analysis

After transcribing interviews, I conducted a thematic analysis, a subtechnique of narrative analysis (Bryman, 2016), that is flexible in its theory and allows for rich and detailed, yet complex accounts of qualitative data (Braun & Clarke, 2006). This study utilized a modified version of Braun and Clarke (2006:87), who outline a 5-step process to thematic analysis: (1) familiarize yourself with the data, (2) generate initial codes, (3) search for themes, (4) review themes, (5) define and name the themes. While this project's analysis began with step (1), my initial coding process started by coding respondent utterances by Park's three ideologies: necessitation, externalization, and self-deprecation. This allowed for a compare-and-contrast approach between interviewee responses and three well-attested, dominant English language ideologies in Korea.

The next four steps more closely resemble steps (2) through (5) in Braun and Clarke (2006). After an initial coding of responses that identified repetitions, typologies, metaphors, and similarities (Bryman, 2016), I searched for themes, particularly overarching throughlines, that connected more fragmented initial codes. I then reviewed and refined the names of these themes. See Figure 6 for an example of this coding process.
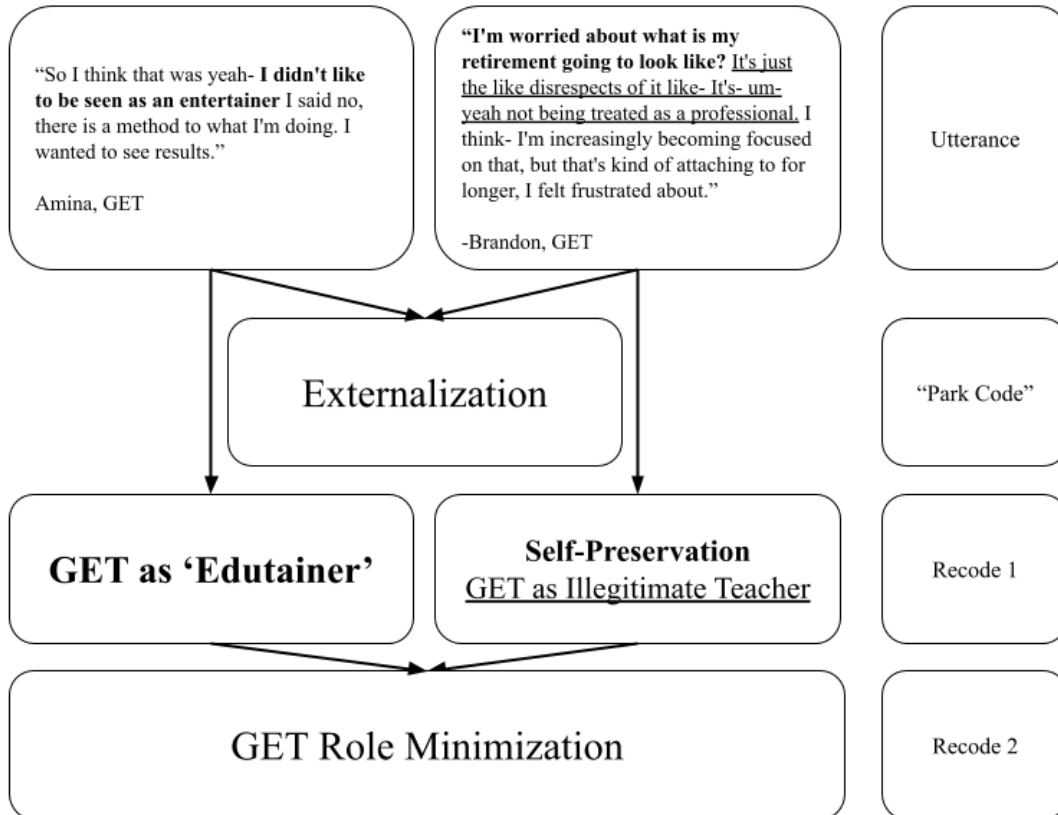
Figure 6. Example of thematic coding analysis.

In Figure 6, both Brandon (GET) and Amina (GET) comment on ideologies of externalization by describing feelings of invalidation, disrespect, marginalization, and precarity. However, while Brandon's comments point to ideologies of illegitimate GETs ("not being treated as a professional") and a sense of precarity and self-preservation ("what is my retirement going to look like?"), Amina's comments indicate an overarching theme of GETs feeling marginalized as "edutainers." However, upon further rounds of coding,

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both Brandon and Amina's commentary fit within an overarching theme of "GET Role Minimization."

Finally, to better compare LET and GET orientations toward dominant English language ideologies, a stance analysis focused on participants' attitudinal positions toward Park's English language ideologies. Stance entails how one uses language to position themselves to a social object and align or distance themselves from an interlocutor. DuBois (2007) discusses stance as having three components: evaluation (what quality or value one assigns to a stance object), positioning (how much responsibility a speaker assumes in a stance), and alignment (how a speaker calibrates their stance with respect to an interlocutor (see Figure 7). Kiesling (2011, 2022) also describes stance in terms of investment, or "how strongly invested in the talk the speaker is" (Kiesling, 2011:5).
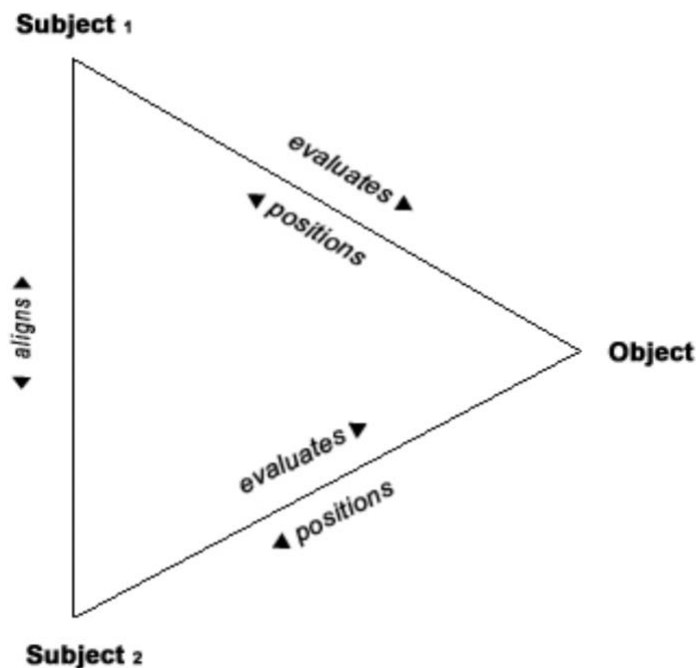
Figure 7. Stance Triangle (DuBois, 2007).

DuBois (2007:139) describes stance as essential to our evaluation of social objects.

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> Stance has the power to assign value to objects of interest, to position social actors with respect to those objects, to calibrate alignment between stancetakers, and to invoke presupposed systems of sociocultural value.

This means participants' attitudes toward language ideologies (e.g., English is essential for Korean students' education) can be evaluated by considering the value-laden language participants use to position themselves relative to the stance object (the ideology) and the interlocutor (the interviewer). Irvine (2001:24) captures the value of stance in language ideology research though she doesn't employ the exact term.

> Ideational schemes, whether about language or other things, have some relationship with point of view - the social position of the viewer, and the practices to which [they] differentially has access - and the viewer's baggage of history and partiality. (Irvine, 2001:24)

Considering participant stances against a sociocultural backdrop of Korean history, education, and sociology allows for a richer account of how they perceive and negotiate dominant English language ideologies.

As my analysis will show, participants provide a variety of stances that index dominant English language ideologies with varying degrees of evaluation, positioning, and investment. Analyzing participants' responses in terms of stance provides insight into whether participants seem to endorse or resist these ideologies. However, intercultural differences (or lack thereof) in LET and GET interviews is one potential limitation that warrants further discussion (see Section 7.2 Limitations) because it entails a significant difference in linguistic and power dynamics between stancetakers (in this case participant and researcher) (Mullings, 1999; Rolland et al. 2020). Because of this, it is also important to recognize the positionality of the researcher as a stancetaker.

Finally, when presenting participant excerpts in later chapters, I edit participant responses with ellipses (for the sake of brevity) and square brackets (for missing

antecedents and to maintain anonymity of place). However, I avoid using *sic* to indicate English grammatical errors to avoid native speakerist, prescriptive notions of error correction, as well as to avoid detracting from the substance of the data (Lee, 2014).

3.7 Positionality Statement

Qualitative research requires readers to understand the positionalities of researchers and participants (Charmaz, 2008) to better contextualize a study's findings and implications. While participant positionality is often clarified through demographic information, it is equally important for researchers to reflect and at times problematize how their own position, biases, and identity enhance or hinder data collection and analysis. Scholars often term this process *reflexivity* or understanding researchers' necessary subjective connections to the research situation (Pennycook, 2001; Charmaz 2015; DeLuca & Maddox, 2016; Ahn, 2018).

I am a white, male-identifying U.S. citizen of middle-class upbringing who speaks English as a first language. My intersecting identity played an outsized role in landing a job with EPIK and moving to Jeollanamdo in 2017. Like many ELT professionals and applied linguistics professors, I started my career with limited qualifications or interest in ELT (Keaney, 2016), what Sung (2012) and others disparagingly call "backpacker teachers."

For two years I taught speaking-based lessons in a suburban Korean high school with limited direction from either the national curriculum or my six co-teachers. During those two years I gathered outsider-insights into the lives of both Korean high school students and the pressures of curriculum and administration experienced by Korean English teachers. I developed a lingering sense of dissonance between the speaking-based lessons

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I was hired to teach and the curricular priorities of Korean public schools. Outside of the classroom, I further questioned students' needs for English. In my suburban community, Korean was by far the most common language spoken, and I perceived my developing Korean skills as more linguistically valuable than English in my day-to-day interactions.

For two more years, I worked at a teacher training center where I led six-month immersive English courses on speaking and listening skills and methodologies. Again, my qualifications for this position were limited to being an L1 English speaker and having two years of experience in the EPIK program. This privilege undoubtedly played a role securing a position as a teacher-educator. However, I parlayed my emerging teacher identity into a teacher-educator identity through reflective practice (Farrell, 2006). I garnered deeper insight into the inner lives of Korean English teachers through regular dialogue and interaction as a "welcomed outsider" (SH Kim, 2012).

While such conversations are anecdotal, these experiences do inform the lens through which I interpret participants' utterances, similar to how an ethnographer would develop a lens for interpreting responses through extended and intensive experience within a community. However, I am also not Korean and would not be qualified to draw qualitative conclusions from autoethnographic experience alone. Therefore, I make every effort to weave Korean teachers' responses with both interview data and discussion drawn from past qualitative work conducted by Korean researchers.

As a former GET, I am better positioned to interpret the experience of GETs. However, I also recognize that GETs contain various intersecting identities that would contribute to diverse experiences, even from structurally similar events (see Charles, 2016,

2019; Choe & Seo, 2021; Seo & Kubota, 2022). This subjective positioning (at least in part) informs the qualitative analysis of interview data presented in the following chapters.

CHAPTER 4. LETS, GETS, AND NECESSITATION

Excerpt 4.1. [Bevan, GET]

I think…for some of the students in- in [my county] especially…it's hard to blame them for maybe looking at English and thinking, 'What's the point?'

4.1 Introduction

This chapter explores key themes in the utterances of LETs and GETs around the ideology of necessitation (Park, 2004; 2009). As exemplified by Bevan's comments in Excerpt 4.1, both LETs and GETs often puzzled over the purpose and value of English education. His voicing of students thinking, "What's the point?" provides two interpretations: an inquiry into English educational policies that lack clarity and cohesion (Ahn, 2013), and a sense of resignation in the face of stifling social pressures to learn English (Shin & Lee, 2019; Park, 2022). It is important to remember, however, that even when LETs and GETs voice their students, such reported speech is a subjective appraisal of both students' and their own positioning to dominant English language ideologies, not necessarily a faithful recall of others' words.

This chapter breaks down into subsections based on key subthemes. Section 2 briefly defines the ideology of necessitation and outlines the core subthemes identified through thematic analysis. Sections 3 through 6 then discuss these subthemes in greater depth. Key findings highlight a diversity of attitudes, motivations, and positionalities toward English and English education. This diversity is reflected both among the teachers themselves, as well as the teachers' perceptions of Jeollanamdo secondary-level students.

4.2 The Ideology of Necessitation

"English as necessity" is an ideology that views English as "a valuable resource one must acquire and secure in order to survive in a globalizing world" (Park, 2004:35).

This ideology entails neoliberal, instrumentalist perspectives that assumes one's inability to acquire English will limit one's opportunities in knowledge-based labor markets (Lee, 2018). The concept of neoliberalism receives further definition and discussion in Section 4.3. While ideologies of necessitation are not limited to Korea, many Korean authors have attested to its prevalence in Korean society and education system through the phrase "English fever" (Shim & Park, 2008; JK Park, 2009; Cho, 2015; TH Choi, 2021).

In discussions with participants, two interview questions[15] most directly aimed to elicit interviewees' positions toward the ideology of necessitation.

1. Do you think English should be a core subject on college entrance exams? Why or why not?

2. What is your opinion on Korean students learning English? Why do Korean students study English?

While most participants acknowledged and affirmed the ideology of necessitation to some degree, some GETs and LETs also pushed back against necessitation through anecdotes, explanations, and expressions of doubt. Through thematic coding, three core themes emerged as shared between LETs and GETs: English for Neoliberal Survival, English as a Global Language, and English Education as Nonessential. In addition, LETs described frustration over the competing pressures of top-down calls from the Ministry of Education for more communicative-focused language teaching (Ahn, 2013; Seo, 2020) and the need to prepare students for high-stakes standardized examinations like the CSAT, which only emphasizes reading and listening skills (Jeon & Lee, 2017). Figure 8 summarizes and organizes these key subthemes.

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[15] However, utterances coded as *necessitation* also appeared spontaneously in interviews and are not limited to the context of these two structured questions.
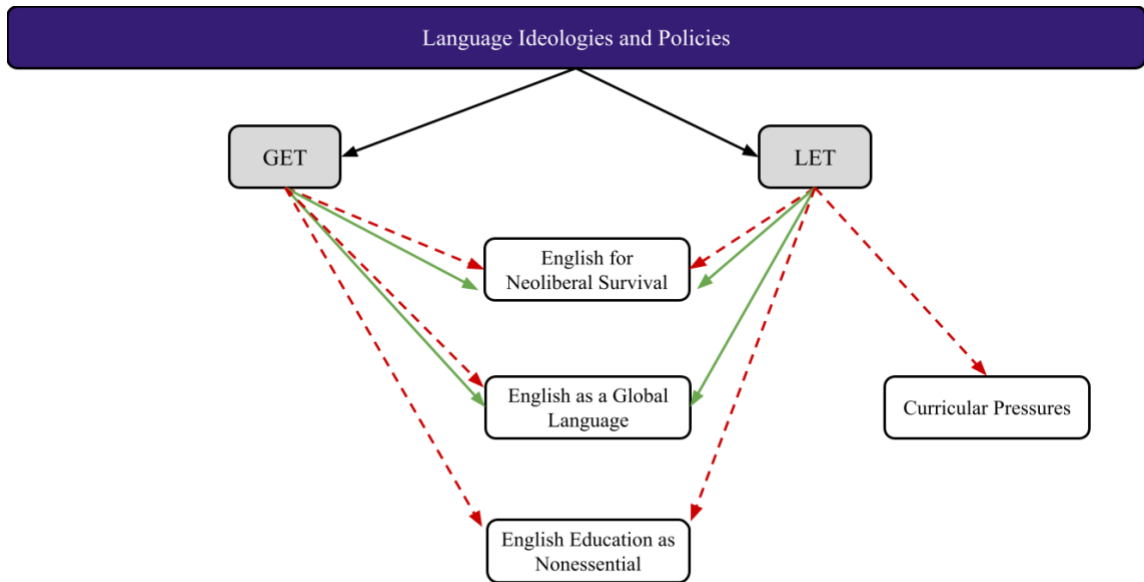
Figure 8. Diagram of key subthemes in LETs' and GETs' negotiation of the ideology of necessitation. Solid green lines indicate a plurality of participants affirming the ideology, while red, dashed lines indicate participants resisting the ideology in their stancetaking[16].

4.3 English for Neoliberal Survival

Harvey (2005:2) defines neoliberalism as "a theory of political economic practices that proposes that human well-being can best be advanced by liberating individual entrepreneurial freedoms and skills within an institutional framework characterized by strong private property rights, free markets, and free trade" (as cited in Kim, 2020:9). The term originates from Friedrich Hayak's challenge to John Maynard Keynes' call for government intervention and welfare in the event of economic crisis. Instead, neoliberal ideology attributes individual choices to economic success and failure, thereby downplaying the effects of structural inequality and discrimination (Steger & Roy, 2010).

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[16] This diagram and other diagrams in later chapters start with a top-level wide box labeled *Language Ideologies and Policies* to keep in focus the idea that dominant language ideologies are constantly (re)produced by the Ministry of Education, an institution that is itself a product of historical time (Chee Hye Lee, personal correspondence). In other words, language ideologies are not created by English teachers, but English teachers vary in their awareness and stances toward dominant language ideologies.

Scholars have operationalized neoliberal ideology in the Korean context with terms like *Hell Joseon*, an emerging jaded attitude among younger Koreans in the face of increasing divides between old and young, rich and poor, and global and local (*Hangyoreh*, 2016; YM Kim, 2018) and the Konglish word *spec* (English: "specifications") or increasingly lengthening résumés that entail ideologies of self-improvement (Schoonhoven, 2017; Kim, 2020).

Many LETs point to English as a key component of university entrance examinations and company interviews, both while reflecting on their own young adulthood and reflecting on general societal attitudes. Miranda describes this through her own vocational journey, but also expresses doubt in the ideology (see also Section 4.5 English Education as Nonessential).

Excerpt 4.2. [Miranda, LET]

So, I chose to be a teacher and um- the subject was English. Because English was very important in Korea. I don't know why. I thought that majoring English would help to get a job in anyway.

Miranda expresses perception of the ideology of necessity in Korean culture and personalizes her own engagement with the ideology by equating her English major with job opportunities. She later recounts a story where she as an English teacher asked her students, "Why do we study English?" And her students said, "To get a good grade to enter the university."

Similarly, Handsome Potato describes his path to English teaching as one of incidental settlement on English as a vehicle for achieving his deliberate goal of becoming a teacher.

Excerpt 4.3. [Handsome Potato, LET]

So, at the time, I decided to be a teacher. But…I wanted to be a science teacher. Because I trusted my aptitude test and it says- it says my scientific aptitude is 9- score 90 and English language- language aptitude is 75…But I decided to be an English teacher, because I'm not good at math.

Handsome Potato recounts how he developed passion for education and science, but pivoted to English when he realized his math skills prevented him from further pursuing science as a teaching subject. This was also true of Jiaenius who "preferred society or history" and Sean who "thought [he] would become a teacher who majors in science." Their responses indicate that many LETs do not enter the English teaching profession with intrinsic interest in the language, but rather as a path to the position of teacher, a public sector position (Korean: *gongmuwon*) sought by many Koreans for its job stability and employment benefits (Kim, 2017). Handsome Potato confirms this point of view when he says, "The teacher- teacher's status is a quite relatively higher than compared to the other country. That may be partly because of the Confucianism."

Sehyeon (LET) also reflects on her own ambivalent motivations to enter the English teaching profession.

Excerpt 4.4. [Sehyeon, LET]

Actually, I didn't [unk] want to be an English teacher. I just wanted to major politics. So, um- but, but my high school, you know the KSAT[17] score is so crucial to like a- to applying to university. So, I had the very good [English] score, so the highest- but my parents wants me to go to the [hometown university].

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[17] The CSAT is often referred to as the "Korean SAT" or "KSAT" by LET and GET respondents. I use the abbreviation CSAT in my analysis because it is the most common term in the literature (JW Kim, 2004; Kim & Byun, 2014; Lee & Lee, 2016), but I leave respondents' terms unchanged.

Like Handsome Potato, Sehyeon starts by saying that as a high school student, she had more interest in studying subjects other than English. ("I just wanted to major politics."). However, due to receiving strong English scores on the CSAT ("the KSAT score is so crucial to applying to university") as well as pressure from her parents ("my parents wants me to go to the [hometown university]," she opted to pursue a degree in English education. Her choices reflect two subthemes that guide many LETs and Korean students' job prospects: tracking (Korean students choosing educational and career paths based on test scores) (Byean, 2015), and students perceived pressure (or lack thereof) from parents regarding educational and career decisions (Kim & Byun, 2014). Sehyeon's decision to pursue a career in English education seems to reflect extrinsic motivation, or motivation derived from goals outside the individual like rewards, competition, or pressure from family or friends (Sansone & Harackiewicz, 2000; Deci & Ryan, 2000). Jin-D also describes his students' motivation to learn English as generally "derived from the external motivation" while also saying "the student who enjoy learning English, itself…I think they are not many."

Handsome Potato and Sehyeon independently estimate figures that corroborate Jin-D's observations, saying about 10% of students they work with seem to have internal motivation towards English. Arizwel (LET) breaks it down further.

Excerpt 4.5. [Arizwel, LET]

I think- I personally think 20% of students, they hate English…And 70% of students- they're just okay with English…And only 10% or less 10% students, they like English, I think.

Arizwel presents a three-category distinction in how she views her students' stances toward English, ranging from 10% or less of students intrinsically motivated to study English, to 20% of students openly hostile to English, and a 70% gradient of students in-

between. This high rate of observed ambivalence again calls back to Bevan voicing his students' appraisal of English as, "what's the point?" (See Excerpt 4.1). Sehyeon echoes awareness of Arizwel's 20% proportion (see Excerpt 4.5) of students who are hostile toward English in her own anecdotes of working in middle schools.

Excerpt 4.6. [Sehyeon, LET]

Some students have hatred to English. Like, 'I really hate the English and…pogi (English: give up), yes. Give up. 'I give up English, like a since I was ten.' Like that.

Sehyeon points not to students' ambivalence toward English as a challenging subject of study necessary for white-collar upward mobility, but a more negatively valanced hatred. Park (2022) describes the prevalence of this phenomenon in the neologism *yeongpoja* (English: One who gives up on English.) This neologism is a clipping and blending of the words *yeongeo* (English), *pogi hada* (to give up), and the agentive suffix *-ja*. Sehyeon's comments peek into a dark underbelly of the "English Fever" narrative that often erases students who not only "say enough to English" (Park, 2022) but also develop open hostility toward it. This open hostility to an othered English language paradoxically represents an open hostility to Korean society where dominant public discourses valorize English as a cornerstone of global (and thereby national) development (Korean: *segyehwa*) (Park, 2006; Song, 2011).

Just as the perceived necessity and difficulty of English leads some students to give up on academic achievement at young ages, students in Arizwel's theoretical middle 70% (see Excerpt 4.5) are susceptible to negative attitudes toward English pegged to their exam performance. Miranda (a high school teacher) and Ninja's Sister (a middle school teacher) both recall anecdotes of students' English-precipitated stress.

Excerpt 4.7. [Miranda, LET]

So, I have to line up the student ac- according to their grade…My English test in my school is very difficult. So many of my students cried after they took the test. It teared my heart.

Excerpt 4.8. [Ninja's Sister, LET]

Some students are so sensitive and when they got a- how can I say- When they made one mistake in a test they cry. Because of- because of only one question. They cry, and then I felt really bad like like 'Oh, is it is it'- How can I say- 'Is it worth like that? In your life?' Something like that.

Most poignant in Miranda and Ninja's Sister's reflections is the affective and emotional contagion (Hatfield et al. 1993, 2011) of students' negative experiences with English on LETs ("It teared my heart" and "I felt really bad…"). The majority of LET interviewees pointed to the experience of building supportive and nurturing relationships with students as the most rewarding aspect of their work. This role of consoling students in distress is one of many hats worn by teachers (Clarkson et al. 2021). It is also an experience notably absent from the stories of GET participants, who more often saw themselves as a fun, upbeat, energetic teacher of English, for better or for worse (see Section 5.6; Excerpt 5.1) However, also latent in Ninja's Sister's story is doubt regarding the tradeoff between English education and student well-being ("Is it worth like that? In your life.") Such empathetic, affect-laden experiences can be pivotal for shifting one's orientation toward language ideologies (see Kinginger & Zhuang, 2023). In other words, Korean teachers in Jeollanamdo are often on the front lines providing the emotional labor (Hochschild, 2012) in students' war of attrition with English "where endless investment in self-development is presented as a key to ideal neoliberal subjecthood" (Park, 2022:2).

Despite most students' ambivalence toward English, many GETs say students appear motivated because, "It is another class, and another grade that can bring your GPA

up or down" (Jihye, GET). Jihye then goes on to say, "If you care about your grades then you're going to do it." Her comments parallel many LETs' English teacher origin stories. Their English grades were strong, so they became English teachers (see Excerpt 4.3 and Excerpt 4.4).

Jihye's comments also allude to English as a symbolic capital hitchhiker within Korean society. Adapted from Mendoza-Denton's (2011) term *semiotic hitchhiker*, English seems to function as fluid symbolic capital because its pragmatic value remains underspecified yet implicates concrete consequences (e.g., needing English to get a good job). Sometimes participants valorized English without any rationale at all (see Excerpt 4.2) where Miranda says "I don't know why"). These reflect ideologies as common-sense notions (Rumsey, 1990) where the necessity of English evades justification and therefore stabilizes any problematic status quo. However, LETs also point to more pragmatic reasons for learning English, namely English's outsized representation in scientific literature.

While most GETs puzzled over the reading-heavy focus in Korea's English educational system, many LETs pointed to the importance of reading as a portal to scientific literature and knowledge acquisition. As Crystal (2003:19) writes, "English is the medium of a great deal of the world's knowledge, especially in such areas as science and technology. And access to knowledge is the business of education.[18]"

As mentioned in Section 2.4, documents produced during the United States Military Government in Korea (1945-1948) enshrined the English language as essential for Korea's

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[18] Some scholars also contend that the overrepresentation of English is scientific discourse is not a practical benefit, but a form of epistemic colonialism (see Grosfoguel, 2007).

modernization[19]. Moreover, a lack of natural resources meant Korea needed to develop its economy through education, manufacturing, and export-oriented industries (Hasan, 1976). Today, Korea has emerged as an economic leader in science and technology, especially in semiconductor production (Mathews & Cho, 2000).

In Jeollanamdo secondary schools, these ideologies of English as a resource for intellectual capital appeared in many LET interviews, as exemplified by excerpts from Jiaenius, Miranda, and Handsome Potato.

Excerpt 4.9. [Jiaenius, LET]

But most major...usually we learn knowledge that originates from other countries written in English. So to get knowledge, I think it's much use- useful- useful to acquire knowledge in original language- or English. Because it is common language in academic area.

Excerpt 4.10. [Miranda, LET]

For the some of the students- They need to- I think the way of getting knowledge- I think English is the platform to get knowledge. Reading- English is uh- how to say? Uh- uh- for the high-level students, when they get to the good university. They need to study in English, in some subject.

Excerpt 4.11. [Handsome Potato, LET]

Also the knowledge, I think. Knowledge is also power and in in the world, many books are written in English…If you don't know the English language, and you, that means you don't even have chance to learn and to know knowledge.

While students tend to study English for its future promises of college admissions and job offers (Park, 2011), Jiaenius, Miranda, and Handsome Potato all point to the practical scholastic and scientific benefits of English. Jiaenius points out that English is often a necessary skill for "most majors" in Korean universities while Miranda then

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[19] Park (2022) problematizes this ideology of English as a modernizing language by referencing historical ideologies of English as a language 'with the potential to deliver the colonized people from their economic and cultural backwardness' (p. 2).

compares English to a "platform" for knowledge while Handsome Potato equates English with knowledge and with power. Sehyeon also spoke about how "most textbooks" at her university (regardless of subject) were written in English during her time as a university student. So as an English education major, she often received requests from friends to help them understand their class content. Unlike the symbolic and status-driven push for English often outlined in the literature, tapping into the dominant language of scientific discourse serves as a practical (if not postcolonially problematic) need for English. It also points to why the CSAT and other standardized English tests in Korea look as they do (see Figure 9). In a Korean culture historically shaped by a drive toward the development of human capital to catch up and compete in a neoliberalizing world (see Section 2.4), learning English for scientific purposes was far from capricious or arbitrary.

This ideology of English as essential for scientific advancement went unrecognized among most GET participants. However, Brandon did nod to English as a store of intellectual capital, saying students who "want to be a researcher or an academic or something…just realized that English is really helpful." However, this kind of insight was rare among GETs. This disconnect represented a significant departure for LET and GET understandings of the ideological landscape of English in Korea. LETs did not always agree with current English assessment methodologies, but still provided a historically grounded rationale for it. GETs, on the other hand, often communicated confusion about why Korean English test questions look as they do (see Figure 9).

In addition to the practical use for English as a source of intellectual capital in the information-driven Korean economy, the most practical reason LETs and GETs shared for asserting the importance of English education is the viability of their own careers.

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Reflexivity abounded in participants' relation to the ideology of necessitation. All participants are or have been English teachers. Therefore, many share a substantial stake in promoting the value of English education because the (perceived) value of learning English is directly tied to their employability. Many participants shared such sentiments, like Ninja's Sister in Excerpt 4.12.

Excerpt 4.12. [Ninja's Sister, LET]

I think [English] should be a core subject forever. Because I'm an English teacher. I'm just kidding. Yeah, I still think it was just really important, because every part in every area is related to English like- computer, internet, everything, I think.

While Ninja's Sister admits to joking that "English should be a core subject forever…because I'm an English teacher", her next utterance re-positions her stance toward the importance of English by starting broadly ("every part in every area is related to English") and narrowing to the importance of English in digital spaces ("computer, internet, everything.") Ninja's Sister's self-interested rationale to keep English as a core subject in Korean education was no anomaly. Yeonghyeon expresses a similar sentiment in Excerpt 4.13).

Excerpt 4.13. [Yeonghyeon, LET]

Ian: Okay, so let me ask you this, do you think that Korean[20] should be a subject on the suneung (English: CSAT)?

Yeonghyeon: You mean English?

Ian: Yeah, should it be one of the core subjects?

Yeonghyeon: Because it's related to my job, it should be. But- I don't think it should be the main subject in the Korean SAT.

Ian: Mm hmm.

Yeonghyeon: But it should be the subject in high school.

Like Ninja's Sister, Yeonghyeon expresses self-interested investment in maintaining English as a compulsory subject in Korean education ("because it's related to my job"). However, she also attenuates her position by turning against the need for English on the CSAT ("I don't think it should be the main subject on the Korean SAT") and turning toward the work she does as a high school teacher ("but it should be the subject in high school"). This stance suggests an awareness of societal problems associated with the CSAT including its outsized influence on young people's future (Lee & Lee, 2016) and the well-publicized surge in student suicides that coincides with the release of CSAT scores (Janda, 2013). However, her stance is versatile enough to maintain demand for English education while opposing English on the CSAT.

While critical applied linguists might explain LETs' continued investment in mandatory English policies through colonial ideologies of English that immerse racialized English language learners in a dangerous ideological cocktail of necessity and insecurity (Park, 2022), a local entailment of such macro-level assessments involves LETs career

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[20] I made this error during quite a few interviews. However, in the spirit of consistency, I will avoid employing *sic* to rescue me from my mistakes.

investment in English education relative to GETs. In other words, LETs may express greater investment in the maintenance of mandatory English language policies not only because they are more socialized into Korea's language ideological landscape (Lee, 2016), but also because LETs' higher education degrees and career-track public service positions compel deeper ideological investment in English education than GETs' often-unrelated university degrees and tenuous career longevity.

While LETs almost categorically supported keeping English as a mandatory subject at least in K-12 education, GETs provided a much wider range of responses. When asked if English should be a compulsory subject in Korean public-school curricula or the CSAT, most GETs assumed less confident stances than LETs, often prefacing their responses by acknowledging the question as difficult. For example, Haley responded immediately with, "that's a tough question" while Ben responded with, "oh, that's a good question." Jane described the question as "loaded", implying an awareness of the problematics of English in Korea while explicitly acknowledging "how English is becoming like a lingua franca" and how "English can help people succeed in the world."

Steve also signals similar epistemic uncertainty before laying out a very equivocal stance in Excerpt 4.14.

Excerpt 4.14. [Steve, GET]

Ian: Do you think- do you think [English] should be optional, or do you think it should be mandatory?

Steve: (3) [sigh] That's a difficult question. Um- (4). I don't know- I think depending- I mean- I think- I think if- if uh- certain- certain schools, made it mandatory that's okay, but I don't know if it should be mandatory across all schools. You know? If you're going into a business school or something like that- Again I think English is- you know- the language of international business. So, I can totally understand and support that being mandatory. Um- But if you're going to some sort of like trade school or- like- something along those lines, I don't know if it should be mandatory. I think it's useful for everyone to learn, but I don't know if [unk].

Steve begins by framing the question as difficult ("that's a difficult question") before pausing for four seconds. He then offers a measured rationale for a selective mandate of English education that invokes themes of tracking, or the division of Korean students into specialized tracks based on test performance in secondary school (Byean, 2015). He also appeals to English as a language of global communication (see Section 4.4) by labeling it as the default language for international business. He does this, however, through many false starts ("I don't know- I think depending- I mean- I think if-") and filler words ("um-" and "uh-"). Questions of alignment with the researcher also sought confirmation to validate his thinking ("you know?"). Such dysfluencies and bids for confirmation exemplify GETs' discomfort with the prospect of reckoning with their position within the postcolonial landscape of ELT. Isadora, in fact, explicitly mentioned English education as a form of colonization. Steve then wraps up his utterance by contradicting his previous stance of selective necessity by invoking an ideology of the universal utility of English ("I think it's useful for everyone to learn").

While Steve had three years of experience teaching English in Jeollanamdo, at the time of the interview he was no longer employed in ELT. More experienced and current

GETs, however, often argued against compulsory English in Korean secondary schools (Brandon; Katie) or argued for replacing compulsory English with a compulsory foreign language of choice (Jane; Bevan). Hyunsoo, on the other hand, ultimately declines to take a position at all. Indecision, however, also manifests as a position on mandatory English education.

> **Excerpt 4.15. [Hyunsoo, GET]**
>
> *Ian: Do you think [English] should be [mandatory], or do you think that English should be an optional subject on the suneung?*
>
> *Hyunsoo: (3) [sigh] Yeah that's- that's difficult…(3) You know…(1) The fact that English is so praised here helps me have job security…(2) But of course as teachers, naturally, we want students to be enthusiastic about the subject that they're learning. You want the students who want to be there. I don't see English going away anytime soon- Umm...(2) At all. Whether it should be optional, I don't know. It's not for me to say. (2) I- I- really don't know how to answer that question.*

Hyunsoo starts with a pattern of epistemic stancetaking like other GETs, hedging his position by appealing to the question's difficulty and dipping into longer pauses and dysfluencies. He then suggests an ideology of neoliberal self-preservation (see also Excerpt 4.12; Excerpt 4.13) by claiming the popularity of English in Korea "helps [him] have job security." He then appeals to inevitability, or what Pennycook and Makoni (2006) call *realinguistik* ("I don't see English going away anytime soon"). Finally, he abdicates any position out of a sense of disqualified identity ("I don't know if it's for me to say") before admitting he doesn't know how to answer. No answer, however, is itself a position endorsing the continuation of the status quo – that mandatory English education ought to remain in place.

This discrepancy between high investment (Hyunsoo's desire to stay employed) and ambivalent positioning (Hyunsoo's unwillingness to take a strong position on the issue

of mandatory English education) exemplifies common responses by experienced GETs who have staked their long-term career plans to ELT. High investment differentiates long-term GETs from low-investment short-term GETs (also known as "backpacker teachers"). On the other hand, despite their experience, long-term GETs' low confidence in their understanding of Korea's ideological landscape (Lee, 2016) relative to LETs contributes to variation in strength of positioning.

The next section explores LET and GET responses that point to English as a language of global communication and travel, an overlapping but distinct theme from ideologies of English as symbolic capital in a competitive, neoliberal society.

4.4 English as a Global Language

This section expands upon participants' stories and explanations that in some way index an ideology of English as a global language that Korean students need in a hypermobile, technology-driven epoch that Schwab (2017) describes as a "fourth industrial revolution" and Blommaert and Rampton (2012) define as *superdiversity*[21]. To put it another way, the proliferation in both physical mobility and digital mobility through online spaces increasingly require people around the world to communicate around language barriers in multilingual, multicultural spaces, and English increasingly fills this need as a lingua franca (Seidlhofer, 2005).

Many GET participants point to either hearing about or intuiting some students' desire to learn English to enable them to travel or live abroad. GET Brandon suggests that studying or living abroad is a common goal among students. He compares his perceptions

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[21] Other scholars question the need for a term like "super-diversity" when the term "diversity" remains adequate to describe circumstances of multilingual language contact (Barrett, personal correspondence).

of students in his previous school, a rural high school, with the students at his current workplace, a foreign language high school.

Excerpt 4.16. [Brandon, GET]

Um- so with- a significant amount of students is because they want to go study in an English-speaking country, or they maybe even want to migrate to another country. Like in [my former academic high school] that was true maybe a handful of students. At the foreign language high school it's true for a lot of the students. And I think that's…That's probably a really major reason is for future education or for living abroad in the future.

Brandon perceives "studying in an English-speaking country" or "migrating to another country" as a goal for many students at a prestigious foreign language high school. He also contrasts this with the rural academic high school where he used to work as having fewer students with aspirations to study or work abroad ("that was true for maybe a handful of students" vs. "it's true for a lot of students"). This also suggests that dimensions (or at least perceptions) of tracking include not only the commonly attested "academic" (preparation for university) vs. "vocational" (preparation for immediate entry into the workforce) high schools (Kim & Byun, 2014:15), but also "urban" vs. "rural" distinctions or vocation-specific prestige.

Kim (2020) also documents dreams of mobility behind Koreans' motivations to learn English, especially women, using the term *Tal Joseon* (English: an exodus of Koreans seeking refuge in foreign countries). One of her participants, Jiwon, explains her decision to travel. "I'm still young and I don't want to sacrifice my life to the company. I want to enjoy my life more" (Kim, 2020:98). Kim goes on to describe many of her participants' motivations to learn English in terms of self-discovery and sidestepping the patriarchal *gongchae* system (English: job-seeking process for young white-collar professionals). As Jiwon says later regarding pressures of mainstream Korean life, "I feel the pressure to keep

up with others (in this country), both consciously and unconsciously. It is suffocating"
(Kim, 2020:103).

Cho (2016) explores the intersection of English language ideologies, feminist
theory, and the interpretation-translation profession, telling stories of Korean women who
view English as a ticket to new horizons abroad. As said by one of her participants, Sunhye,
"I wanted to live overseas before – right – and I think I had this idea that English is a must"
(Cho, 2016:206). This kind of imagined English use is a significant theme towards how
both LETs and GETs construct the value of English when teaching their students. For
example, GETs like Amina often called attention to the need for Korean English education
to pay more mind to students' specific language needs.

Excerpt 4.17. [Amina, GET]

*They need that- hospitals, the police services, customer care, those Korea
part- those Koreans- those children have to learn English. And if you're
going to be owning a Pizza Maru[22], I mean you don't need to learn English.
The guy will learn Korean for what he wants to order, like it's gonna be
fine. Don't force that guy to learn English.*

While she does not specifically refer to tracking, she does call for differentiation of
English needs according to Korean students' career goals. This theme of imagining
scenarios that require English communication, either with Koreans abroad or with
foreigners in Korea, exemplify a kind of global "imagined community" (Anderson, 1991).
Anderson's theory of imagined communities revolved around the rise of nation-states that
exist on shared myths and a collective imagination where "the members of even the
smallest nation will never know most of their fellow-members, meet them, or even hear of

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[22] Ironically, Pizza Maru is one of Korea's largest international pizza chains with 650 locations across Korea,
the U.S., Singapore, and Hong Kong (LADYIRONCHEF, 2018). In other words, the owners of some Pizza
Maru locations would benefit from knowing English. (https://www.pizzamaru.co.kr/)

them, yet in the minds of each lives the image of their communion" (Anderson, 1991:6) To put it a different way, language and national stories create a sense of solidarity among fellow citizens despite having no knowledge of the others' existence. Chatterjee (1991), however, critiques this "solidarity" as erasive of pluralism and multilingualism within Western (and according to JSY Park (2008), Korean) ideologies of the monolingual nation-state. While Anderson theorizes of imagined communities in terms of nation-state citizenship, Pavlenko and Norton extend imagined communities to a global English network of imagined identities that presuppose enhanced ranges of future possibilities (Pavlenko & Norton, 2007; Norton & Pavlenko, 2019). In Amina's passage, she delineates students' memberships in imagined communities of English by profession: healthcare and law enforcement will interact with many English users while pizza chain owners will not.

Cho (2016) and Kim (2020) also share the stories of Korean participants who conceptualize English as a bidirectional bridge to imagined communities of English beyond Korea's borders.

Excerpt 4.18. [Yena, Participant in Kim (2020:129)]

I didn't learn English as a school subject, so I liked learning English and after I began college it was most enjoyable to talk with foreigners while traveling overseas. My favorite part is that I can talk with everyone by using English and it is one feature of English, so English is a bridge for communication for me.

While Yena's description of a bridge metaphor suggests both imagined and concrete possibilities for communication, Youngmi points to the affective dimension of dreams living among imagined communities of English users.

4.19. [Youngmi, Participant in Cho (2016:205)]

Well, Korean society has certain stereotypes in terms of seeing me, about women in their late 20s – right – Like, 'Did she get a job since she graduated a university?' "Does she have a boyfriend?' 'When is she going to get married?' Things like that- I can be free from such things [overseas]. And... I feel like I have more opportunities when I am overseas. Not that I had any real opportunities, but it's kind of a feeling.

For Youngmi, dreams of learning English served as a bridge toward connection and opportunity, but also as a bridge away from oppressive, patriarchal norms of Korean society (see also Jiwon's (Kim, 2020) comments on p. 67). However, after experiencing life abroad, Youngmi tempers her imagination of opportunities in favor of describing it as a "kind of feeling." Both excerpts exemplify an investment in English as a store of potential due to the imagination of English speakers (and thereby career and social opportunities) abroad.

In Jeollanamdo, both GETs and LETs appeal to imagined communities to motivate students to learn English. Andile, along with many other GET interviewees, often appealed to the benefits of using English while travelling abroad within the imagined community framework.

Excerpt 4.20. [Andile, GET]

I've been to Philippines, I've been to Spain, I've been to Portugal. People speak English there…And that's when [students] start getting excited. Once you put the aspect of travel and meeting new people, and you know, being able to communicate with different cultures. That's when they start opening up and realizing 'whoa hang on, this language or studying English is actually can be fun and is quite important in their career and in what I want to do in the future.'

Andile uses his own experience as an expat and a traveler to appeal to Korean students' imaginations. He identifies both Spain and Portugal, countries where English is neither an official nor dominant language, as countries where "people speak English." This

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points to conceptions of the imagined community of English speakers as an all-encompassing sandbox of travel where the price of admission is a proper passport and the English language.

Appeals to imagined communities of English speakers are not only limited to teachers imagining Korean students working abroad, but (like Amina in Excerpt 4.17) also imagining students needing to communicate with foreigners within Korea's borders[23]. Arizwel recounts an illustrative example of this in her classroom.

> ***Excerpt 4.21. [Arizwel, LET]***
>
> *Um- My students say, 'Why should I study English?' And I always answer, 'Because you need this.' And one of my students…he said, 'Okay, after I graduate high school, I'm going to be a bus driver. So, I don't need English. Why should I learn English?' And I was really embarrassed, and I didn't know what to say. So- And then I said 'Okay, then, if you want to be a bus driver and if your passenger is foreigners, and if he or she had a problem, then you should help him or her so that's why you have to learn English.' And he said 'Oh, okay.'*

Arizwel's student expresses incredulity toward the need for English (redolent of *yeongpoja*, see p. 56) and puts Arizwel on the back foot, as evidenced by her affective stance of feeling "really embarrassed" and not "knowing what to say." Arizwel's stance of embarrassment may also reflect that the student's pushback represents a face threatening act (Brown & Levinson, 1987), where Arizwel's identity and authority as a teacher is contested. Recognition of face is a key principle of discourse in Confucian-inspired societies (Hong, 2013). As she collects herself and responds to the student's challenge, she appeals to a hypothetical scenario set within an imagined community where English-

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[23] This focus on scenarios where Koreans need English to speak with foreign visitors is a potential symptom of a larger pattern of government-sponsored policies supporting the export of Korean culture (Korean: *hallyu*) and reciprocal import of tourist revenue as speculative investment in Korean economic growth (see Oh, 2018).

speaking tourists regularly interact with the student in the role of bus driver. To put it another way, her scenario does not seem to consider the frequency of tourists in rural Jeollanamdo, but rather appeals to shared notions of English as the lingua franca of a global community. In return, her student seems to drop the point. But her story also points to the ideological work done through images of imagined communities and appeals to necessity with the inciting incident of the argument. "Why should I study English?" "Because you need this."

While most LETs alluded to scenarios of Koreans interacting with English-speaking foreigners within Korean borders and GETs often alluded to scenarios of Koreans using English beyond them, overlap exists. Some GETs (like Amina in Excerpt 4.22) conceptualize scenarios of Koreans needing English to interact with foreigners, while LETs like Yeonghyeon describe English as necessary in a "global world" with "blurred borders." Coupled with Arizwel's appeals to communicative scenarios (see Excerpt 4.20), Yeonghyeon's comments mesh with Lynn (Cho & Kinginger, 2022:10), who describes learning English as part-in-parcel to her goal of experiencing a wider world. "Rather than going to a better place, it's more like experiencing the wider world, just because I want to."

While beyond the scope of this thesis, such comments, often from participants that identify as women, reflect a pattern of gendered English language ideologies (Cho, 2016; Kim, 2020) where male-identifying students and young professionals tended to see English as a tool to achieve career success within Korean corporations (see Section 5.4) while female-identifying participants often considered English as a bridge or gateway to connections, opportunities, and experiences beyond Korea's borders (see Excerpt 4.20 Excerpt 4.21)

When it comes to rural-dwelling Korean students, some expressed needing English not for the mobility of persons, but rather the mobility of goods. Amina describes one such student in her island secondary school.

Excerpt 4.22. [Amina, GET]

One of the kids who spoke the best English in school told me that he wants to be an abalone farmer because it brings in a lot of money…so he didn't feel like he needed English. But he only- he said he's good at English because he wants to do business abroad. He wants everyone outside of Korea to understand how like delicious Korean food is you know? And how much heart- heart goes into- into the farming. So, his motivation was different.

Many previous comments by LETs and GETs focus on English as a path to upward mobility to either university or tracked careers, which in Korea often entails moving from the countryside to the city (Cho & Kinginger, 2022). However, Amina provides a compelling counterexample where a rural student sees a need for English that does not involve urban migration. At first, she characterizes her student as unconvinced of the need to learn English ("He didn't feel like he needed English"). However, she then describes him as highly motivated due to his goals to expand his agricultural business ("He wants everyone outside of Korea to understand how like delicious Korean food is.").

Bevan (GET) also describes a reversal of this canonical phenomenon of mobile Koreans moving from rural areas to cities both domestic and abroad. He notices many immigrants moving to Korean rural areas as part of multicultural families.

Excerpt 4.23. [Bevan, GET]

In the country schools you tended to have higher- You would have one or two or maybe even three students who spoke English quite well because their parent- one of their parents would be non-Korean. They would have like a Filipino or Vietnamese parent, and so you know if they spent time in the Philippines, for example, that would give them a higher level of English exposure than the kids who were in Korea [unk].

While "one or two or maybe even three students" sounds like a small sample, both LETs and GETs described rural country schools as having an average class size between five and ten, pointing to substantial ethnic diversity developing in rural parts of Jeollanamdo. Patterns of urbanization in Korea contributed to a family crisis in rural provinces where the proportion of marriageable-aged men and women grew imbalanced (Mee, 2007; A Kim, 2018). As a result, rural areas have a higher proportion of multicultural marriages between migrant women and Korean men compared to urban areas (A Kim, 2018). Bevan's explanation then adds a key dimension to the theorization of English language and mobility in Korea. While the majority of GETs and LETs oriented toward English as necessary for Koreans travelling abroad, few (if any) respondents beyond Bevan brought up English as necessary for multicultural Koreans navigating multiple cultures through travel or heritage.

4.5 English Education as Nonessential

On the other hand, many participants also shared stories and stances that range from doubting to rejecting the essentiality of English. In his analysis of *yeongpoja* (See p. 56), Park (2022:7) calls for students and teachers to "say enough to English" as a path towards decolonizing subjectivities. Part of disrupting such subjectivities entails doubting, questioning, and later challenging dominant ideologies of the necessity of English.

One early step on the path that precipitates language attitude change is epistemic uncertainty. In Excerpt 4.2, Miranda's reflection on the importance of English in Korean society belies this sense of epistemic uncertainty. She spoke about how "English was very important in Korea" but she "did not know why." This sense of uncertainty and equivocation was also apparent in Arizwel's reflection on why Korean university graduates

need to take English proficiency examinations as part of job interviews at major corporations, but "does not know why" (see Excerpt 2.1).

Rumsey (1990) defines language ideologies as shared, commonsense notions about language. This entails beliefs that have common explanations or are beyond explanation to the point of being self-evident. However, "I don't know why" resists the epistemic certainty of common sense and carries no chain of reasoning. It thereby allows space to modify one's beliefs about language.

Interestingly, Arizwel's next utterance backs off this uncertainty by contradicting her previous statement by later saying "[students] need English in daily life. That's why they learn English." The need for English in job searches or in daily life contradict her previous epistemic hedge.

While "I don't know why" is a powerful expression that lays the foundation for challenging dominant English language ideologies, replacement ideologies that either reinforce the conclusion (new reasons why English is essential) or reach a new conclusion (English is not essential) are key in changing orientations toward ideology. Yeonghyeon discusses changing conclusions when she tries to assuage her vocational high school students' long-standing resistance to English.

> **Excerpt 4.24. [Yeonghyeon, LET]**
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> *So all [the students] say to me was, 'English is too difficult and my English academic record in my middle school was too low, so I just gave up learning English'…I just said, 'I don't want to- I don't want you guys to feel stressed about learning English because it's not like like even though you don't know any English word, you will graduate and you will live your life so don't be stressed in learning English.'*

Speaking to her *yeongpoja* students, Yeonghyeon turns away from the necessity of English to psychologically attune to students' needs for reassurance. She reminds her

students of possible futures where English does not factor into their daily life ("even though you don't know any English word, you will graduate, and you will live your life.") Most noteworthy in this future projection is its absoluteness ("any English word"). While bound to carry out her duties as an English teacher, Yeonghyeon challenges dominant ideologies of necessitation by normalizing the idea of "saying enough to English" (Park, 2022).

By "externalizing," or using the spoken word to self-regulate one's behavior or social world (Tasker et al. 2010; Johnson & Golombek, 2011), Nancy also finds the space to challenge ideologies of necessitation when considering whether English should be a core subject on the CSAT.

Excerpt 4.25. [Nancy, GET]

I guess if it's taught in school for so long, as long as all the other subjects are on there, it's hard to disagree that it should be on there. But at the same time, though, if it's not relevant to what you want to study in college or university, is it fair to be on there at all in the first place?

Nancy begins with an appeal to tradition ("If it's taught in school for so long…It's hard to disagree that it should be on there.") This sets up a circular loop where students must study for content on the exam and the exam ought to contain content that students study in school. However, she breaks this loop by questioning the relevance of English, revealing her inner debate with the discourse phrase "at the same time though…" This inner ideological debate likely amplifies due to Nancy's own background as a U.S. citizen, who grew up taking standardized examinations in U.S. schools, and likely experienced similar dissonance between test exam content and real-life application through what Karimzad and Catedral (2021) call "chronotopic materialities" or world-knowledge gathered through embodied experience inside envelopes of time. To put it another way, Nancy likely has many experiences taking standardized examinations and experiencing dissonance analogous to

not only Korean students, but also to millions of children in the U.S. over the past century who have also endured the problematics of standardized testing (Hutt & Schneider, 2018). These past experiences lead her, and many GETs, to question the detrimental effects of high-stakes exams on students' well-being in Korea. Ben echoes this creeping sense of doubt, intuiting that many of his Korean high school students question the need for English.

Excerpt 4.26. [Ben, GET]

Some of them, you know- Some of them like don't take English all that seriously. So- Yeah, I can see, like in their heads, like they're questioning why they're here, why they're studying English, and that sort of thing.

While Ben of course cannot literally see into students' heads, his statements either suggest that students' behavior belies an inquisitive stance toward the value of English, or that he projects his own doubts about the necessity of English education in Korea onto the faces of his students.

Many GETs (e.g., Brandon, Jane, Katie) hold stronger opinions about the necessity of English in Korean education, supporting the idea that English be downgraded from a core subject to an elective. Amina takes a similar stance, but not one that abandons English completely.

Excerpt 4.27. [Amina, GET]

Um- I think for Korea, English should not be mandatory…Because, like I said, not every Korean child dreams of leaving Korea to go in, make it in the big bad world. Some Korean kids love Korea, truly patriotic…English should be taught up to a certain grade and then like- in our- like in most countries, you choose the subject you're going to carry on with.

Amina starts by supporting English as an elective rather than a core subject ("English should not be mandatory"). However, she then makes appeals to English as a global language (see Section 4.4), establishing a dichotomy between nationalistic

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domesticity and English-speaking cosmopolitanism[24]. Finally, she qualifies her earlier proposition by not abandoning mandatory English but teaching it "up to a certain grade."

Such shifts in the position and valence of participants' stances regarding mandatory English reflect the complexity of negotiating the ideology of necessitation. While Section 4.3 describes LETs as less equivocal in their stances toward mandatory English education when compared to GETs, they were not immune to contradicting previous stances at later points in the interview, suggesting a kind of reflection-in-action (Schön, 1987) or reflection-on-action (Farrell, 2014) common in semi-structured interviews. Many scholars capture these conflicting feelings in the hearts of ELT professionals as the "access paradox" (Janks 2004; Marr & English, 2019). To require students to learn English burdens them with the often-unfulfilled neoliberal promises of English (JSY Park, 2012). Yet to discourage students from studying English as an act of resistance may serve to further marginalize them from the resources and "mark of distinction" that English confers.

Finally, several participants like Miranda pointed to the fourth industrial revolution as a harbinger for the decline of the need for English education.

> ### Excerpt 4.28. [Miranda, LET]
>
> *Actually, when I get- when I give my students some task like writing, they usually use the Papago[25] or translation application. So, the advance of technology- Will make the English- the importance of English- Will make the importance of English- Not important. Less important.*

By observing her students' use of technology ("using the Papago or translation applications"), Miranda extrapolates to a decline in the need for English education in

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[24] See Park (2006) for a discussion on how ideologies of globalism and nationalism are not exclusive, but mutually reinforcing.

[25] Papago is a popular Korean translation application owned by Naver, the most-used search engine in Korea (https://papago.naver.com/)

Korea. But while research on artificial intelligence (AI) in computer-assisted language learning (CALL) is still in its infancy (Zhang & Di, 2022), the claim that AI will render teachers obsolete remains unfounded for now (Felix, 2020). Nonetheless, a shared belief in the future redundancy of English education due to advances in AI and natural language processing (NLP) also represents an ideology among a subset of participants in this study.

4.6 Curricular Pressures and Confusion

One downstream effect of the Ministry of Education's push for more communicatively oriented language teaching and a long-unchanged CSAT system is that LETs often feel squeezed between the two. Many LETs (e.g., Arizwel, Jin-D) and one GET (Brandon) report teaching new courses in the high school curriculum like "English Culture", "Career English" or "English Literature." However, as Arizwel describes, aspirations for teaching communicative English often wither under the wide shadow of the CSAT.

Excerpt 4.29. [Arizwel, LET]

The subject that I'm teaching now, it's called English Culture. But what I teach now is course book from EBS[26]. For Korean SAT. So, I'm thinking like 'Okay, only 5 or 10 students would take the exam and rest of them, they would not take the exam and…What am I doing this? Yeah, why should I do this?' It's like dilemma.

Arizwel frames these curricular pressures as a "dilemma." While she teaches a course called "English Culture," she remains beholden to EBS textbooks designed for test preparation. On top of that, she notes that "only 5 or 10 students" (or about one-third of her classroom) plan to take the Korean SAT. In the context of a 30-student classroom in a large

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[26] EBS, or Korea Educational Broadcasting Service, is a publicly-funded broadcaster and publisher. They are one of the leading producers of Korean English textbooks and e-learning at the secondary level (Teo et al. 2020).

consolidated rural high school, this "dilemma" was not uncommon among LET participants who felt compelled to adhere to a test-preparation curriculum designed in urban areas like Seoul to serve students in urban schools focused on admission into top-level universities.

As mentioned in Chapter 2, the annual number of students sitting for the CSAT is in decline. Today, a majority of university admissions in Seoul require students' teacher recommendations, school grades, and extracurricular activities (Korean: *susi*) as opposed to the nationally competitive Korean SAT path to admission (Korean: *jeongsi*). Therefore, part of Arizwel's dilemma involves having to teach a curriculum that does not interest her to a classroom of students where the majority do not see its immediate value (Ro, 2018).

Yeonghyeon also describes the increased responsibility she felt since moving from a vocational high school (where most students did not deem English as essential) to an academic high school.

Excerpt 4.30. [Yeonghyeon, LET]

So, nowadays, I feel more responsibilities, because uh- the time- in students high school life is really important for them and it can determine their life, their future life. That kind of responsibility.

Contrasted with her previous anecdotes of feeling less pressure to teach-to-the-test in a vocational high school, Yeonghyeon reflects on working in an academic high school as one of "more responsibilities" where "high school life is really important" and "can determine [students'] life." This suggests the powerful draw of dominant English language ideologies that pull participants back into their orbit despite earlier acts of resistance.

Rather than resist and return, other participants rephrased and recategorized concepts of language learning in order to reject the necessity of English. For example, GETs hired to teach speaking skills from an outsider's perspective often divided the idea

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of "English skills" with "test taking skills." Nancy, for example, recounted her impression of reading sample CSAT questions (see Figure 9).

> **_Excerpt 4.31. [Nancy, GET]_**
>
> _You know? I just really was like- Is this a test of like- I think it's like is it a test of testing- testing your English knowledge? Or is it a test testing your like- test taking skills?_

Nancy, like many GETs, expressed skepticism toward the language skills entailed in the English section of the CSAT after reading sample questions, questions that most English users would find challenging. Rather than equating skills on the CSAT to linguistic knowledge, she differentiates tests of English language skills and test taking skills ("testing your English knowledge" vs. "testing your test taking skills").

34. There have been many attempts to define what music is in terms of the specific attributes of musical sounds. The famous nineteenth-century critic Eduard Hanslick regarded 'the measurable tone' as 'the primary and essential condition of all music'. Musical sounds, he was saying, can be distinguished from those of nature by the fact that they involve the use of fixed pitches, whereas virtually all natural sounds consist of constantly fluctuating frequencies. And a number of twentieth-century writers have assumed, like Hanslick, that fixed pitches are among the defining features of music. Now it is true that in most of the world's musical cultures, pitches are _____. However, this is a generalization about music and not a definition of it, for it is easy to put forward counter-examples. Japanese *shakuhachi* music and the *sanjo* music of Korea, for instance, fluctuate constantly around the notional pitches in terms of which the music is organized. [3점]

① not so much artificially fixed as naturally fluctuating
② not only fixed, but organized into a series of discrete steps
③ hardly considered a primary compositional element of music
④ highly diverse and complicated, and thus are immeasurable
⑤ a vehicle for carrying unique and various cultural features

Figure 9. Sample question from the English section of the 2020 CSAT (Hanguk Ilbo, 2020).

Brandon echoes a similar sentiment.

Excerpt 4.32. [Brandon, GET]

I think really what [students] end up doing is learning to see the kind of the tricks of how test questions are written. So, they- I don't think they're reading the passage and understanding it to any degree of fluency.

Brandon points to the test-based nature of English education in Korea as antithetical to the communicative goals that underlie both his own teaching practice and the Ministry of Education's current National Education Curriculum (Ahn, 2013), saying he believes students are not "reading the passage" with "any degree of fluency." He further highlights

this differentiation between *language learning* and *language study* while observing students who wanted to improve their English skills after taking the CSAT.

Excerpt 4.33. [Brandon, GET]

Like I've had high school students do this- Finish suneung and then like- 'Okay, now I'm going to focus on English.' And then they just do more grammar translation study. And so, their English level stays the same, but they start doing better on tests.

Brandon reveals a key distinction between his conceptualization of "English level" and "English study." He sets up expectations of students taking a more communicative approach to English learning after finishing the reading intensive CSAT only to notice students employing study habits identical to pre-exam methods. He distinguishes between students' English level (it "stays the same") and improvement in their exam results ("they start doing better on tests"). Many GETs echo similar sentiments of confusion and differentiation between test hacking skills taught in many Korean English classrooms, and the communicative skills they were hired to teach.

Such emphasis on reading and listening skills and a diminished need for speaking skills among students often left GETs like Ben concerned about how to best meet students' needs.

Excerpt 4.34. [Ben, GET]

Like obviously you want to, you know, give students the highest quality of English education. But…that- that's always tricky right? How do you provide the highest quality, like in terms of what...?

Ben shares his struggle to understand his role in Korean English education. Despite his goal to provide the "highest quality of English education," the terms of what constitutes "high quality" remains opaque as most students' core English-learning motivations rest with test results and not communication. GETs are recruited to Korean public schools to

provide communicative language teaching and ostensibly to reduce the rising costs of private tutoring and shadow education (Kang, 2013). Yet many report feeling like they "weren't making a difference" (e.g., Isadora, Katie). To put it another way, GETs struggle to navigate the ideological field of English in Korea where their primary teaching responsibilities are deemphasized to the point where some question whether their job has meaning at all. This leads some GETs toward more cynical views, like Patricia who says GETs are "not cheap" and Isadora who says, "I feel like [the Korean government] is wasting time and money" on their current English education policies, particularly because they are "severely underutilizing [GETs]." This cynicism also clashes with GETs' recognition of the material benefits of their job. As Jihye says, "you have this great opportunity, a comfortable life, you get paid a nice little salary." This forms yet another ideological bind where GETs feel financially rewarded doing work that many feel is not valuable or commensurate with their compensation.

4.7 Conclusion

This chapter denotes and complicates key subthemes expressed by LETs and GETs with respect to Park's (2004, 2009) ideology of necessitation. LET and GET participants take a variety of stances toward the ideology of necessitation. They appeal to (or resist) English as an essential skill for neoliberal self-improvement, English as a linguistic passport for travel and membership within imagined communities, or English as nonessential altogether. LETs also reported feeling squeezed by the Ministry of Education's ideological clash between the need to teach communicative English and the sociocultural momentum of high stakes standardized examinations. GETs also struggled through this tension through senses of confusion and meaninglessness in their work.

While LETs' and GETs' stances showed considerable overlap, key distinctions also emerged. While GETs were more likely to appeal to English as a medium of communication and key to physical mobility, LETs more often appealed to English as a medium of intellectual capital and a symbolic tool for social mobility. LETs (more so than GETs) reported lending their emotional labor to students' hostility and stress-induced tears precipitated by English. Moreover, LETs and GETs spoke about having very different teaching duties and therefore tended to interact with student through different emotional frames. LETs often assumed the role of emotional caretaker as students struggled to shoulder the burden of punishing English study regimes (see Excerpt 4.7; Excerpt 4.8) as well as assuming their own burden of exam preparation (see Section 4.6). GETs, on the other hand, often felt pushed into a role of "conversation partner" and "edutainer" (see Section 5.3; Section 5.6). This difference in roles creates mixed feelings and a complex sense of identity among GETs, as the next chapter will explore.

CHAPTER 5. LETS, GETS, AND EXTERNALIZATION

Excerpt 5.1. [Hyunsoo, GET]

It's not always what your background is, how great of a teacher you are, it's whether or not, you know, you're a international face from one of the seven countries[27] and you're seen as an native speaker whose class can easily be cancelled.

5.1 Introduction

This chapter explores LETs' and GETs' negotiation of Park's ideology of externalization, or the view of English (and, as this chapter will argue, GETs) as inherently separate and antithetical to Korean identity. And as Hyunsoo says in Excerpt 5.1, ideologies that externalize English through essentialist notions of language and nation contribute to GETs sense of marginalization as foreign bodies (Toporov, 2019), as "human tape recorder" vessels of language (Tajino & Tajino, 2000), and as illegitimate teachers of English in spite of their native speaker privilege (MH Jeon, 2009; Choi, 2022). Rather, experienced GETs often sense that being nothing more than an "international face" (read: non-Korean face) from "one of the seven countries."

Section 5.2 begins by defining the ideology of externalization and sharing two examples from the literature, and Sections 5.3 through 5.6 share and discuss four key subthemes that emerged under the umbrella of externalization through thematic analysis. The subtheme of GETs as the sole proprietor of English communication was shared among LETs and GETs. LETs' notions of externalization often involved a metaphoric extension of "English as a tool" as well as English as a monolithic, external culture. GETs, on the other hand, often spoke about their sense of role minimization.

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[27] See Section 2.9 for the seven countries.

During semi-structured interviews, one question (and two subquestions) most directly aimed to elicit participants' stances toward the ideology of externalization.

LETs [28]:

1. Have you ever worked with a native English teacher (GET)?

    a. If so, what kind of co-teaching experiences can you recall?

    b. In your opinion, what is the GET's role in students' education?

    c. GETs:

2. What kind of co-teaching experiences can you recall with your Korean co-teachers?

    a. Are your lessons different from a Korean English teacher's lesson? How so?

    b. In your opinion, what is your role in Korean students' education?

In the Korean context, GETs embody an ideology of externalization as instructors recruited primarily for their linguistic and cultural background rather than their teaching credentials (Gerald, 2020). Therefore, eliciting participants' views on the purpose of GETs in Korean schools also helps index their positions on English language and culture within Korean education and society.

5.2. The Ideology of Externalization

Externalization, or "English as foreign…views English as a language in opposition to Korean, incongruent with a Korean identity" (Park, 2004: 35).[29] Although many Koreans identify English as a language they need for communicative or symbolic purposes (see

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[28] In retrospect, I regret not including questions about LETs' sense of identity and ownership of English, or whether they consider themselves bilingual. However, this concept of linguistic ownership receives substantial consideration among scholars in Korea (Lee, 2014; Kim et al. 2014), Japan (Matsuda, 2003), Taiwan (Seilhamer, 2015), Indonesia (Lee et al., 2019), and Thailand (Le Ha, 2009) among others.

[29] See Song (2011) for a critique of Park's analysis. While Park argues that power imbalances in Korean society are a consequence of the ideology of externalization, Song argues that power imbalances create the conditions for externalization ideologies.

Chapter 4), the ideology of externalization posits that English is a cultural entity incompatible with the image of Korean personhood, entailing a reciprocal ideology of Korean monolingualism (JSY Park, 2008; Lee, 2010). Park expounds upon this ideology further:

> While we noted above that English is actively pursued as a global commodity in Korean society, there is also a strong belief among Koreans that views English as a language of an Other – as a language of an outgroup that is in opposition to one's own identity. We may call this ideology externalization, which treats English as an external language that is incongruent and incompatible with who Koreans are. (JSY Park, 2008:336)

In Jung & Norton's (2002) study on English language attitudes among primary-level Korean educators, one teacher succinctly captures the ideology of externalization. "Today, more children aspire to the Western culture. I am sometimes worried if we ignore our own culture too much" (Jung & Norton, 2002:264). This teacher positions the relationship between English and Korean as oppositional forces in a zero-sum game of identity. English language learning (which this teacher equates to Western values and orientation) happens at the expense of Korean culture. In other words, the ideology of externalization contributes to what Chan (2023) calls an alternating or conflicting identity style (where multilingual identities are separate, context-specific, and in tension) as opposed to a hybrid or harmonious identity style (where multilingual identities blend elements from each language or culture into a coherent whole).

Kathleen Lee (2014), a bilingual Korean American education scholar, illustrates this sense of identity in one exchange with Tanya, a Korean English teacher.

Excerpt 5.2. [Conversation between Lee and Tanya (LET) (Lee, 2014:137)]

I responded that movies with simple plots are fine, but historical dramas and characters speaking regional dialects are difficult for me to understand, to which Tanya exclaimed, "Wow, you're bilingual!" In response, I said, "So are you!" leading to Tanya laughing and shaking her head 'no' vigorously.

Lee receives Tanya's label of bilingual without challenge and seeks alignment by conferring the same label on her ("So are you!"). However, Tanya seems to reject the same label by "shaking her head "no" vigorously." This exchange suggests misalignment between Lee and Tanya's identities as English speakers. It also indicates an exchange between one speaker of conflicting identity and another speaker of more harmonious identity.

LETs and GETs both espoused ideologies of externalization in their interviews. Like Chapter 4, stances by LETs and GETs showed variety in terms of positioning and investment as some responses affirmed the ideology of externalization and others indicated resistance. Five key subthemes emerged as a result of thematic analysis. Both GETs and LETs discussed GETs as "authentic" or "real" communicative resources with language skills and cultural positionalities inaccessible to LETs. LETs, on the other hand, often framed the English language in terms of an external "tool" and an external culture apart from their own identities. Finally, this chapter will argue that GETs invoke the ideology of externalization when discussing their perceived marginalization within Korean schools and society. See Figure 10 for a diagram of these 5 core subthemes.
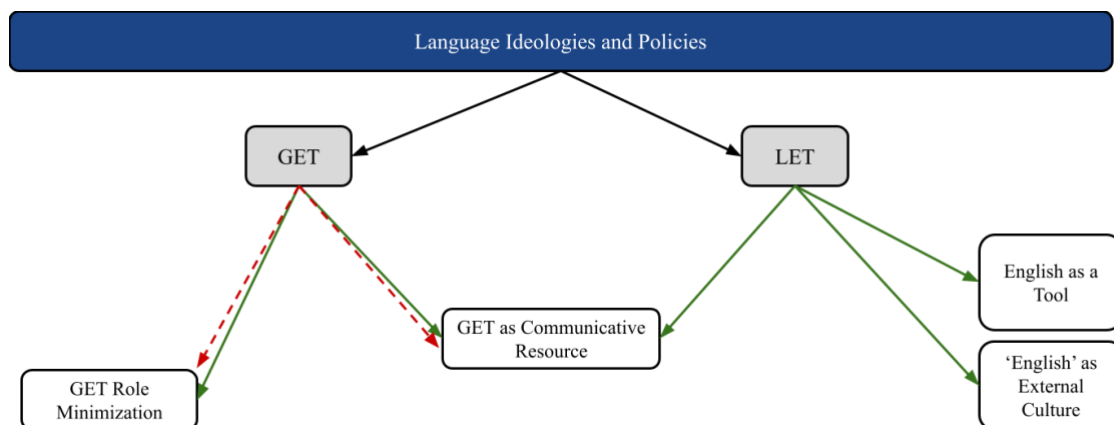
Figure 10. Diagram of key subthemes in LETs' and GETs' negotiation of the ideology of externalization. Solid green lines indicate a plurality of participants affirming the ideology, while red, dashed lines indicate participants resisting the ideology in their stancetaking.

5.3 GETs as (the only) Communicative Resource

Both LETs and GETs commented on GETs' role in school as a source of "authentic" communication, almost invariably pointing to a division of labor between the speaking-teacher GET and the reading-teacher LET [30]. As Yeonghyeon says, "In Korea…the role of the native English teacher is for like just conversation class or listening class."

One reason for this division seems to be LETs' labeling of GETs as "authentic" or "real" English users, as Anne explains.

Excerpt 5.3. [Anne, LET]

[The GET] make students get familiar with native speaker and low their anxiety when they encounter native speaker. Like that. So, they can teach authentic language or culture things. Because we don't know deeply about the culture.

Anne implies Korean students' inexperience in cross-cultural interactions with foreign English speakers ("make students get familiar with native speaker") as well as

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[30] This division of language skills between LETs and GETs is very common in LET-GET co-teaching situations (HY Park, 2010; Keaney, 2016; Ahn & Lew, 2017).

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anxiety when interacting with foreign English speakers ("low their anxiety when they encounter native speaker"). Crucially, she also positions GETs to "teach authentic language and culture things" because LETs "do not know deeply about the culture." Taken together, Anne's statements not only reify the ideology of global English use in an imagined community (see Section 4.4), but also delegates the prerogative of authentic linguistic and cultural knowledge to GETs, drawing from an ideology of essentialism linking ethnicity and language use (Blommaert, 1996; Cho, 2017; Catedral & Karimzad, 2018). This sentiment is mirrored by Brandon, who thinks that "sometimes students and Korean English teachers see native English teachers as kind of conversation partners" while he would much prefer GETs to function as "activity leaders."

Arizwel echoes similar sentiments when describing the role of GETs in Korean public schools. "If [students] can learn real literature, like the subject, or real writing and reading or culture, and it will be really great." Like Anne, Arizwel sets GETs apart as arbiters and progenitors of "real literature" and "real writing, reading, and culture." Implicit in this stance is that authentic[31] teaching of English literature or writing cannot come from LETs. Moreover, the converse suggests that LETs are not eligible to claim "real writing or reading" despite teaching jargon-filled authentic texts like journal articles on a regular basis (see Section 4.6). This makes "real" or "authentic" culture more elusive than simply the source of a text.

Woongbear builds on Anne and Arizwel's comments by drawing identity-based links between ethnicity and language use.

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[31] See Bucholtz (2003) for a sociolinguistic discussion of the complexities of *authenticity*.

Excerpt 5.4. [Woongbear, LET]

Because- Because the students do not talk to Korean English teacher, because he is- he or she is Korean. They always tried to use the Korean. However, when they- when they talk to native speakers, they don't try to talk to them using Korean, because they are not Korean, so I think- Native speakers- native teachers uh- can lead students to talk to English very well.

Woongbear notes partitions of social space (Silverstein, 2003) where Korean is a language used between Korean students and Korean teachers, and English between Korean students and non-Korean teachers. His framing is one of linguistic identity rather than competence ("They don't try to talk to them using Korean because they are not Korean"). His statements act as a form of erasure (Irvine & Gal, 2000) that renders invisible not only GETs who use the Korean language during their school-work days, but also LETs whose English skills may be a valuable communicative resource for Korean learners of English (Lee, 2014).

Jane corroborates Woongbear's comments, saying she has "been told by- by numerous co-teachers, that [her] class is the only time the students can actually speak English." She contrasts this with a previous statement that students "don't have time to speak English in their normal- in their Korean English teachers' classes." Jane casts LET-led lessons as "normal" before correcting herself to be more specific. This suggests an ideology of externalization grafted onto GET-led lessons that are marked, different, and separate from the cultural norms of students' other courses. (See Section 5.6 for more discussion of the othering of GETs and their lessons.)

While many LET participants discussed how GETs serve as an "authentic" English communicative resource, many GETs did not report strong depth of communication with their students. Isadora provides an emblematic example.

[Excerpt 5.5. Isadora, GET]

Sadly, I just felt like maybe, partly because the school was so big and I didn't get to see them enough. But I do feel like the level of English was low enough to the point that I did not get to establish a very real relationship with any of those students. In [the city] specifically. My relationship with those kids was very surface. We had fun together. We played games together. They were happy when they saw me. They always said 'Hi' to me in the hallways. But I could never have a real conversation with any of them.

Isadora invokes several subthemes brought up by many GETs including a paucity of teaching time per student ("I didn't get to see them enough") and a lack of connection due to language barriers with lower-level learners ("I could never have a real conversation with any of them"). This was a common gripe of GETs who worked "in [the city] specifically" where teaching to the middle (Linder & Dooley, 2003) and an assembly-line of scripted superficial teacher-student interactions becomes a survival strategy.

In addition, while most LETs tabbed the GET as a source of authentic communication, GETs' reports of students' uptake of that "authentic" communication were mixed. For example, Steve described the joy he felt when he used an informal expression in class like "holy cow" and later overheard students shouting "holy cow" in unison while chatting in the hallway outside class. Isadora, on the other hand, expressed frustration when she consistently corrected students' use of "nice to meet you[32]" with "nice to see you." In many English varieties, "nice to meet you" is a phrase speakers use during a first encounter, but "nice to see you" is a greeting used in subsequent encounters[33]. However, Isadora's

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[32] This inter-varietal misunderstanding likely comes from influence of the Korean verb *mannada* ("to meet") on varieties of Korean English due to the extended semantic scope of *mannada* vs. "meet" and "see" in many varieties of U.S. English. In Korean, *mannada* can apply to both a first encounter and any subsequent encounter.

[33] Though Cramer (personal correspondence) also points out that the use of "meet" can be appropriate in some Southern varieties of American English where "Did you meet X on the road?" can imply a familiar interactant (though it may be more common in past tense references). With that being said, regional U.S.

students often repeated the phrase "nice to meet you" during subsequent encounters despite her frequent error correction. In other words, as typecast "authentic language teachers," GETs often struggle to implement ESL methods in an EFL[34] context like Korea (CH Lee, 2021) and sometimes resort to prescriptive notions of "correct" English use due to societally imposed pressures of linguistic and cultural ambassadorhood. Miranda says as much in her interview.

> **[Excerpt 5.6. Miranda, LET]**
>
> *Miranda: And we are not living in the ESL situation.*
>
> *Ian: Oh yeah?*
>
> *Miranda: We are living in EFL situation, I think. So we don't need to speak English in everyday life.*

Miranda demonstrates strong metalinguistic awareness of the role of English in Korean society. English is a language that is not spoken "in everyday life." This makes GETs' primary teaching task nearly Sisyphean, trying to teach speaking skills to an indifferent Korean audience.

Andile takes a more positive stance toward GET-student interaction, though still from an externalistic perspective.

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varieties of English tend to be erased in favor of "mainstream U.S. English" in most EFL textbooks (Sullivan et al., 2023).

[34] ESL (English as a Second Language) classrooms often entail contexts where English is a dominant language in public life (e.g., the United States). EFL (English as a Foreign Language) classrooms often entail contexts where English 'has no recognized status or function' (Nayar, 1997). While I would argue that Korea is an EFL context, I would not argue that English lacks a recognized status or function in Korea (see Chapter 4).

Excerpt 5.7. [Andile, GET]

I hear some other native English teachers say that we're there for comic relief, or we're there to be actors and so on. And when you start talking that way, then you're missing the point you know? We're not there as actors we're there to...We're there to bridge a gap that's huge in a way, you know? We're there to bring cultures together. We're there to- to bring in diversity, you know? Like you know Korea is - especially where we were - is very Korea... homogenous, you know?

Andile assumed a much more optimistic stance throughout most of his interview, and this is no exception. He opens up by building a voicing contrast (Agha, 2005) between himself and the opinion of "some other native English teachers" that "say [GETs are] there for comic relief." However, his positive affective stance of "bringing cultures together" and "bridging a gap" presupposes envisioning Korea as a homogenous country where externalized foreign instructors "bring in diversity," especially in rural areas (i.e., "where we were"). His comments echo excerpts from Kim (2020) and Cho (2016) whose participants both described English as a metaphorical bridge. However, Kim and Cho's participant bridges entailed communication beyond Korea. Andile orients the bridge toward bringing diversity to Korea, a country reckoning with its own multiculturality (Kim, 2019). In other words, Woongbear's comments serve to erase language users who do not adhere to a strict ethnicity-language correspondence while Andile correspondingly erases the multiculturality already present in Korean society, especially in rural areas (see Bevan's comments about rural multiculturalism in Excerpt 4.23).

5.4 English as a Tool

Many LETs discussed English as an external object through the metaphor of tools. Fishman (1977) discussed the purportedly neutral, tool-like image of English in Expanding Circle countries (as cited in Phillipson, 1992:10). While he later walked back assertions of English neutrality (Fishman, 1987), this section considers the ideological implications of

English as a tool, or an external object one manipulates to achieve a goal but remains independent and differentiated from one's sense of self[35].

Fishman's theorization of English as a tool appears throughout the literature on English language ideology and policy in Korea. Sung (2007) discusses how English became a "survival tool" due to the hegemony of the U.S. Military Government in Korea (see Section 2.4). The legacy of U.S.-Korean relations contributed to English developing into a "tool" for enhancing South Korea's competitiveness in the global market and rebuilding the economy (JH Jeon, 2009; Chang, 2011). Kim (2020:114) discusses how her male participants used English test scores as a "tool" to outperform *haewaepa*[36] (English: Koreans who learn English by living abroad) job seekers who were thought to have better English skills while one male participant in Cho & Kinginger (2022:9) "saw [English] as a tool, focusing only on obtaining a passing score and moving on." From a more critical perspective, recent scholarship describes English as a "tool" to reproduce inequalities in class and status within Korean society. (Shin & Lee, 2019; LJ Choi, 2021). Finally, relating to ideologies of English for global communication and imagined communities of English use, Kim (2020) discusses how her female participants often described "English as a tool for freedom" (Kim, 2020: iv).

A plurality of LETs in this study explicitly describe English using the word "tool" or "instrument." For example, employing the term "tool", Yeonghyeon describes the study habits of Korean learners of English.

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[35] See De Preeter & Tsakiris (2009) for a more in-depth discussion on the philosophy of body-extension and body-incorporational theories of tool use.
[36] See Cho (2016) for a more in-depth discussion on the divide between *haehwaepa* and *guknaepa* (English: Korean English speakers who did not learn English abroad).

Excerpt 5.8. [Yeonghyeon, GET]

In Korean maybe I think most of the students or most of the kids just memorize all the vocabulary not understanding the exact tools or situation that they have to cer- Pronounce certain sounds. Yeah, they're just memorize like 'School sounds school because it sounds school.' Like that. Yeah.

Yeonghyeon's generalization of "most of the students" entails an ideological stance toward English as a cultural object. She describes how many students simply memorize vocabulary or sound patterns ("school sounds school because it sounds school") without consideration of language use in social contexts ("the kids just memorize all of the vocabulary not understanding the exact tools or situations that they have to pronounce certain sounds[37]"). Rote memorization serves as a predominant method of English study because rather than a medium of communication, English is "viewed by Koreans as highly effective tools in gaining upward social mobility" (Ahn, 2013:3). Hyunsoo voices Koreans' attitudes toward English in this way as well, saying "specifically parents, even though they say they want their kids to- to do well in English…doesn't necessarily mean that they want them to be fluent and proficient in English, they want them to perform well on the *suneung* test." Jin-D echoes a similar sentiment, saying that students "are learning English as a tool- As a tool for getting answers, memorizing words." Through this tool metaphor, Korean students can reap the socially conferred benefits of English without risking the integration of English into their identities.

Sean further reinforces this idea of English as a tool through repetition while responding to the question of what he enjoys most about being an English teacher.

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[37] To be fair, for some language patterns like high frequency words or common irregular grammatical constructions, such rote memorization is not only encouraged, but recommended.

Excerpt 5.9. [Sean, LET]

How do I say- give my students opportunity to use the English itself as a tool to explore or research a certain topics. English as a tool. And secondly... um- how do I say- yeah these days in Korea, I think you know a lot about this. Korean society, there are a lot of English words being used or obviously how to say- loanwords? L-O-A-N. Loanwords. There are so many loan words and... In this situation... The need of learning English, uh- is like required for many students and I could- I can teach- teach my students. How to use English as a necessary tool.

Sean begins by appealing to the value of English in acquiring knowledge, "exploring" and "researching certain topics" (see Excerpt 4.9; Excerpt 4.10; Excerpt 4.11. After that, he detours to discuss how English is an important decoder tool for the massive influx of English loanwords into the Korean language[38] (Lee, 1996) ("There are so many loan words…The need of learning English is required for many students"). He then finishes by repeating this tool-like operationalization of English ("how to use English as a necessary tool"). Sean's explanation illustrates the overlapping and porous boundaries between Park's ideologies. In this case, he invokes themes related to necessitation, while also maintaining externalization by keeping English at arm's length as a tool. He identifies English as essential to understanding the rapidly changing Korean language, but not as a language to integrate with the Korean identity.

Arizwel, on the other hand, describes English as a tool for communication, saying she "thinks English is kind of tool that we can use in communicating with others, not reading just text or studying." Therefore, a bifurcation of instrumental and integrative motivation (Gardner & MacIntyre, 1991) does not quite capture the ideology of English as a tool. Rather, even as a medium of communication, English still appears as a "tool"

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[38] See Rüdiger (2018) for a discussion on Koreans' ambivalent attitudes toward importation of English loan words.

external to LETs sense of self. Broadly speaking, instrumental motivation maps onto external motivation, or the desire to learn a language for economic or social benefits while integrative motivation stems from a learner's goal to learn a language out of sincere interest in culture or to "integrate" the language within one's sense of self (Cho, 2017). One pre-service elementary teacher in CH Lee (2021) echoes a similar stance of instrumental motivation.

> ***Excerpt 5.10. [Participant in Lee, 2020:50]***
>
> *Because a language is a tool to communicate, English listening is the most important competency. It is meaningless to learn English if you cannot say [speak] a word even after learning English for more than 10 years.*

Lee's participant operationalizes English as a tool while also elevating the importance of speaking skills, labeling "more than 10 years" of English study as "meaningless" if one "cannot speak even a word." In this way, notions of English as a "tool for test taking" and a "language for communication" is complicated by the notion of "tool to communicate." It also feeds into the ideology of self-deprecation where both LETs and GETs tended to valorize speaking and listening over reading and writing when evaluating English user competency (see Section 6.3; Section 6.4).

To further complicate LETs' notions of English as a tool, Jiaenius discusses the inverse of Arizwel's comments by appealing to the value of English for reading while indexing a more integrative motivation.

Excerpt 5.11.[Jiaenius, LET]

Jiaenius: I think English- It's- English is very effective as an instrument. As a tool?

Ian: A tool.

Jiaenius: Mm. Instrument.

Ian: I see. It's an effective instrument. As it- what is it- As an instrument or a tool, what is it useful for?

Jiaenius: For- for- Reading texts…Within literary, literature…I think it makes my life rich.

Ian: Rich?

Jiaenius: Yes, I can make friends, experience [unk] things.

Jiaenius begins with a similar comparison to English as a "tool" and "instrument." However, when nudged to further elaborate on her thinking, she speaks more toward intrinsic, integrative motivations, using English to "make friends, experience things" and "make [her] life rich" as opposed to the more extrinsic, instrumental motivations discussed by other LETs above (e.g., English as a "tool for getting answers"). Sehyeon shares similar integrated, humanistic orientations toward English when she says that "real education should be focused on…means…to like a better- to be a better human being." Cho (2016: x) also alludes to this complex relationship between tool-like English and motivation, describing English as "an instrument to enhance individual competitiveness, and as adding value to personal aesthetics." Such an appeal to both "individual competitiveness" and "value to personal aesthetics" echo Sean's description of English "as a necessary tool" for acquiring knowledge and Jiaenius' point that English can "make her life rich."

5.5 "English" as External Culture

This section discusses LETs and GETs invocations of "English" as an external (and thereby distinctly non-Korean) culture. I place "English" in quotes in this case because applied linguists struggle to reckon with English's colonial legacy by debating post-colonial terminology for the use of English throughout the world. Much terminology aims to relinquish British and U.S. oligopoly of geographic and cultural ownership of the English language. Terms like *global English*, pluralized *World Englishes*, and even lower-case *world englishes* emblemize the semantic and ideological handwringing of applied linguists over how to define the use of English in a post-colonial world (see Rajagopalan, 2012).

In this thesis, LETs and GETs tie English language to an external, homogenous culture that forms a binary with Korean language and culture. For example, Jin-D highlights his goal of learning more "English culture" as a prerequisite for teaching culture-based lessons in his English classroom.

> ***Excerpt 5.12. [Jin-D, LET]***
>
> *Uh- I want to know the English culture. Me- I want to first- Cause to teach a student English culture, I need to know English culture, first as an English teacher. So, I want to have more opportunity to learn English culture. Yeah, even though we are very far from each other.*

Jin-D begins by setting a goal of learning more about "English culture." While I did not explicitly ask, it never seemed apparent that Jin-D was speaking specifically about the culture of people living in England, but instead of a homogenous English-speaking culture, likely as a proxy for Western, English-speaking culture. He then sets learning English culture as a prerequisite for being able to bring cultural knowledge into the classroom ("to teach a student English culture, I need to know English culture") while also

acknowledging our physical distance as an act of alignment ("even though we are very far from each other.")

A participant in Root (2012:210) makes a comment that initially stands against Jin-D's ideas, but also reinforces a separateness of English culture.

Excerpt 5.13. [Korean Student (SS 12) in Root (2012:210)]

I would have to make an embarrassing confession as a student majoring in English. That is, I have not taken a single class instructed by a foreigner…the basic reason seems that I have a great fear about taking a foreign instructor's class (SS 12).

Root argues that SS 12's comments indicate an opposition to English language ideologies through acts of avoidance (though Root also links this avoidance to the concept of "foreigner fright" (Root, 2012:195) which does not suggest agency.) However, SS 12's statement also presupposes the legitimacy of courses taught by L1-speaking English teacher. Their avoidance of such courses and expressed embarrassment also undermines their perceived self-credibility as an English major and ultimately devalues courses taught by non-L1 English instructors ("I would have to make an embarrassing confession.")

Miranda (LET) expresses similar anxiety about feeling like a legitimate teacher of English by virtue of not living abroad.[39]

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[39] The ideological divide between Koreans who learned English by studying abroad (Korean: *haewaepa*) and Koreans who exclusively learned English living in Korea (Korean: *guknaepa*) receives in-depth discussion in Cho (2016).

Excerpt 5.14. [Miranda, LET]

Miranda: I think that I cannot be uh- expert.

Ian: Really?

Miranda: Uh- because I'm living in- I'm not living in the English country. And then I don't use English at all, except for the class.

Ian: Oh, yeah? Does that ever come up in class? Like you feel like you're not the expert?

Miranda: Yeah, yes. And then the uh- the use of- the use of articles or prepositions or phrasal verb or prepositional verb. I- I cannot explain things to my students. Because they uh- to figure out- them I think it needs some intuition.

Miranda withholds from herself the potential title of "expert" because she has never "lived in the English country" and does not "use English at all" outside of her lessons. However, she proceeds to list complex grammatical jargon like "articles or prepositions or phrasal verb or prepositional verb" before denying that she can explain them to her students. Like SS 12 above (see Excerpt 5.13), Miranda's comments belie an ideology of native speakerism (Holliday, 2006) which (falsely) holds up native speakers as ideal teachers of their language. Miranda's knowledge of grammatical terminology that is lost on most L1 English speakers is erased in favor of L1 "intuition." In fact, many scholars argue that LETs who learned English as a second language have distinct advantages in language teaching due to previous experiences as EFL learners and greater explicit knowledge of language structures and patterns (e.g., Matsuda & Matsuda, 2001; Mahboob, 2003; Moussu & Llurda, 2008).

However, it is also important to consider the instrumental motivations many LETs have when it comes to learning "English culture." The texts that appear on important English exams in Korea like the CSAT or TOEIC often contain culturally specific

knowledge and bias that students require to answer questions correctly (Choi, 1995). This

belief is widespread enough to become a source of English-related *yumeo* (English: humor)

(Park, 2004), as shown in Figure 11. This sample exam question represents the TOKIC

(Test of Korean for International Communication), a satirical standardized test for learners

of the global Korean language.

Part one consists of short conversations, and you must listen to the
conversation and choose the right answer. [...]
Man: What's going on today? Why are you so excited [*heungbun*,
            JSP]?
Woman: Well, I'm visiting [*myeonhoe*, JSP] my boy friend Cheolsu
            today.
Man: Oh yeah? Where is he?
Woman: He just came out of training center and is now in
            Cheolweon. It's the *Baekgol* [=White Bone, JSP] Unit, and
            I'm worried.

Q: Which of the following is correct about Cheolsu?
1. Cheolsu has been selling drugs and is now in prison.
2. Cheolsu's bones are white.
3. Cheolsu made the woman excited.
4. It has been about six weeks since Cheolsu joined the military.

A: 4.

Figure 11. Online post translated in Park (2004:124).

The satirical online post translated in Park (2004:124) also discusses the importance

of Korean as a world language and the need for English speakers to learn "authentic"

Korean in lieu of colloquial Engl-rean (English + Korean) to get a good score on the

TOKIC and enter a prestigious university or secure a high-paying job. Figure 11 shows a

sample multiple-choice question from the TOKIC that requires very specific cultural

knowledge to answer correctly[40]. This post satirizes the culturally specific knowledge required by Koreans who sit for English proficiency tests. Therefore, it is fair to acknowledge that LETs' goals of learning "English culture" entails not only ideologies of externalization, but also pragmatic needs for exam preparation. This reifies what Litzenberg (2021) calls the *coloniality* of English, or the "pervasive structural phenomenon" of the linguistic and epistemic hegemony of the Global North over the Global South (Kerr and Andreotti 2018:56)

From GETs' perspective, many participants noted that their lessons interested students due to exotic novelty, but often did not sustain interest when communication became the focus.

Excerpt 5.15. [Katie, GET]

The- there is yeah- the difference is they like- uh- English is attached to the Western culture. So [students are] excited to come into the English classroom for what the English teacher's going to be putting on today. What videos are attached to the subject matter? Or what's what songs are attached to the subject matter? ...But if they have to practice any phrases or learn any grammar or learn any language that they actually need to take- put effort into, the enthusiasm fades.

Prior to this explanation, Katie articulated a distinction between students' interest in English exposure and interest in English learning. When asked to elaborate on the difference, she talks about how students often entered her class excited to engage with a culture unlike their own ("English is attached to the Western culture"). However, once

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[40] The answer to the question in Figure 11 is #4. Korean learners must remember that South Korean men around the age of 20 are required to join the military. Learners who picked #1 read the word "visit" and immediately imagined a "prison visit." This is an Engl-rean way of approaching the question. Learners who picked #2 likely read the word *Baekgol* and didn't realize it was an idiomatic expression. Learners who picked #3 don't understand that the Korean word that translates to "excited" in English (*heungbun*) has a sexual connotaton, and no 'real' Korean user would choose this as the correct answer (paraphrased from translated parodic post in Park, 2004: 125).

lessons moved beyond consumption of curated videos or music and into communicative application, Katie reports students losing interest ("the enthusiasm fades"). In other words, for (about 90%[41]) of Katie's students, English serves as an external, exotic cultural object of interest, but not as a language for communication. English still serves as a language of study, however, due to the symbolic benefits and social pressures of the promises of English (Park, 2011) as a medium of "pure potential" (Park, 2016:454) among ideal neoliberal subjects (Park, 2022). This dichotomy between English as a language to use and English as a language to study permeated both LETs' and GETs' ideological positions.

5.6 GET Role Minimization

Many scholars have discussed the complex position of linguistic privilege and political marginalization experienced by GETs in Korea (MH Jeon, 2009; Ahn & Lew, 2017; Howard, 2019; Choi, 2022). Miyazato (2009) describes GETs as both linguistically powerful and politically weak. This section aims to connect this literature to the ideology of externalization, using GET responses to highlight how GETs are also harmed by the imperialistic implications of the externalization ideology.

Many applied linguists argue that GETs who receive teaching opportunities abroad classrooms as unqualified teachers (Clayton, 1990; Holliday, 2006; JR Kim, 2011; Lee, 2014). And while it is important to acknowledge the privilege inherent in securing a job in the first place (Gerald, 2020), GETs' experiences suggest that students also discount their legitimacy as teachers. Isadora provides a lengthy, yet instructive contrast between students' behavior in her class and their LET-led classes.

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[41] See Excerpt 4.15

Excerpt 5.16. [Isadora, GET]

[Students] tended to disrespect my class a lot. They just saw it as kind of like an extra recess almost. Um- come in, misbehave, be silly with their friends, ignore me when I'm talking. I tell them to stop. They say 'Oh okay, okay, okay, and then they don't stop…And then I would walk past their classrooms when they're in a regular class- science or math or English with the Korean teacher, and they're so well behaved. They're- they're studious, they're listening, they're quiet, they're not disruptive…With me, there was no consequences, so that was very frustrating and made me feel very disrespected.

Isadora begins by describing behavior in her class that she labels as disrespectful including "misbehaving", "being silly with their friends", and "ignoring her when she is talking." She then contrasts this behavior with the behavior of students in their science, math, or LET-led English courses where students are "so well behaved", "studious", "listening", and "quiet." However, ideologies of externalization creep into the comment that students "saw [her class] as kind of like an extra recess." In other words, many students consider GET-led classes as a vacation to a non-Korean destination where foreign teachers do not demand status quo hierarchical recognition between student and teacher. On top of that, Isadora positions her class as marginalized by labeling students' math, science, and LET-let English classes as unmarked and "regular" in opposition to her more marked, GET-led course.

However, GET Haley also admits that her expectations of working with Korean students were "based off stereotypes…that Korean kids were more disciplined…and more well behaved and more respectful because of the culture." This likely deepened her culture shock when she noticed her students were "wild…getting out of their seats…drawing on the board, throwing things, [and] fighting." To put it another way, GETs' experiences of feeling disrespected in the Korean classroom may also connect to a violation of orientalist stereotypes of Asians as docile, submissive students (Prashad, 2000). However, Haley also

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ascribes institutional responsibility, noting she was "not taught to really be able to manage" her classroom. This is one facet of a common outcry of poor orientation and preparation programs for GETs in Korea (Ahn & Lew, 2017; Ahn, 2018).

The GET's classroom constructs a liminal space apart from Korean social and educational norms. Such rapid shifting between cultural contexts can foment conflict between co-teaching LETs and GETs. Two participants in Heo (2016), Kevin (GET) and Mary (LET), describe a critical incident (Flanagan, 1954). Mary was upset at Kevin after scolding a student in a way Mary viewed as inappropriate, and they erupted in argument after class ended. Mary reported that she "was really angry at James' act" because she had previously warned James "to discipline students not individually, but as an entire class" (Heo, 2016:168).

James went on to continue his strict discipline style and James and Mary's relationship broke down. In a later reflection, James explains how past experiences informed his strict discipline style.

Excerpt 5.17. [James, Participant in Heo, 2016:169]

I felt some students showed disrespect to me (.) I thought that 'if I am not strict (.) kids will take advantage of me' (.) as I would like to be respected as a teacher (.) like other Korean teachers (.) I tried to manage and control a class in stricter ways.

Most telling in James' utterance is that he "would like to be respected as a teacher," specifically "like other Korean teachers." His explanation belies presuppositions that GETs must earn respect as teachers and that Korean teachers are afforded respect by default. Moreover, he goes on to say that he did not "understand why Mary did not intervene in discipline in that [critical incident]." This also suggests that he and Mary either have

mismatched perceptions about what constitutes appropriate student behavior, or they have

mismatched perceptions about what constitutes appropriate behavior in GET-led lessons.

While not a Korean example, Myazato (2009) shares a story of one Japanese

Teacher of English (JTE) who observes the classroom dynamics of a foreign Assistant

English Teacher (AET) and hints at how LETs and students view discipline in GET-led

classes.

Excerpt 5.18. [JTE in Myazato (2009)]

The boy cut the class and walked around outside, because I assume AET2 (Assistant English Teacher) doesn't scold students. AETs are only guests for students, because they never give them grades. Students just regard AETs as someone that speaks "live" English.

The JTE seems to attribute two factors to the male student skipping class without

cause: AETs do not scold students and students view AETs as guests who "never give them

grades." The lack of institutional power to assign meaningful grades was a common lament

of GETs in this study as well. For example, Hyunsoo said, "[GETs] don't have any

authority over students, as far as [they] don't have any control over their grades" and Katie,

who said "my class was not graded at all…the co-teachers used to want me to make the

class fun" (see also Isadora in Excerpt 5.16)

The JTE's use of the word "assume" further indicates either a negative affective

stance toward AET2's dereliction of duty to scold students, or a positive stance that AET2

meets their expectations of GETs not disciplining students. Mary's negatively valanced

comments about James' strict discipline style before Excerpt 5.17 suggests the latter.

The JTE also invokes the ideology of tools (see Section 5.4) by saying "students

just regard AETs as someone that speaks "'live' English." However, in this case they

describe the AET themselves as a tool for "speaking live English." So, while LETs in

Section 5.4 describe the English language as a "tool" or "instrument", the ideology of externalization also inscribes otherness onto the bodies of GETs as instruments of conversation (see Section 5.3), as "human tape-recorders" (Tajino & Tajino, 2000), or as "performing monkeys" of edutainment (MH Jeon, 2009). As Patricia comments, "I've heard other teachers say that they've been used strictly for modeling pronunciation and that's it."

However, Hyunsoo also describes a humanizing flipside to students viewing him as an outsider.

Excerpt 5.19. [Hyunsoo, GET]

So, when the Korean teachers in the classroom are present students feel more on edge. They don't want to make a mistake, or they want to watch what they say. Or they feel like they can't be themselves.

Hyunsoo's introduces a triad of expectations and communication dynamics between LETs, GETs, and students where the LET's classroom presence keeps students shackled to Korean cultural norms of hierarchical address ("students feel more on edge"), accuracy-orientation to language use (Ortega, 2009) ("they don't want to make a mistake"), and appropriate topics of discussion ("they want to watch what they say"). All these factors culminate in Hyunsoo perceiving the LET's presence as inhibitory to the authentic communication that LETs and GETs both hold up as GETs' primary job duty ("they feel like they can't be themselves.") To put it another way, Hyunsoo's position as a "welcomed outsider" (SH Kim, 2012) provides students with a space where cultural norms are reset, thereby creating space for students to negotiate topics often deemed unbroachable in greater Korean society. Hyunsoo says as much when speaking warmly about a co-teacher

who allowed him to lead his lessons alone[42] with the goal of fostering a "fully immersive experience" and allowing students to "become more authentic and more real" by negotiating meaning without the crutch of the "translator LET" (JY Lee, 2021), a tool-like role lamented by many LET co-teachers (Lee & Yin, 2021).

GETs have polarizing positions on their role as educational entertainers (edutainers), or what Jeon (2009) calls "dancing monkeys." Andile rejected the notion that entertainment was the sole function of a GET (see Excerpt 5.7) and endorsed the necessity of GETs to "bring in diversity" and "bridge cultural differences." Isadora mentioned receiving satisfaction from students during her entertainment-driven lessons, but also lamented a shallowness of communication (see Excerpt 5.5).

Hyunsoo shared a critical take common among experienced GETs regarding their typecast roles as English entertainers.

Excerpt 5.20. [Hyunsoo, GET]

[Korea is] flying us here to teach [their] students but we're being underutilized and putting to these roles of you know edutainer or clown, you know? Give us some autonomy and some authority over, you know, grades, and I think at that point English will be seen as more along the same lines as the other subjects.

Hyunsoo starts by appealing to a controversial topic in Korean educational discourse – the cost of GETs. While Jeon & Lee (2017) finds that many secondary-level teachers perceive the placing of GETs as cost-effective relative to the exorbitant sums spent on shadow education by middle-class households (Kim, 2016), Jeon (2009:175) argues that

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[42] While permitting GETs to lead lessons alone is a common practice in Korean secondary schools, it is also illegal due to the unlicensed status of GETs as teachers in Korea. This leads to an additional dimension of externalization and division as GET visas often indicate their work status as "instructors" (Korean: *gangsa*) in opposition to LETs' status as "teachers" (Korean: *gyosa*).

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"the entertainment value" of native English teachers alone does not adequately justify the significant costs of running the EPIK program." In other words, contrary to common derisive views of GETs as lazy, unmotivated "backpacker teachers" (Keaney, 2016), many GETs aspire to transcend the role of edutainer into a more integrated contributor to their students' education. Nancy also makes note of this stereotype of the disinterested GET who embodies the "clown" or "edutainer" role outlined by Hyunsoo.

Excerpt 5.21. [Nancy, GET]

Among guest native teachers, you know, there's like some negative stereotypes like- You know, some people come abroad to teach because maybe they couldn't be qualified to do anything else at home or they weren't good at what they were doing so they like moved abroad to teach.

On the contrary, of the GETs in this study, four reported earning U.S. teaching credentials (Bevan, Isadora, Hyunsoo, and Nancy) while living abroad[43]. In addition, Brandon reported earning a master's degree and Jane reported earning a doctoral degree in a TESOL-related field while working in Korea[44]. To put it a different way, nearly half of all GETs in this study have pursued advanced education partly due to their experiences teaching in Korea,[45] and therefore this half of the GET sample tended to express the greatest displeasure in the ideology of GETs as entertainers. One such participant outside of this study, Larry (in Choi, 2022), describes the challenges that come from asserting a more academic and less clown-like role in the classroom.

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[43] This does not include Patricia and Amina who earned teaching licenses in their home countries before arriving in Korea.

[44] The participants in this study comprised a sample of convenience. Therefore, this distribution of GETs furthering their education after moving abroad does not necessarily generalize to the whole population of GETs in Korea or other countries. See Choi (2022) for a more in-depth discussion of GETs' reflections of privilege and positioning while pursuing further education post-Korea.

[45] As the author of this thesis, the author claims membership in this group as well.

Excerpt 5.22. [Larry, Participant in Choi (2022:8)]

Whenever I pushed the students to study, I was reprimanded with statements such as, 'Students say, Larry teacher is 'no fun'.' For me, this has always been a term of some contention, not only due to its inherent vagueness, but also its contradiction to my Korean colleagues' lessons and the students' parents' expectations.

Larry provides a voicing contrast of what seems to be his LET co-workers who themselves voice students in saying "Larry teacher is 'no fun.'" The interaction of these nested characterological types (e.g., the GET who wants to expand beyond their role of edutainer, the LET frustrated with GETs who will not stick to prescribed roles, the students who demand fun in the GETs' class) create a "source of contention" in Larry. He expresses feeling othered as an illegitimate instructor whose lessons are without value outside of the frame of "fun." Larry's interpretation of his colleagues' reprimands externalizes GETs as clowns ("its contradiction to my Korean colleagues' lessons and the students' parents' expectations") (see also Excerpt 5.16 for Isadora's comments comparing LET and GET-run classes). In this respect, Larry seeks to be held to comparable expectations to his LET counterparts which presupposes LETs' appraisal of his lessons as "other."

Protesting underwhelming expectations was a common thread of discussion among GETs. Brandon exemplifies this frustration through a vignette where he observed a fellow GET's lesson in an official capacity.

Excerpt 5.23. [Brandon, GET]

The province asked me to go do an observation of a new EPIK teacher. And I watched her class…And she did 45 minutes straight of drilling...And it was frustrating to see too because the students were- the students were trying to make it more communicative like they- they'd crack jokes in English about something on her PPT slide or something, and none of it would go anywhere…I was very critical of her lesson. And then the other- like the Korean person from the education office who was like also doing observation was …just like 'That was wonderful' and 'You're so responsible,' and 'You made them focus on the textbook so much.' 'You did a great job.' And so…I very lightly said a few of what- a few of the points I wanted to say. Um- And then after [the GET] was like, 'Was she- was that really good?' and [the education official is] like, 'Oh yes, like compared to some of the others I've seen, that was great.'

Although this example is lengthy, it is instructive and summative of many of the arguments made in this chapter. Brandon starts by positioning himself against the novice GET's lesson of "45 minutes of straight drilling" by calling it "frustrating" and being "very critical of her lesson." His oppositional stance rests in his own beliefs in communicative language teaching where learning should not involve rote drills, but ongoing negotiations of meaning. He notes this in the form of missed opportunities in the observed lesson where "the students were trying to make it more communicative…and none of it would go anywhere." As a dedicated GET with 10 years of experience and a master's degree, he views teacher-facilitated student-to-student interaction patterns divorced from pure edutainment as a path to GET legitimacy. By comparison, the Korean education official describes the observed lesson as "wonderful" and "focused on the textbook" while labeling the novice GET as "so responsible." Most tellingly, the education official bestows this label in contrast to "some of the other [lessons]" they have seen. This presupposes a norm of irresponsible GETs whose lessons are of little to no value unless they adhere to the scripts of the textbook.

Through Brandon's eyes, a double frustration emerges. First, the observed lesson fails to meet his expectations of a well-run GET lesson. Second, the lesson clearly exceeds the expectations of the Korean education official. In other words, the reported comments of the education official (i.e., being responsible and sticking to the textbook) reflect a positive affective stance when associated with a GET, but a bare minimum of employment for LETs who often expressed frustration over being shackled to textbooks (see Section 4.6). Such a contrast reflects how even positively valanced comments can devalue GETs as illegitimate, foreign others.

Many experienced GETs expressed discouragement over their perceived lack of belonging, echoing sentiments from previous studies on GETs in Korea (MH Jeon, 2009; Howard, 2019; Choi, 2022). Katie, who has since left Korea, commented that she would love to return "for the culture" but she would not return to "find job fulfillment," despite her later comment that "EPIK treats their teachers well." Hyunsoo, who has remained in Korea working in a teacher-training institute (Korean: *yeonsuwon*), says he would never return to working in a school. Others like Andile and Ben report positive experiences but have also since moved on to other opportunities (employment in South Africa and computer science graduate school in Korea, respectively). Brandon predicts a slow end to the EPIK program[46], describing it as something "tacked on" and "a distraction" from an English educational system with more systemic problems (See Section 4.6). Katie even quotes one of her co-teachers in saying "You know, [LETs] could do what [GETs] are doing. We don't actually need foreign teachers."

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[46] In fact, that slow decline has accelerated as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic, though recruiting continues to this day (HS Lee, 2022).

However, LETs like Yeonghyeon also propose how GETs can push back against the "GET as illegitimate instructor" stereotype through greater cultural awareness and integration with the curriculum.

Excerpt 5.24. [Yeonghyeon, LET]

I think it would be so ideal that [GETs] can- uh- they can teach some reading materials such as like the EBS book or some articles to the- to the students and they can communicate, like uh- their opinions about the article so- So just academic things or the main- or some some question type in Korean SAT, I think that kind of thing can be covered by Korean English teacher, but expressing their own opinion or talking about their experience with a native English teacher can be- it can be very- can be very interesting for me.

Yeonghyeon starts by suggesting that GETs select teaching materials that better integrate with the Korean English curriculum ("EBS book or some articles"). She then proposes that GETs take a more communicative approach to the same content ("the students…can communicate…their opinions about the article.") While she maintains the idea of a division of labor between LETs and GETs (earlier she said that "in Korea…the role of the native English teacher is for like just conversation class or listening class"), she proposes greater synergy in that separation. In other words, LETs can teach the "academic things" or "question types in [CSAT]" but GETs can encourage students to "express their own opinion or talking about their experience." While an ideology of externalization still emerges through this stance (see also Excerpt 5.4), it inches closer to greater inclusion by suggesting more integration of GET teaching into students' academic goals, and encouraging LETs and GETs to both teach to their strengths (Matsuda & Matsuda, 2001). For example, in line with Hyunsoo's observation of Korean students lowering their affective filters around GETs (see Excerpt 5.19), GETs can better play to their strengths as privileged outsiders to play a more valuable role in Korean students'

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education. It also serves to build more mutual respect between GETs and LETs (MH Kim, 2010).

While not proposed in the same prescriptive frame, Sean also suggests how GETs can better get along with their LET co-teachers.

Excerpt 5.25. [Sean, LET]

Please do whatever you want, but try to do your best. And then I will know what you're going whether you're planning to do and during from that point, I think we could coordinate how to teach or what to teach.

While Yeonghyeon proposes how GETs can better integrate their teaching content into the Korean English curriculum, Sean provides more open-ended advice: "do whatever you want but try to do your best." Again, this advice still affirms ideologies of externalization by presupposing GETs as lazy and unmotivated instructors who do not try their best. However, Sean also shared negative with previous GET co-teachers by saying "quite many English native speaker teachers, they have low motivations, or they didn't know really what to do, or how to teach." This re-contextualizes his advice as more optimistic than condescending. Through transparency, he considers how he can make his teaching more accommodating by saying "we could coordinate how to teach or what to teach" and opens the door to more symbiotic and productive collaborations.

5.7 Conclusion

This chapter explored key themes pertaining to JSY Park's (2004, 2008) ideology of externalization through the stancetaking of LET and GET participants. Many LETs describe the duties of GETs in terms of cultural resources and describe English as a "tool" external to their own sense of self. However, the potential uses of this "tool" are complex and cannot be simplified to English as a tool for "getting answers" or for upward social mobility. This tool metaphor also expands to embody GETs themselves when GETs tell

stories of feeling disrespected in class, feeling trivialized in their pedagogical and classroom management goals, and feeling marginalized in their school lives.

This chapter aims to integrate literatures on conceptions of English in Korean society with emerging literature on the complex positionalities of GETs as privileged outsiders. Moreover, LETs also provide advice for how GETs can better integrate their lessons with the larger curricular framework by drawing from similar content as LETs but drawing from their own communicative and cultural competences to engage students' critical thinking. In the next chapter, LETs and GETs share their insights on the third and final ideology from JSY Park's framework: self-deprecation.

CHAPTER 6. LETS, GETS, AND SELF-DEPRECATION

Excerpt 6.1. [Katie, GET]

I've heard…Koreans that are so good at English, speak to me in English, and still say they're not good at English.

6.1. Introduction

This chapter explores how LETs and GETs negotiate the ideology of self-deprecation, or Koreans as bad speakers of English (JSY Park, 2009). Both LETs and GETs invariably noted the salience of this ideology, more so than the other two ideologies. For example, when asked if she ever heard Koreans mention being "bad at English" despite studying for many years, GET Haley responded, "Yes, all the time," while LET Anne responded with "Yeah, I heard it a lot."

Like Lee (2018), this chapter will argue that what appears on the surface as appeals to modesty in a Confucian-inspired society is a complex ideological process materialized in cross-cultural interactions. And as Katie explains in Excerpt 6.1, Koreans' self-assessment of their English language skills do not often align with GETs' evaluations. This chapter will argue that GETs tend to explain this invariant denial of language skills in terms of Confucian-derived modesty while LETs tend to discuss self-deprecation set against standards of native-like pronunciation and fluency. Together, however, LETs and GETs both discussed self-deprecation in terms of arbitrary benchmarks of "good" or "bad" English abilities with LETs tending to focus on the erasure of Koreans' reading skills amidst the valorization of speaking skills while GETs often noted Koreans' perfectionistic tendencies biasing their self-reported linguistic competence.

Section 6.2 will define the ideology of self-deprecation in more detail while Sections 6.3, 6.4, and 6.5 will discuss three key subthemes between LETs and GETs' negotiations of this ideology.

6.2. The Ideology of Self-Deprecation

JSY Park (2008:339) defines self-deprecation, as a belief that Koreans lack communicative competence in English despite ardent English language study. This belief is ideologically driven and not necessarily an honest appraisal of Koreans' language skills. Rather, self-deprecation often functions in tandem with ideologies of externalization and Korean monolingualism to erase English influence in the Korean linguistic landscape (Kim, 2022a), the Korean lexicon (Excerpt 5.9), or service-sector interactions (Kim, 2022b). Park (2004: 255) further defines self-deprecation as an act of "disclaiming English," a double-entendre entailing Koreans "give up and renounce" as well as "reject and deny" language competence during English interactions. To put it another way, English and Korean as linguistic repertoires form a zero-sum game where claiming competence in one code (English) disavows the other (Korean) and vice versa. A mirror image of this ideology also crosses oceans as one participant in Cheng's (2021:5) study of Korean American dialect and identity commented that "other Korean people, they're gonna look down on you if you look Korean but can't speak it."

Lee (2014) shares many examples of Korean LETs affirming ideologies of self-deprecation through metalinguistic discourse. One teacher in her study, Richard, describes why Korean English teachers tend to retire earlier than teachers of other subjects.

Excerpt 6.2. [Richard, Participant in Lee, 2014:128-129]

So, the old, old English teachers are very stressed because the students also look at the old teacher, 'You, you are not fluent, you're not good at English.' So, they, many, many old English teachers are thinking of retiring at an early age because of those kinds of pressure. But the other teachers don't feel like that. The other subject [e.g., math, Korean language, science, or history] teachers. So, these days I rarely see over sixty-years old English teachers. Fifty-eight, fifty-seven. They retire because of the pressure, I think.

Another participant, Patricia[47], describes how English teachers and Korean teachers take markedly different approaches to students' questions.

Excerpt 6.3. [Patricia, Participant in Lee, 2014:129]

Korean teachers have a meeting, decide, and announce, 'This is the right answer.' For English teachers, we have a meeting, but we have to contact someone, professors or native [English] teachers and search the Internet or whatever, then we let the answers out. But still students challenge that.

Patricia's anecdote shows more overlap between Park's ideologies of externalization and self-deprecation. While Korean language teachers seem to perceive themselves as authorities who can reach their own consensus on "the right answer," English teachers "have to contact…professors or native [English] teachers." Through externalization, LETs exclude themselves as legitimate experts in a language many have studied for upwards of two decades. Miranda also disqualifies herself as a potential "language expert" on cultural grounds in Excerpt 5.17. And as Richard's utterance (see Excerpt 6.2) indicates, age seems to predict more rather than less self-deprecation of English skills. In other words, inexperienced teachers discredit their English knowledge due to cultural inexperience (e.g., Excerpt 5.12; Excerpt 5.3) and older teachers discredit their English knowledge due to a perceived lack of communicative fluency despite

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[47] Patricia in K Lee (2014) should not be confused with Patricia, a GET in this study.

Woongbear (Excerpt 5.4) denying using English with his students and speaking skills being entirely deprioritized in the Korean English curriculum (see Section 4.6).

In this study, most LETs' and GETs' stances toward the ideology of self-deprecation came in response to the following question:

1. Some people say that Korean students are not good at English even though they study for many years. *What would you say about this argument?*

LETs and GETs almost invariably said they have heard variations on this statement. Some responded with a laugh and "yes" (Sean) or said that they hear it "all the time" (Jihye). It is important to start by saying that some LETs and GETs both expressed explicit agreement with the above statements. Arizwel (LET) responded, "Yeah. I've heard about it a lot. And I also think so, too," while Ninja's Sister said, "I always say that, and I totally agree with that idea." Some GETs, like Isadora, also provided an explicit endorsement when she says, "First, that it's true. I agree." Bevan, on the other hand, provides an affirmative yet qualified response saying, "I mean it makes- like to me, it makes sense. It's more like, you know, I mean you look at what a Korean English class is like. And it tends to be a lot of rote memorization."

The next sections further break down affirmations and rejections of this ideology in LETs' and GETs' ideological stances toward self-deprecation: an arbitrary standard of "good at English" discussed by both LETs and GETs, an unattainable native speaker ideal identified by LETs, and GETs' perceptions of humility and modesty among Korean speakers of English. Figure 12 summarizes and organizes these key themes.
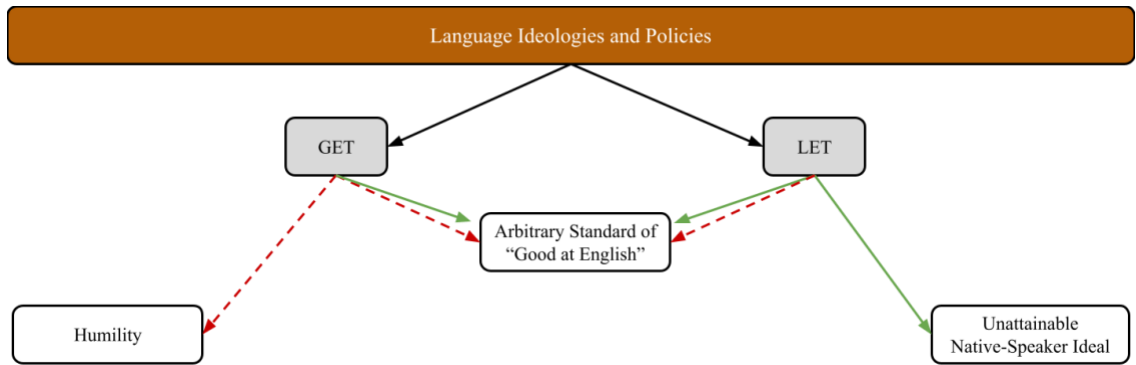
Figure 12. Diagram of key subthemes in LETs' and GETs' negotiation of the ideology of self-deprecation. Solid green lines indicate a plurality of participants affirming the ideology, while red, dashed lines indicate participants resisting the ideology in their stancetaking.

6.3. Arbitrary Standard of "Good at English"

LETs and GETs both navigated ideologies of self-deprecation by discussing arbitrary standards that Koreans impose toward being "good at English," thereby labeling themselves as "bad at English" through binary negation. This arbitrariness extends across two planes: the skills emphasized, and the proficiency level expected.

For example, LET Anne provides a skill-dependent assessment saying, "Korean students are not good at speaking English. I think they are good at reading English." In other words, the ideology of "Koreans as bad speakers of English" (JSY Park, 2008) serves to discount (at best) or erase (at worst) the high reading proficiency of many Korean students who have historically scored above average In the Program for International Student Assessment (PISA) among OECD countries (GS Lee, 2022). Miranda supports this notion in saying, "I think the- We- Korean English education is centered in only reading." Many LET participants echo this line of thinking, pointing out that many Korean students have receptive skills (reading and listening) that outstrip their production skills (writing and speaking), which SLA scholars often report as a canonical process of language skill development (Davies, 1976).

GETs often provide similar reasoning, but from the perspective of their speaking-specific job duties. For example, Jane goes as far as to label the teaching of communicative English in Korea as a failure.

Excerpt 6.4. [Jane, GET]

Like the best method to teach English and like CLT is like about communication, and like, learning how to speak, but like it's kind of a failure in Korea. Because it's not the learning style, like it's not how they learn, and it's not how they produce, I guess.

Jane's statements reflect a common frustration expressed by GETs. They are hired to teach speaking skills to an entire school population where only a fraction of the students may require English speaking skills on a regular basis. This is not unlike LETs' complaint about needing to teach test-taking skills to a minority of students seriously preparing for the CSAT (see Section 4.6). Sean shares a similar idea when he says, "the major reason is…because of…*suneung* (English: CSAT) system. That is blocking our opportunities as a student to speak in English itself." More specifically, the CSAT system "blocks…the amount of exposure to English itself." In other words, while Jane also attributes her charge of "failure" to Korean students' learning styles by saying, "it's not how they learn, and it's not how they produce," Sean considers curricular pressures as an explanation for students' slower communicative development. However, it is also important to mention that Sean averts the practice of erasure common in discourses of self-deprecation (see JSY Park, 2008) by saying, "of course, there are differences between- among individuals."

Jihye also points to sociocultural factors, noting students' limited opportunities to speak English outside the classroom.

Excerpt 6.5. [Jihye, GET]

[Students] don't get enough practice in their everyday. It's not surprising. After you leave the class, you go back home to all Korean. You go back to the grocery store, it's all Korean. You go here, there, everything around you, Korean central. So where do you get that practice? Normal, everyday, day to day practice? You don't.

Jihye and Jane's (Excerpt 6.4) comments are both redolent of Miranda's comments of ESL methods being incompatible in an EFL context like Korea (see Excerpt 5.6). However, unlike Jane, Jihye attributes her students' lower conversational proficiency to limited practice opportunities, saying Korean is the language outside of her classroom. ("Everything around you, Korean central.") Such sentiments also lead many GETs (e.g., Isadora, Jihye, Katie) to suggest more GET-led lessons to improve to Korean English education. This assertion also crosses over into ideologies of externalization by essentializing GETs as conversation partners (see Section 5.3 and 5.6) as well as valorizing speaking above the other three language skills.

Woongbear also approaches the ideology of self-deprecation from a skill-specific standpoint.

Excerpt 6.6. [Woongbear, LET]

[Students] know the English expressions. And they can listen, or they can write alphabets, or they can introduce themselves. However, they always think that using English is very difficult, because the test was very difficult.

Woongbear begins by identifying English skills most of his students do have (i.e., expressions, listening, writing in the alphabet, self-introductions) but noting that students seem to gauge their language abilities to the level of exam questions – questions LETs and GETs identified as excerpts from doctoral theses or articles from science and history journals (Yeonghyeon, Nancy). Arizwel echoes similar sentiments when she says, "students they're um- they know a lot of words, vocabularies, but they are all related to

very difficult topics which are not used in daily life." As a result, one Korean student in Root's (2007) study of English language ideologies in Korean classrooms suggests an ideological bind where exam preparation for neoliberal survival (see Section 4.3) leads many students to acquire strong reading skills at the expense of speaking skills while also believing that "English communication skills itself was the only method to judge one's English skills" (Root, 2007:213). Moreover, that threshold of perceived competence filters through academic genres known for complex and wordy sentence structures (Alley, 1996).

Brandon goes on to explain this predicament from a GET perspective.

Excerpt 6.7. [Brandon, GET]

[Students are] still- Kind of- It's still frustrating because I want them to just focus on improving their communication level, bit by bit. Whereas they're saying 'I'm bad at English' because they can't like pump out a whole essay or something… What…they're saying they can't do is so high level, I'm like 'Yeah of course you can't do that.'

Brandon narrates a mismatch in expectations between his goal to facilitate communication, and Korean students' high expectations for communication competence and low tolerance for mistakes. He then describes this divide in expectations as a "lack of metalinguistic awareness" when students "look at stuff and say, 'Oh, I can't do that. I'm- so I'm not good at English.'" On one hand, Brandon suggests how a fatalistic orientation toward language learning may be counterproductive to one's development. Though describing this phenomenon as a "lack of metalinguistic awareness" does indicate an elevation of communicative language skills above the other purposes English serves in Korean society (see Chapter 4). In other words, while the job imperative of teaching communication likely leads GETs to prioritize language as communication above other social functions, it also reflects a more short-sighted perspective of English's position within the ideological landscape of Korea (Lee, 2016).

A perception that Korean students' all-or-nothing perfectionistic attitudes are borne out of social pressure came from many GETs including Isadora ("[Students] don't want to make a mistake in front of their friends"), Jane ("When you make a mistake, you are shamed"), Nancy ("It's all about making mistakes in Korea, everyone has to be perfect, the first time, or else they just don't do it"), and Hyunsoo ("I feel like the pressure…to speak English isn't necessarily coming from the teachers and the native speakers, it's- it's coming from…their Korean peers and colleagues").

These perceptions of perfectionistic tendencies pile even more responsibility onto GETs' shoulders. Many LETs view GETs as the sole progenitor of authentic English conversation (see Section 5.3). GETs' classes serve as the only source of English conversation practice for most students living in an otherwise ideologically monolingual EFL context (see Excerpt 6.5). And GETs also struggle to negotiate students' affective filters (Du, 2009) which remain elevated despite a perceived relaxation of other cultural norms in GET classrooms (see Section 5.6). Katie describes it as a double-hurdle.

Excerpt 6.8. [Katie, GET]

In my class, when I asked [students] an interactive question, it's not even the language that's most important. Firstly, they need to switch their brains on to be able to start engaging and thinking about a response, then the language comes in second.

According to Katie, GETs must navigate not only Korean students' self-consciousness around using English, but also self-consciousness around participating in Western-style, dialectic classrooms. Such is the duty of an EPIK teacher to "improve and expand English teaching methodologies" and to "encourage cultural awareness between Koreans and EPIK teachers" (EPIK, 2023).

However, Woongbear provides a more encouraging message to his students, resisting ideologies of self-deprecation by introspecting on his own experience as an English user.

Excerpt 6.9. [Woongbear, LET]

[Students] know English. However, they don't have courage to using English, I guess…They learn the English a lot of time, however, they- they don't know about the English. However, I don't think so. Already- they already know English very well…I- I recommended them to get uh- brave- brave thinking. Because when they- when we talk to English- I also- I also use many English mistake. However, I always want try to say, and I try to uh- show my thinkings. Because the mistakes is not important for me. Because using English and talk to you, and talk to the other person is important matter. So that is my answer. Can you understand about that?

Although this quote is lengthy, it serves to summarize many points provided by participants above. First, Woongbear flatly denies the ideology of self-deprecation by establishing a voicing contrast between his own opinions and common discourse around Koreans' English skills. ("They learn the English a lot of time, however, they- they don't know about the English. However, I don't think so. Already- they already know English very well"). Handsome Potato echoes this voicing contrast almost identically, saying, "People say Korean students are not good at English, but that's- that's wrong, I think. Korean students are only good at listening and reading, not speaking and writing." Woongbear then points to Korean students' elevated affective filters as a key barrier to students' ability to express themselves in English, which he refers to as "courage" ("They don't have courage to using English.") He goes further to emphasize the importance of communication over perfection ("Because the mistakes is not important to me…talking to the other person is important matter.") And in a poetic, fourth wall-shattering conclusion, he asks if I can "understand about that," which I then confirmed. While it is beyond the scope of this study to ascertain

if Woongbear's beliefs about language use are common among LETs throughout Korea, his thoughts do reflect that at least some teachers resist the ideology of self-deprecation[48].

6.4 Unattainable Native-Speaker Ideal

On the mirror edge of arbitrary standards, many LETs and some GETs described near-unattainable ideals of native-like proficiency as a barrier to Koreans acknowledging being "good at English." Park (2022:3) summarizes this dilemma, intertwining ideologies of necessity and self-deprecation in the process.

> Since what counts as "good English" is defined by the racial and national identity of the English user, Koreans' investment in English language learning does not lead to a confident sense of ownership of English. On the contrary, it further enhances their insecurity, as they come to see their English as perpetually lacking, thus always in need of greater improvement towards the ideal of the native speaker's English.

(Park, 2022:3)

It is important to note that this sense of "perpetual lacking" likely comes from racialization of language users rather than some objective assessment of competence. It also implies that the social expectations of interactants may imbue even "perfect" users of a language varieties with an internalized label of "near native," unable achieve native speaker membership due to non-linguistic factors. Babel (2014:2), for example, describes the "near-naiveness" of her Spanish abilities in a similar way, describing approaching the native ideal the way a mathematician would describe a hyperbolic equation approaching (but never reaching) a limit of zero.

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[48] I also argue that theorization about what constitutes an "error" or "mistake" in EFL contexts remains an open question. It's debatable if instructors should deem language use as "erroneous" if communication is successful. In other words, Woongbear says he attempts to communicate in English despite making many mistakes, but GETs differ in what constitutes a mistake, or how important it is to correct it (Shin et al. 2021).

> Being near-native is a little like being a number approaching infinity—no matter how far I go or how near I get, I'm never going to lose that tell-tale little thing that sets me ever-so-slightly apart (Babel, 2014:2).

Most important is the social information baked into the capacity to perceive one's language skills as "native." Park describes English as a racialized language of which Koreans are not members, thereby permanently relegating them outside the boundary of native-like proficiency (which ties into ideologies of externalization). Babel is less explicit, but still hints at the ideological and social implications of native speakership through a "tell-tale thing that sets [her] ever so slightly apart."

These senses of "tell-tale little things" betraying speakers' perceived community membership and self-evaluations of "perpetually lacking" language skills index what scholars have called *linguistic (in)security*. Meyerhoff (2006:292) defines this as "speakers' feeling that the variety they use is somehow inferior, ugly or bad." In the Korean context, Meyerhoff's definition entails negative attitudes towards Korean English or Konglish[49], an attitude Hagens (2005) demonstrated in a rare study of English teachers in Jeollanamdo where "Konglish is almost always corrected and students are advised not to use it," presupposing a superior, "correct" version of English to aspire to. Preston (2013) provides a less value-laden definition of linguistic (in)security that involves someone's fear or confidence around accomplishing a linguistic task. Preston's definition is apparent in Park's (2004:122) examples of Korean *yumeo* (English: humor) that satirizes Koreans' fears of using English with foreigners, or Root's (2012:195) concept of "foreigner fright" experienced by her Korean student participants (see Excerpt 5.13).

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[49] See Ahn (2014) for the distinction between Korean English and Konglish that is beyond the scope of this thesis.

Many LETs in this study also discussed how native-like proficiency is held up as a benchmark for their own language standards, though their attitudes toward this ideology were mixed. Yeonghyeon (LET), for example, spoke about how her perceived limitations in acquiring English evolved as she studied phonology in university. "When I- the more I learned about phonology I felt more like limitation of foreign- foreigners in learning English phonology." Yeonghyeon highlights pronunciation as a key factor in the development of her own linguistic insecurity.

Jiaenius echoes a similar point about pronunciation as a source of insecurity, but also points to how ELT professionals can resist native-speaker norms and ideologies by downplaying the importance of nativelike proficiency. Jiaenius recalls, "I considered too much about my pronunciations and grammatical error. But [my university instructor] said the- speaking native-like is not that important." Jiaenius's ventriloquation of her university instructor dovetails with the comments of a GET quoted in Chin (2002:123) and reproduced in JSY Park (2008:340).

Excerpt 6.10. [Participant in Chin (2002:123)]

When students begin to ask a question or tell me something, they examine the expression on my face and my quizzical expression often sends them into a series of apologies for the poor quality of their expression. They don't understand that I'm not even listening to their errors. I am attempting to ascertain the meaning of what they're saying.

Hyunsoo describes a similar experience when working with LETs in a training workshop.

Excerpt 6.11. [Hyunsoo, GET]

I gave a workshop on Thursday about authentic English and using slang and some Americanisms and, you know, they all told me, you know, 'Oh, I speak poorly.' And I'm like, 'Really? But you're speaking to me now, and I fully grasp everything that you're saying', you know?

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Hyunsoo's story indicates a bind experienced by many GETs where they feel pressured to teach their culture on one hand (what he calls "authentic English" and "Americanisms") while also working against Korean students' tendencies to hold their cultural teachings as the standard of English learning. GETs walk a tightrope between sharing their culture and language in a sincere act of cultural exchange without holding up their local variety of English as "correct" or "authentic", as the latter behavior only serves to reify ideologies of externalization and self-deprecation among Korean learners already sensitive to high standards of language competence. This tightrope leads instructors like Hyunsoo to provide mixed messages when they identify the English of Western countries as "authentic" while also aiming to mollify Korean learners' anxieties by appealing to language as a culturally removed neutral medium of communication.

While scholars show that some GETs work to resist ideologies of idealized native speakers and Western-centric Englishes (e.g., Canagarajah, 1999; Matsuda & Duran, 2012), overwhelming evidence suggests that these ideologies take substantial time and effort to unwind. Secondary-level teachers in Lee (2018:210), for example, echo Yeonghyeon's insecurities (see p. 131) by expressing reservations in identifying as bilingual (see also Excerpt 5.2).

> ***Excerpt 6.12. [Kate and Yoon, participants in Lee, 2018:210]***
>
> *One of the teachers, Kate, said the best foreign language teacher is one who is a bilingual, one who understands the nuances of both languages. I attempted to say that all the teachers here are ideal teachers because they are bilingual. However, Yoon, another secondary teacher, laughed it off and said that he is not "bilingual but a little more than monolingual, maybe half lingual.*

Lee (2014, 2018) reports several instances of meeting resistance from LETs she identifies as bilingual. And while Yoon in Excerpt 6.12 moves beyond the monolingual

erasure documented in Korean discourse around English (JSY Park, 2008) by recontextualizing himself as "half-lingual," Kate also contextualizes this label by setting a native-like standard of bilingual as "one who understands the nuances of both languages."

Yeonghyeon's (see p.131) and Hyunsoo's (Excerpt 6.11) comments also suggest how Korean students internalize ideas of American English as the "ideal English pronunciation" through the overrepresentation of (white) American English voices in Korean English learning materials (Ahn, 2013). Even Brandon, a GET from Australia, cannot escape U.S.-centric notions of ideal English pronunciation when he receives teacher evaluations from Korean supervisors. He says, "One of the questions was rating my English level. And [the supervisors] all rated it low. They didn't know anything about me, except that I was Australian. So, it's literally just 'Oh, he's Australian. Low.'"

Yeonghyeon also goes on to critique students' English abilities while also holding them to a very high standard of sociolinguistic competence.

Excerpt 6.13. [Yeonghyeon, LET]

For example, um- even though Korean students learn English for a long time, but they still don't know like what a topic or what sentences can be rude to the foreigners in Korea.

Yeonghyeon's framing of students' English competence presents important implications of how LETs site English and thereby English communicative competence. She starts by presupposing shortcomings in students' language development by qualifying students "learning English for a long time" with "even though." Her reasoning for this underachievement is that students do not understand what topics or sentences may be rude to foreigners in Korea, invoking a global imagined community of English speakers (see Section 4.4). Her comments also hold up high sociolinguistic competence as a benchmark for foreign language learning (see also Excerpt 5.5 and following paragraph). But

sociolinguistic competence is culturally relative. Describing students' choice of topic as "rude to foreigners" hitches sociolinguistic competence to the conversational norms of Western English-speaking cultures. Such topics may in fact be appropriate to the Korean context, and it could be argued that foreigners in Korea require greater sociolinguistic understanding of English conversational norms in Korea. Here we see more overlap in Park's ideologies as Yeonghyeon externalizes the norms of English speaking to a Western context, thereby self-deprecating Koreans' English sociolinguistic competence.

While this section thus far argues that both GETs and LETs conspire to elevate Western pronunciation and sociolinguistic norms to the detriment of Korean learners' senses of self as English speakers, Ninja's sister adds fluency to this mixture.

Excerpt 6.14. [Ninja's Sister, LET]

Ninja's Sister: And then, I think it's just my personal opinion. I think Korean people care about pronunciation too much. So, some officials, their pronunciation is not that great. And we think, 'Oh their English was just-just okay.' But some people's pronunciation is really good, then they think 'Oh, their English is really great.' So, um- If we are not ready to pronounce some words, we don't want to speak it.

Ian: Yeah…This might be a hard question, but what does good pronunciation sound like?

Ninja's Sister: How can I say? Like no- no pause. Like without any pause, like 'loo-loo-loo-loo-loo-loo!' Like very fluent- very fluent sentences.

Ninja's Sister's comments represent a nuanced departure from ideologies of idealized American English and perfect pronunciation towards one of fluency. She starts with a complex voicing contrast of discourses that link quality of pronunciation with English abilities, thereby elevating verbal communication as the most-judged language skill (see Root, 2007:213). Her call-and-response voicing links "not that great" English pronunciation of public officials with a societal evaluation of "their English" as "just

okay" while "really good" pronunciation indicates that "their English is really great."

However, when I redirect Ninja's Sister to elaborate on what good pronunciation sounds

like, she connects good pronunciation with fluency rather than place-based accuracy. To

put it another way, she voices "the ideal native speaker" with a rhythmic series of "loos"

that index the prosody of fluid speech. What goes unsaid is how the vast majority of L1

English speakers frequently use dysfluencies and filled pauses that violate Ninja Sister's

conception of the "ideal native speaker" (see Excerpt 4.14; Excerpt 4.15).

She also prefaces this perspective by positioning herself against the importance of

pronunciation, saying, "Korean people care about pronunciation too much" as well as by

softening the force of her argument by saying "it's just [her] personal opinion." In other

words, although difficult, it is important to acknowledge a plurality of opinions regarding

how language abilities are judged among Koreans, a group of people often stereotyped as

monolithic, homogenous, and collective (Kohls, 2001; Kim, 2014; Cawley, 2016).

6.5 Humility

Many GETs also interpreted Koreans' assertions of poor English skills as

culturally motivated expressions of humility and modesty (Tan & Chee, 2005) due to

Confucian influence on Korean culture. As Brandon says regarding Koreans disclamation

of English, "Some of the time it's just not true. Like they're actually quite- quite fluent in

English." (See also Excerpt 6.1; Excerpt 6.10; Excerpt 6.11). In other words, many GETs

interpret Koreans' self-deprecatory bids not as an honest assessment of language skills,

but as culturally specific pragmatic stances linked to relational in-group modesty and

social pressure (Hwang, 2011) (see also Section 6.3).

Jane (GET) reflects on this cultural difference through a composite anecdote.

Excerpt 6.15. [Jane, GET]

I say, 'Oh, do you speak English?' and they say, 'Oh, a little.' But they're like so good at English and I'm like, 'Are you kidding me?' Like I find out later that they're like amazing at English and I'm like, 'What are you talking about you're so good at English.' They're like 'No- no I'm not I'm not.' Like they have a lot of like modesty.

Jane's narrative exemplifies a common cultural miscommunication between GETs and the Korean people they interact with. Her story parallels those of Brandon (Excerpt 6.8) and the teacher from Chin (2002) (Excerpt 6.10).

Where GETs focus on successful communication and Koreans provide self-deprecatory assessments of their English skills counter to GETs' appraisals of successful communication. However, while many GETs attribute this low appraisal to social pressure and perfectionism (see p. 127), Jane attributes this appraisal to "modesty." Not every GET had a charitable interpretation of this ideology of modesty, however. Patricia said that such negative self-evaluations were "typically…false modesty and the people who are bad- or bad English tend not to know it." This serves as an intriguing foil to Brandon (p. 126) who described Koreans' lack of metalinguistic awareness in the opposite direction. In other words, Patricia identifies the modesty presented by Koreans' English self-evaluation as metalinguistically insincere, while Brandon suggests a metalinguistic awareness that descends from real (though ill-fitting) expectations of perfection.

Katie generalizes these assumptions into a rule.

Excerpt 6.16. [Katie, GET]

Like I say to people that people will ask a Korean, you know, can you speak English? And the person will reply, no, but like- you can never ask a Korean person can you speak English? Because even somebody who's fluent will always say no, they can't.

Katie presents an exceptionless policy of not accepting a Korean's English self-assessment at face value ("You can never ask a Korean person, 'Can you speak English'"). Her rule presupposes past experiences where she has complimented Koreans' English language skills only to be met with a denial ("Even somebody who's fluent will always say, 'No, they can't'"). Her experience exemplifies many GETs' experiences navigating cultural differences between how Koreans and GETs accept compliments. For many GETs, a Western cultural upbringing entails cultural norms that valorize identifying one's strengths (Kim & Bolton, 2013) and speaking to those strengths with frankness that stops short of arrogance (Tiberius & Walker, 1998), at least when those strengths are acknowledged by other interactants. But in Korea, no GET stories involved a Korean interlocutor sincerely accepting or reporting English as a strength. In an intriguing contrast, Ben says "only the jokesters in the class would say [that they're good at English]," presupposing that Korean users of English would never sincerely admit to having strong English language skills.

Part of this disconnect may come from variation in politeness dynamics between Korean and American English in the exchange of compliments. In Korean, successfully receiving a compliment often entails deflecting or rejecting praise (e.g., "Really?" or "No, my English is not good enough.") (Han, 1992) while receiving a compliment in Western varieties of English often entails quiet acceptance (e.g., "Thank you"). This leads many GETs like Nancy to assume cultural values behind Koreans' refusal to accept "good at English"-related compliments. "So, I think part of it could be like a cultural thing like, you know, just being like humble and not trying to, you know, overplay like your skills" (Nancy, GET). She suggests that cultural norms of not only modesty, but also keeping one's head down could prevent many Koreans from acknowledging English prowess even

if such a denial contradicts their private feelings. Many other GETs hint at this notion. Jane mentions that her students "have a lot of like modesty" even when she finds out later that they're "amazing at English." Ben echoes similar sentiments, saying, "I think most of [my students] would respond with modesty…Like 'Oh teacher, I'm not- I'm not good at English'…And they end up writing like a two-page essay…describing everything in eloquent perfect grammar stuff like that." These utterances point to a shared perception by GETs of a culturally pragmatic rationale for disclaiming English, rather than a genuine assessment of skill or identity conflict.

However, it's important to compare these notions with Park's (2008:340) denial of humility or modesty as sufficient explanations for Koreans' English self-deprecation.

> While it is easy to interpret this as a sign of 'modesty' or 'politeness' that is often stereotypically attributed to East Asian cultures or as a manifestation of general principles of self-praise avoidance, Koreans rarely produce comparable apologies for their incompetence in other languages; for instance, speakers do not apologize for their incompetence in a language such as Japanese, which is instead simply acknowledged as unremarkable. This suggests that this practice is linked with an ideological conception of Koreans' relationship to English – that they ought to be competent in the language, but they are not (JSY Park, 2008:340).

Park's assessment strongly suggests that GETs misinterpret Koreans' ideological positioning when they "disclaim English." Just as Haley needed to reassess orientalist notions of her students as docile and submissive when she witnessed them talking back and fighting in class (see Section 5.6), so too do GETs need to reassess stereotypical assumptions of Koreans as a collectivist mass of modesty.

6.6 Conclusion

Both LETs and GETs in this study invariably pointed to narratives of self-deprecation when interacting with Korean teachers, staff, or students. Both LETs and GETs

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suggested arbitrary standards of language proficiency as one reason behind self-deprecatory self-appraisals. However, LETs were more likely than GETs to acknowledge Koreans' strong reading and listening skills and GETs often centered language competence around speaking due to the "conversation teacher" label embedded in their job duties and many of their visas[50]. LETs also commonly expressed a lack of confidence in English by comparing their skills (or sometimes their students' skills) to an ideal native speaker. Finally, GETs (incorrectly) attribute Koreans' unwillingness to claim the title of "good at English" due to stereotypical East Asian notions of politeness.

While JSY Park (2008:340) denies "modesty" as a potential explanation for Koreans' disavowal of English, his explanation of Koreans' ideological conception that they "ought to be competent in a language but are not" also seems incomplete. LETs' externalistic notions that Koreans speak Korean and foreign teachers speak English (see Section 5.3) and nationalistic discourses intertwining Korean language, culture, and nationhood (Park, 2006; Lee, 2014) suggest that many Koreans see English as a language they ought not speak well or at all. JSY Park's (2022) later work on Koreans' sense of "perpetual lacking" due to racialization and neoliberal subjectivities within a global hegemony dominated by Western varieties of English also argues that many Korean learners of English do not believe they ought to speak English well due to non-linguistic factors irremediable by additional study or conversation practice.

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[50] The majority of GETs in Korea teach on an E-2 visa, labeled in Korean as *hoehwa* (English: conversation).

CHAPTER **7**. DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION

Excerpt 7.1. [Sean, LET]

I wanted to use my talents or gifts to help or support the next generations coming, and that made me, or that gave me, some idea about becoming teacher.

7.1 Discussion

In Korea, dominant language ideologies (Park, 2004, 2009) position English as an essential language for Korean global competitiveness (necessitation) set in opposition to Korean identity (externalization) of which Koreans deny competency like a game of "hot potato" regardless of any external evaluation (self-deprecation). This combination anchors an ideological landscape where Koreans aggressively and begrudgingly pursue English education in what scholars have called a "social malady" (Song, 2011), "English Fever" (Korean: *yeongeo yeolpung*) (JK Park, 2009), an insidious cancer (Crookes, 2017), and an endless cycle of self-improvement that positions Koreans as precarious neoliberal subjects (JSY Park, 2021; 2022).

These macro-level ideological analyses draw (at least in part) from theories of linguistic imperialism (Phillipson, 1992), neoliberalism (Harvey, 2005), and native speakerism (Holliday, 2006) by tying Koreans' seemingly endless striving for English education with a sense of perpetual postcolonial subjectivity (Park, 2022). These macro-level analyses and the foundational work that preceded them play an important role in critical applied linguistics. It is important to question neutral, value-free assessments of global of English (cf. Crystal, 2003) by considering how power imbalances are reproduced or exacerbated through ideologies of language. But while scholars like Park (2021)

continue to push theories of linguistic politics in Korea into new and exciting directions, it is also important to make space for the voices of on-the-ground practitioners to make sure top-down theoretical insights reflect the lived material realities and local negotiations of language ideologies (Canagarajah, 2005). This study is one step in that direction.

Despite the overwhelming global forces that swirl above the heads of English teachers in Korea, teachers like Sean in Excerpt 7.1 still recognize the ongoing importance of supporting and uplifting upcoming generations through education. And in this study, LETs and GETs discussed not only the problems associated with English education in Jeollanamdo, but also some hope for the future.

This study aimed to address the following research question:

(1) How do GETs and LETs working in the Jeollanamdo province in South Korea affirm, resist, or negotiate dominant English language ideologies?

This study builds nuance into language ideology research most often conducted in urban and cosmopolitan settings by analyzing the ideological stances of LETs and GETs in the rural Jeollanamdo province. Few studies have compared the perspectives of LETs and GETs in Korea through the lens of language ideology, so this study is also a first step toward more comparative ideological research.

LETs and GETs both showed overlap and variation in their ideological stances and perspectives toward dominant English language ideologies in Korea. When it came to ideologies of necessitation, both LETs and GETs tended to argue for the essentiality of English in the Korean education system. However, LETs often linked the necessity of English to Korea's need to compete in fields of science and technology, while GETs often emphasized the need of English for travel and global communication. LETs alone tended to articulate the curricular pressures associated with competing imperatives from the

Ministry of Education – new mandates to teach communicative English and preexisting mandates to teach test-taking strategies for the CSAT. However, many GETs and LETs also presented counterarguments to the necessity of English, sometimes minutes after arguing for the need for English education. This exemplifies an ideological bind experienced by many ELT professionals who are aware of the problematic history and inequalities built into English education but also maintain an interest in its propagation for their own career prospects and survival in neoliberal markets. Table 3 summarizes key findings related to the ideology of necessitation.

Table 3. Key findings comparing the ideological positions of LETs and GETs regarding the ideology of necessitation.

Ideology	LETs often…	Both LETs and GETs often…	GETs often…
Necessitation	• Positioned English as a valuable platform for accessing scientific literature (see Excerpt 4.9). • Pursued English not out of integrative interest, but for the social prestige afforded to teachers of any subject (see Excerpt 4.4; Excerpt 4.5). • Described feeling split between competing demands in Korean English curricula: teach communication and prepare students for a standardized exam devoid of communicative goals (see Excerpt 4.27).	• Appealed to "imagined communities" of English speakers to motivate their students (see Excerpt 4.20; Excerpt 4.21) • Questioned the need for all students to learn English (see Excerpt 4.22; Excerpt 4.24).	• Positioned English as an essential tool for intercultural communication when traveling abroad (see Excerpt 4.16). • Struggled to advocate for the necessity of English education while also acknowledging their role in a colonial system of linguistic imperialism (see Excerpt 4.14; Excerpt 4.15).

When it came to the ideology of externalization, LETs and GETs discussed how GETs often serve as the ideal and only communicative resource for secondary-level Korean English learners. While LETs linked this subtheme to ideas of "English" as an external tool and inherently inaccessible culture for Koreans, GETs often linked essentialist notions of

"Koreans speak Korean and foreigners speak English" to their own felt sense of marginalization and exoticization within their school and local cultures. Table 4 summarizes findings related to the ideology of externalization.

Table 4. Key findings comparing the ideological positions of LETs and GETs regarding the ideology of externalization.

Ideology	LETs often…	Both LETs and GETs often…	GETs often…
Externalization	• Described English as an important tool for accomplishing social and symbolic functions but also a language external to their own sense of self (see Excerpt 5.9). • Appealed to GETs as a source of authentic "English culture" (see Excerpt 5.12; Excerpt 5.14)	• Viewed GETs as the only legitimate source of authentic communication (see Excerpt 5.4; Excerpt 5.5).	• Felt marginalized as illegitimate instructors and linguistic vessels (see Excerpt 5.16; Excerpt 5.21). • Felt frustrated teaching conversational English in an educational system that did not seem to value conversational English (see Excerpt 5.20).

Finally, both LETs and GETs shared how ideologies of self-deprecation often descend from arbitrary standards of being "good at a language." However, LETs were often quicker to acknowledge the oft-erased evidence that Koreans' reading skills are above average compared to OECD countries, while GETs often (incorrectly) attributed Koreans' self-deprecation to stereotypes East Asians as humble and collectivist, rather than an honest self-assessment of linguistic competence. Table 5 summarizes key findings related to the ideology of self-deprecation.

Table 5. Key findings comparing the ideological positions of LETs and GETs regarding the ideology of self-deprecation.

Ideology	LETs often…	Both LETs and GETs often…	GETs often…
Self-Deprecation	• Affirmed Koreans' strong but oft-erased reading and listening skills due to test preparation (see Excerpt 6.6)	• Discussed Koreans' self-deprecation with respect to arbitrary (and often ill-suited) standards of linguistic competence (see Excerpt 6.6; Excerpt 6.13).	• Viewed Koreans' self-deprecation as a pragmatic expression of modesty (see Excerpt 6.16). • Elevated speaking skills and communication as the standard for which linguistic competence is assessed (see Excerpt 6.4).

In addition to these shared and distinct subthemes of dominant language ideologies, LETs' and GETs' observations of rural students also suggest that dominant language ideologies carry less power in more rural areas. This study therefore cautions against assuming people in rural areas have the same ideological footing as people in urban areas. In other words, it's important to contextualize language ideologies as situated, place-based sets of beliefs linked to the place-based orientation of their speakers (Ferguson, 2022). In the context of this study, "Korea" may be too broad of a place to identify as a unified ideological marketplace (Bourdieu, 1991). This is not because the ideologies are necessarily different, but because the ideological signal surely does not carry a uniform distribution.

While iterations of language ideologies were interpreted from every participant, each participant showed varying gradations in their reasoning, positioning, and alignment with each ideology. To put it another way, various subthemes discussed above and summarized in Table 3, Table 4, and Table 5 reflect variation in LETs' and GETs' negotiation of dominant English language ideologies. While a degree of sharedness is essential to the definition of language ideologies, individual interpretation of ideology through the lens of experience and cultural background creates the liminal space through which social actors can exercise agency to either endorse or resist ideologies in their own way.

It is also important to resituate this analysis in the context of rural-urban distinctions. LETs and GETs who reported working in both rural and urban secondary schools discuss marked differences between the motivation and demeanor of rural and urban students. Andile (GET) described students on his rural island school as "very relaxed", "less tired" and less likely to be "sleeping in the class." "Sleeping in class" is one of many acts of resistance by overburdened Korean students who decolonize subjectivities and "say enough to English" (Park 2022:6). Such acts of resistance indicate students' saturation within dominant English language ideologies. Conversely, by bringing their energy into the classroom, students in more rural communities demonstrate less need to resist ideologies of English due to the ideologies' attenuating influence over geographic space.

Handsome Potato (LET) corroborates Andile's statements. He thinks rural students "are not interested in studying" any subject, including English. "Because…their parents are not getting that much interested in educating children." While Chang (2010) argues that most rural parents encourage their children to improve their employment prospects through education, Handsome Potato's comments reflect a potential urban-rural distinction between the strength of dominant English language ideologies in Korea. Sehyeon (LET) further supports this notion by arguing against motivation as a mediating factor in differences between urban and rural students. She says, "the atmosphere is so different from city… from rural area." In rural areas, students think, "Oh, that's fine he's studying, I don't study." But in the city, "everyone's studying" so students feel pressure to study despite their low motivation. That social pressure comes from both peers and from "what [students'] families expect from them" (Amina, GET). In other words, Sehyeon thinks, "The motivation is very similar to each other…but the social pressure is so different." This common sentiment expressed by LETs and GETs who worked in both rural islands and coastal cities suggests that geographical distance from urban centers may attenuate the influence of dominant English language ideologies. In other words, language ideologies identified around Seoul (Lee, 2014; Kim, 2020) and Jeju Island (Lee, 2016) are useful starting points for language ideology research elsewhere in Korea but should not be taken for granted as the same.

7.2 Limitations

Like all language ideology research, this study is not without limitations. While analyzing participants' self-reported narratives and reflections on their experiences can yield rich ideological data, it is also one-sided. Moreover, it is important to acknowledge

that semi-structured interviews are contextually and socially situated speech events that could contribute to a higher affective filter among participants than a less structured conversational setting (Heller et al., 2017). To put it another way. more data is required (e.g. class or participant observation) in order to corroborate or refute participants' assertions and provide a more holistic interpretation of both LETs' and GETs' perspectives (Choi, 2022). Moreover, returning to reflexivity, it is important to acknowledge my own position as a white, male-identifying, U.S. citizen working at a U.S. institution of higher learning. After all, "like the texts we write, we can never be transcendent" (Denzin & Lincoln, 1994:582). This positionality likely contributed to "interviewer effects" where differences in age, gender, or racialized identities may have inhibited participants from sharing more honest, or vulnerable perspectives (Denscombe, 2007:184). I also acknowledge that while I was familiar with every LET participant in my study, cross-cultural differences may still have played an inhibitory role in LETs' interviews.

Interviews were also conducted (mostly) in English. While I do not discount the complex notions that LETs shared in English, LETs were also second-language speakers of English, and therefore may have been limited in their ability to share more. As Pavlenko (2007:172) says in relation to multilingual interview participants, "the presentation of events may vary greatly with the language of the telling."

For example, Miranda said at the end of her interview, "I have many thoughts in my head, but I cannot explain it." While I responded that she was free to share those thoughts in Korean, she did not seem comfortable doing so. So, I backed off. I speculate that asking Miranda to share her thoughts in Korean was an abrupt violation of the established linguistic frame of our interview (i.e. to conduct the interview in English). It

also mirrors ideologies of externalization that impose explicit monolingual frames on interactants, particularly Korean-English bilinguals (King & Park, 2023). Therefore, this thesis aimed to cite the work of Korean scholars to better corroborate LETs' commentary. Second, limited work in Korean rural sociology (written in English) limits understandings of language ideologies in rural areas. Without understanding the ideologies of rural Korea, it is more challenging to situate English language ideologies. As put by an anonymous reviewer for a past abstract submitted to the Annual Meeting of the Linguistic Society of America, Park's three dominant ideologies might be a poor comparison, and more research may be necessary to identify English language ideologies specific to rural Korea. Finally, while this thesis occasionally pulls from the literature to corroborate LETs' and GETs' stances, it is important to contextualize the findings of this thesis as the subjectivities of LET and GET participants. In other words, statements about student behavior or the voicing of others in narratives are one-sided stories. However, narratives and perspectives are also valuable sources of ideological research because the subjectivities of participants carry presuppositions that can reveal ideological stances (Preston, 2019).

7.3. Implications and Future Research

This study is quasi-ethnographic and exploratory, which allows for several avenues of future research. First, due to length requirements, many nuances in LETs' and GETs' ideological perspectives could not be further unpacked. Future writing can add more layering and texture to this analysis. Future studies can also survey the language attitudes of students in urban and rural areas to corroborate or refute LETs' and GETs' observations of less stressed, less ideologically bound rural students. Second, closer conversation analytic transcription of LETs' and GETs' opinions on compulsory English can yield

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important insights into how English teachers navigate the ideological bind of promoting their employability while reckoning with the problematic colonial positioning of English using pauses, repairs, and dysfluencies. Interview data could also be reconsidered through the lens of Karimzad and Catedral's (2022) re-chronotopization triangle, where interactions between embodied experiences, textual discourse, and imagined subjectivities contribute to variation in LETs' and GETs' interpretation of language ideologies. This model can provide deeper insight into how social actors (LETs and GETs) negotiate fractally recursive ideological scales (Karimzad & Catedral, 2022) in a place Al-Alawi (2022:1) might call "the center of the periphery." To put it another way, a chronotopic analysis would be especially helpful in discussing how language ideologies operate between teachers and students in urban and less urban locales (Ferguson, 2022; Cho & Kinginger, 2022). Finally, more traditional ethnographic work can explore how ideological work takes place at the micro-level of interaction. For example, fieldwork in a Korean English teacher-training center (Korean: *yeonsuwon*) could examine how LETs and GETs negotiate language ideologies through translanguaging or use of English as a lingua franca (ELF) (Kinginger & Zhuang, 2023).

Another implication of this work is the ongoing need to provide GETs with a framework to better understand the language ideological landscape within their local teaching contexts. Many scholars have criticized the inadequate preparation and orientation programs of GETs in Korea (Lee & Yin, 2021; Choi, 2022; GS Lee, 2022). In these studies, GETs often report orientations (often lasting 7-14 days) mostly focusing on Korean culture and classroom games, with little focus on pedagogy (Choi, 2022). However, few (if any) of these studies have proposed orientations that better connect GETs to the ideological

landscape of English in Korea. This intervention may involve a dynamic process of verbalization and reflection from new GETs regarding their emerging teacher identity and their ideological perspectives on English as a foreign language in Korean society. A program can couple this reflection with mediation (in the form of lectures or one-on-one conferences) from more experienced GETs or trained linguists (Johnson & Golombek, 2016). This short protocol could help GETs critically reflect on the ideological perspectives on English they bring from their home cultures (which can differ depending on their country and racialized background) and develop a critical conscientization of English language ideologies in Korea (Freire, 1996). This can, in turn, contribute to more critical awareness of future pedagogical decisions (Matsuda & Friedrich, 2011).

7.4 Concluding Remarks

Due to the embedded problematics in the context of global ELT (see Phillipson, 1992; Pennycook, 2001), this study required participants to discuss topics of discomfort. GETs showed courage by grappling with difficult questions and reflecting on English's position as a mandatory subject and their own positionality in Korean English education (see Excerpt 4.1 and Excerpt 4.15) while LETs also showed great courage sharing complex ideas in a second language of which many expressed great linguistic insecurity. For example, Ninja's Sister prefaced her interview saying, "I think my English skills is getting low. I have no confidence right now." Both LETs and GETs displayed courage in participating in this study, wading through uncomfortable topics that shape the context in which teachers of different cultural backgrounds must collaborate on a regular basis.

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In her analysis of the Wednesday Demonstration[51] (Korean: *suyo jipoe*), feminist geographer Jaeyeon Lee (2023:11) calls on activists to "engage the politics of discomfort" to reveal the violence of familiar and non-confrontational knowledges. By engaging in their own politics of discomfort, ELT professionals can better understand not only the ideological complexities of their local teaching contexts, but also grow more inclusive of the diverse ways these ideologies contribute to the material, lived experiences of their colleagues and students. This is especially important if LETs share Sean's goals of "using their talents" to "support the next generations" (see Excerpt 7.1). It was also crucial for one participant in Kinginger and Zhuang (2023) who reckoned with their own privileges when adapting to living abroad.

Excerpt 7.2. [Participant in Kinginger & Zhuang (2023)]

You've never been in a setting where you were not…the center. You've never not been the center. And so, when you go to a foreign country, it may be your first experience…of not knowing what's going on and feeling like people might be laughing at you, even if they're not…All those experiences of, like, I am not in control. I think it's easier then to look at the person who's an immigrant and sort of say, like, 'Golly, they must be pretty disoriented right now' […] like, 'Hey, I remember what that feels like.'

My own journey as an instructor and teacher-educator in Korea involved an iterative process of decentering myself and learning to accept confusing circumstances. Importantly, I learned to assume valid reasons behind the policies and priorities of Korean English education, even if those reasons did not resonate with my own subjectivities. To

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[51] The Wednesday Demonstration is a decades-long activist project led by surviving "comfort women," Korean women victimized through the Japanese imperial system of sexual slavery during the Japanese colonial period (1910-1945), particularly during the Pacific War. Every Wednesday, survivors and their supporters protest outside the Japanese embassy in Seoul demanding an official apology and reparations from the Japanese government (Lee 2021).

put it another way, when I surrendered control and sought to listen and understand, I found pockets of meaning and contribution within an unfamiliar ideological ecology.

Relinquishing control, decentering one's worldview, opening one's ears, acknowledging, navigating, and growing from discomfort with open-minded compassion may be the only way LETs and GETs can transcend cultural differences to arrive at systems and pedagogies that best serve their students within the ethically fraught and ideologically contentious landscape that is English education.

APPENDIX 1
LIST OF SAMPLE INTERVIEW QUESTIONS FOR GETS

Sample Interview Questions – Guest English Teachers (GET)

1. How did you decide to become an English teacher?
    1. How long have you been teaching English?
2. How would you describe the city or town where you work?
    1. How would you describe the school(s) where you work? How many students do you work with per week?
3. What do you enjoy most about being an English teacher?
    1. What do you find most difficult about being an English teacher?
4. What kinds of things have you heard your students say about learning English?
    1. How do your students seem to feel about learning English?
    2. Why do you think your students study English?
    3. Do your students ever talk about studying English outside of the school? What kinds of things have they said?
5. What is your opinion on Korean students learning English? Why do Korean students learn English?
6. Do you think English should be a core subject on college entrance exams? Why or why not?
7. Some people say that Korean students are not good at English even though they study for many years. What would you say about this argument?
8. What kind of co-teaching experiences can you recall with your Korean co-teachers?
    1. Are your lessons different from a Korean English teacher's lesson? How so?
    2. In your opinion, what is your role in Korean students' education?
9. In your opinion, what do you think is the current attitude or trend in Korean English education policy?
10. Do you think English education in Korea should be changed? If so, how so?
11. Would you like to choose a fake name for this interview information? What name would you like?

APPENDIX 2
LIST OF SAMPLE INTERVIEW QUESTIONS FOR LETS

Sample Interview Questions - Local English Teachers (LET)

1. How did you decide to become an English teacher?
    1. What did you find easy or difficult about learning English?
    2. When you were a college student, are there certain things your professors emphasized about English?
    3. How long have you been teaching English?
2. How would you describe the city or town where you work?
    1. How would you describe the school where you work? How many students do you work with per week?
3. What do you enjoy most about being an English teacher?
    1. What do you find most difficult about being an English teacher?
4. What kinds of things have you heard your students say about learning English?
    1. How do your students seem to feel about learning English?
    2. Why do you think your students study English?
    3. Do your students ever talk about studying English outside of the school? What kinds of things have they said?
5. What is your opinion on Korean students learning English? Why do Korean students study English?
6. Some people say that Korean students are not good at English even though they study for many years. What would you say about this argument?
7. Do you think English should be a core subject on college entrance exams? Why or why not?
8. Have you ever worked with a native[52] English teacher (NEST)?
    1. If so, what kind of co-teaching experiences can you recall?
    2. In your opinion, what is the NEST's role in students' education?
9. In your opinion, what do you think is the current attitude or trend in Korean English education policy?
10. Do you think English education in Korea should be changed? If so, how so?
11. Would you like to choose a fake name for this interview information? What name would you like?

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[52] In the context of interviews, I often used the term native-speaking teacher (NET) when distinguishing between LETs and GETs. While I made efforts to avoid that term during this thesis, I used the term "native" in interviews because it was the term most familiar to participants.

APPENDIX 3
LIST OF TRANSCRIPTION CONVENTIONS

Symbol	Meaning
[unk]	Unknown or inaudible utterance.
[*nominal*]	Edit for anaphoric reference.
…	Part of utterance removed for brevity.
(#)	Seconds of pause (See Excerpt 4.14; Excerpt 4.15)
-	Abrupt pause or dysfluency.
[sigh]	Audible sigh.

Today I had a long, engaging interview with Jane. She is a teacher from [the U.S.] who has lived in Korea for 6 years - spending a little over 5 of those years teaching. She spent 4 years in the [a Southeastern Korean city] and about 1.5 years in [a Jeollanamdo city]. She's mostly taught in middle schools, with a few elementary school lessons as well. She earned her M.A. in Education from a university in the UK, completing her thesis in 2020.

What I found most interesting was her reflective, critical account of English education in Korea. It was clear that she has an academic interest in ELT and is critical of how English is taught in Korea. I would put her in the 'experienced' category. 6 years of experience plus a higher education degree suggests she is committed to English education.

In response to the 'compulsory' question, she paused and called it a "loaded question", which suggests that she has some insight into the ideologies that surround English education in Korea. She finds the whole system outdated and "so Confucian." Her response was interesting because she said she wouldn't be opposed to making language learning compulsory, but she sees English and the way it is taught now as something that shouldn't be compulsory. She has a lot of insight into the language ideologies of Korea and how language testing feeds into neoliberal ideologies and credentialism of getting jobs.

She also had a nuanced response to the whole 'Koreans are not good at English' question. In short, their responses come across as 'false modesty' as well as a fear of 'shame.' She said she found the shame angle to be very enlightening. Koreans seem afraid to let their English skills fly out of fear of making a mistake and experiencing shame.

She also had some interesting comments that differentiate urban (Ulsan) and rural (Mokpo) students. The students in Ulsan seemed "sharper" and more skilled at English compared to rural students.

She spoke at length about how Korean students mostly study English just for the test. She was surprised when she surveyed students in her class and a plurality of them insisted on learning more grammar. And she questioned if "they really want that." And that she doesn't really teach grammar. It presents an interesting discussion on what it means for students to express their needs. Against the sociocultural backdrop of a test-heavy 'meritocratic' culture, maybe students genuinely want to learn English grammar. Though in the Western idea of personal goals and desires, maybe they don't want to learn grammar. Maybe it's purely external.

I think I will get a lot of gems from transcribing Jane's interview. I'm curious as to how her ideas will stack up in comparison to other more experienced native teachers as well as less experienced native teachers.

She said she would change Korean education by shifting focus away from testing and toward English and a lingua Franca - as well as World Englishes.

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