

Chapter 2

Defining Identities

Abstract To consider all the contextual factors that characterize the target population, Korean early study-abroad undergraduates, I review previous studies in the following order in this chapter. First, I present different conceptions of identities so as to help understanding of what constitutes identities in general. Second, I deal with second language learners' identity issues especially in regard to classroom-based perspectives. Since "inside the classroom" perspectives make up the majority of the relevant studies, this part of the literature helps us understand the main theme of the study more clearly. I also focus on outside classroom perspectives in second language learners' identity formation. Finally, I suggest a definition of identities based on borderlands identity and cosmopolitanism and use this work as a theoretical framework of the entire book.

2.1 Types of Identities

As Fearon (1999) mentions, there is no unified definition of identities in spite of the increasing interest in identities in the fields of social science and humanities. He summarizes "brief definitions and clarifications" from various articles (p. 4):

1. Identity is "people's concepts of who they are, of what sort of people they are, and how they relate to others" (Hogg and Abrams 1988, p. 2)
2. Identity "refers to the ways in which individuals and collectivities are distinguished in their social relations with other individuals and collectivities" (Jenkins 1996, p. 4)
3. Identities are "relatively stable, role-specific understandings and expectations about self" (Wendt 1992, p. 397)
4. "the term [identity] (by convention) references mutually constructed and evolving images of self and other" (Katzenstein 1996, p. 59)
5. "Identities are...prescriptive representations of political actors themselves and of their relationships to each other" (Kowert and Legro 1996, p. 453)

Even though each definition varies in terms of its range and complexity, one main theme penetrates all of these definitions: the contextual importance of “other(s).” Identities can be acquired by situating oneself into certain categories among many, and it can only be explained by relations to and with other(s). Once one puts oneself into certain categories, one is assigned certain roles and attitudes based on this categorization. These roles and attitudes always focus outward from the self because they are all about positioning the self in relation to others. Language plays a very special role in this categorization process. First, the categories themselves are embodied by language. They can have definite meanings only through the help of language. Second, roles and attitudes are closely related to the language that we speak, since most of our interactions with others are verbal. In this sense, Tugendhat’s (1986) notion of identities is useful. Identities are “relational” and “situational” by nature and language is the core of these characteristics.

Although it is difficult to define what identities are in general, the definition becomes clearer in the case of a specific identity. In other words, we can get a better idea of identities by studying different types of identities (or different kinds of categorizations). Social identity is the most widely used conceptual framework in the studies of identities. Social identity has drawn particular attention since a social psychologist Tajfel (1974, 1981) maintained that group membership is the key factor in the formation of one’s identity. Tajfel (1974) defines social identity as “(a) part of an individual’s self-concept which derives from his knowledge of his membership of a social group (or groups) together with the emotional significance attached to that membership” (p. 69). He suggests four main processes of social identity theory: social categorization, awareness of social identity, social comparison, and search for psychological distinctiveness.

According to Tajfel (1974), a given social context (including relations between salient social groups) provides categories through which individuals, by learning to recognize linguistic or other behavioral cues, allocate others (and themselves) to category membership and learn the valuation applied by the in-group and salient out-group to this membership. Although these processes help us understand how social identity is constructed in a specific way, the order of them can be questioned and contested. The psychological distinctiveness that Tajfel (1974) put as the final stage of social identity construction can be shown in the other three stages. In other words, people can feel their distinctiveness while they categorize themselves into one social group, feel their identity in that group, or compare themselves to others. Hence, I believe that Tajfel’s (1974) processes should be viewed as four synchronous processes of social identity construction, not as four discrete step-by-step stages.

Another point that I think that Tajfel (1974) should have made more explicit is how power relations work in those four main processes of social identity theory. In my perspective, “social categorization” and “social comparison” are processes of drawing lines between oneself and others. Since the society that we live in is based on various power relations, the processes of comparison and categorization and the identity that we might take on are also based on the power relations.

Apart from its shortcoming as a stage theory of social identity construction, Tajfel's (1974, 1981) social identity theory explains the "situational" characteristics of identity (Tugendhat 1986) very well. Considering the fact that the society that we live in has diversified contexts (or categorizations), we have multiple identities based on those contexts. Which identity we will take on is based on the situation we are in and the people we interact with in that situation. Therefore, the emphasis on "contexts" should be taken into account when we talk about identities.

Along with the aspect of social context, the great importance of language is also the focus of other scholars whose studies are based upon social identity theory. Even though social identity theory was not originally formulated with reference to ethnolinguistic identity, Giles and Johnson (1981, 1987) developed ethnolinguistic theory, focusing on the role of language in social identity theory. Giles and Johnson (1987) point out that language often plays a salient role in terms of formulating group membership and social identity by providing people with very distinctive group membership and identity. Thus, when individuals from ethnically/linguistically minority backgrounds try to change their social identity to one considered more positive in mainstream society, their language goes through a process of linguistic adaptation, which can result in subtractive bilingualism or even language erosion if a large number of members of a particular group assimilate into another to achieve what they believe to be a more positive group identity.

The studies of Giles and Johnson (1981, 1987) show how language plays a critical role in categorizing people and further influencing identities related categorizations. Language is a conspicuous label that people can use to show their social/ethnic identities, and works as a factor to draw lines among groups of people. However, Giles and Johnson (1981, 1987) do not mention "how" language becomes such an important factor of differentiation. Language itself is neutral so that in itself it is neither positive nor negative. But, when language belongs to and is used by a certain group of people, it becomes a representative notion of the group as well as the people in that group and a part of their behaviors, values, and lives. Consequently, language becomes value-laden according to the power relations of groups. The language that powerful groups use usually carries positive connotations, while the language of less powerful groups is often, but not always, stigmatized with the groups' powerlessness. Therefore, I think when we examine ethnolinguistic identity, we should be able to see not just the fact that language difference contributes to group difference but how it does so, through interplay with the power relations of the groups.

Even though Giles and Johnson (1981, 1987) do not mention the underlying power relations of ethnolinguistic identity, their notion of ethnolinguistic identity is meaningful because it addresses the importance of language in formation of identities (Tugendhat 1986). They focus on how language influences one's positioning in a certain social categorization especially in terms of ethnicity. Language is not a simple tool that we use for daily communication but a complex mechanism that helps us distinguish "I" from "others," and "my position" from "their position." This distinction becomes very clear for an ethnic categorization because the language we use is one of the most conspicuous characteristics that define our

ethnicity. Then, what other nonlinguistic factors should be considered to explain ethnic identity?

In her review article, Phinney (1990) points out the lack of consensus in defining “ethnic identity.” To explain what ethnic identity is, she is drawn to two theoretical frameworks that can help delineate its characteristics: social identity and acculturation. According to Phinney (1990), ethnicity is a special marker of group identity (or social identity) since just being in one ethnicity does not guarantee a positive identity as Tajfel (1974) suggested. Ethnicity interacts with social environment in a very sensitive way so that it leads certain groups to attribute a positive identity to their ethnicity. Previous studies have demonstrated that someone from a low-status group in the society would potentially have a hard time forming a positive self-perception (Hogg et al. 1987; Houston 1984; Paul and Fischer 1980; Ullah 1985; White and Burke 1987).

Phinney’s (1990) explanation of the difficulties low social status groups have forming a positive ethnic identity is linked to power relations as well. Even though Phinney (1990) does not mention it explicitly, I think that she postulates the invisible but influential power relations among ethnic groups by ordering ethnic groups hierarchically (i.e., low-status vs. high-status) and assuming that low-status group would have difficulties in having positive ethnic identity. And I agree with Phinney’s (1990) assumption that there exist “hierarchical” power relations among different ethnic groups since power relations are basically grounded in unequal power distribution. And it is quite predictable that this unequal power distribution among ethnic groups would produce different images of each group, with those of powerful groups being more favorable.

Another interesting characteristic of ethnic identity can be explained in relation to “cultures.” Since ethnic identity always entails at least two different ethnic groups,¹ there is a strong likelihood that those different ethnic groups have “cultural” conflicts. The theory of acculturation deals with changes in cultural attitudes, values, and behaviors caused by contact between two distinct cultures (Berry et al. 1986), and it usually focuses on how immigrant, minority groups are related to the mainstream (or dominant), larger society.

The deep involvement of culture in explaining ethnic identity is linked to the definition of ethnicity as well. In contrast to race, which is based upon biological and/or anatomical traits used to categorize people, ethnicity is “learned” while people live in certain social contexts (Gans 1979; Nagle 1994). In other words, race is more deterministic because it is genetically inherited. However, ethnicity is more flexible because it is an acquired trait grounded in the culture that people live in. For instance, it is possible for Korean-born U.S.-adoptees to define themselves as

¹Phinney (1990) mentions that “Ethnic identity is meaningful only in situations in which two or more ethnic groups are in contact over a period of time. In an ethnically homogenous society, ethnic identity is virtually meaningless concept” (p. 501).

Americans with respect to ethnicity or nationality. Their physical traits as Koreans are given when they are born, but their prolonged stay in the U.S. can influence how they categorize themselves. In short, ethnicity refers to a social group that shares the culture which may occur in spite of racial difference.

Ethnicity is a social categorization that demonstrates well the “relational” characteristic of identities (Tugendhat 1986). As Phinney (1990) mentions, ethnic identity comes into the fore when there are other comparison groups. For instance, Koreans may not be aware of being Koreans until they look around at other ethnic groups. For example, when they consider themselves in relation to the Chinese and Japanese, they start to draw a line that defines them as Koreans, characterized by the language that they use, and the cultural traits and ideologies that are different from those of the Chinese and Japanese. Therefore, ethnic identity necessarily entails the mutual understanding of “ours” and “theirs,” in social and cultural aspects.

Phinney (1990) explains why cultural identity is to be dealt with in relation to social identity. Cultural identity is difficult to define like culture itself; since culture can be as broad as “European culture” that spans several nationalities and ethnicities or as narrow as “French winery culture” that focuses on one group within a society, cultural identity attached to each level of culture can be different. However, as Hall (1990) points out, culture and cultural identity have one distinctive characteristic regardless of their breadth; it is collectivity. He mentions that there are two phases in cultural identity. The first is a superficial phase that emphasizes “oneness” or commonalities. With this, we can explain how European culture looks in general sense. This is the way to demonstrate culture and cultural identity as a “present being.” The second phase underlies this “oneness.” It helps us understand how European culture has developed historically to comprise many different subgroups under the notion of oneness. This is the way to show how a certain culture actually becomes “the culture,” and how people become a part of that culture. It is notable that cultural identity, whether it reflects the first view of culture or the second one, should involve a group of people that share a particular culture.

It is this collectivity and diversity that characterize culture itself, and further, the relation between cultural identity and other identities, such as social, ethnic, or ethnolinguistic identity. Thus, four different types of identities that are dealt with in this section are all connected to one another. Each type stresses crucial factors of identity: contexts (social identity), language (ethnolinguistic identity), others (ethnic identity), and collectivity and diversity (cultural identity). These factors are all linked to Tugendhat’s (1986) emphasis on language and “relational” and “situational” characteristics of identity; and they are fundamental to this study, primarily in the interpretation of the results of critical discourse analysis. My interpretation of the two themes of Ethnicity and English will be grounded in aforementioned identities (social identity, ethnolinguistic identity, ethnic identity, and cultural identity), and the penetrating theme of power will be dealt with as a major factor in understanding the participants’ borderlands identity (Anzaldúa 2007).

2.2 Second Language Learning and Identities

Studies on second language learning and identities can be categorized by context: inside the classroom and outside the classroom. Although the majority of studies regarding second language learners' identities have been conducted inside the classroom context, outside the classroom context should be taken into account in order to provide a balanced view of second language learners' identities.

2.2.1 *In the ESL Classroom*

Ironically, while identity is recognized as one of the most influential factors in the second language acquisition (SLA) process, little attention has been paid to it in the SLA literature. The main focus of second language acquisition studies has been on such linguistic aspects as specific features and the sequence of second language development. Although some scholars such as Ellis (1994), Gass and Selinker (2001), Krashen (1981), Schumann (1978) recognize the importance of nonlinguistic factors in second language acquisition and try to include them in studies of second language acquisition, those “non-language influences” (Gass and Selinker 2001, p. 329) are not treated as seriously as the linguistics ones. And when they are considered, social factors are often restricted to classroom environments and interactions, which are analyzed linguistically without adequate consideration of their social context.

However, as Norton (2001) contends, the world in which second language learners live is not unidimensional. Even in the ESL classroom, which is often considered as an idealized language learning environment, many identity issues arise. Talking about identities in second language learning does not negate previous perspectives but rather turns the lens to the other side of the field in order to look more closely at a complex phenomenon.

Several studies examine how the ESL classroom functions as a place for contesting identities, especially in terms of power relations (Auererbach 1993; Cahnmann 2005; Collins and Blot 2003; Currie and Cray 2004; Duff 2002; Florez and Burt 2001; Morgan 1997; Norton and Toohey 2001). Morgan (1997) especially focuses on the relationship between identities and intonation, which has not been dealt with extensively in the field. As an ESL teacher-researcher in Toronto, Canada, he pays particular attention to his students' English pronunciation and intonation learning, and applies Halliday's sociocultural theory (especially, “the semantic and functional prominence accorded phonology; and systematic account of how social experience, interpersonal relationships, and language intentions” (p. 431) to look at his own classroom activities. He finds that his students who are newcomers from Hong Kong to Canada face the problem of social integration along with English language learning, and their current instability in terms of their social roles affects the “dynamics of intonation” (p. 432). He argues that “the accent” of

the ESL learners does not simply categorize them linguistically but also implies the unpowered social status that stigmatizes them.

Morgan's (1997) study is particularly meaningful because it shows how ESL students are positioned by the larger social structures that they live in. They do not take the unpowered and marginalized position as a result of their own will, but they realize that they are put in that position by the central power of the society. The fact that they speak English with an accent does not simply mean that they speak English differently; because it has the potential to become value-laden negatively from the socially powerful group, it negatively affects their self-perception. From my perspective, Morgan's (1997) term "dynamics of intonation" refers to the dynamics of power relations in the English-dominant society.

It is noteworthy that not only macro-power structures but also micro-power relations affect ESL learners' identity formation in the classroom. This point is supported by analyses of classroom discourse and interactions (Hellerman 2006; Markee 2004; Miller 2007). In particular, Miller (2007) investigates how power and identities are embodied by interactions in an ESL classroom in which she taught for 3 years. Her study focuses on three adult immigrants from Laos, Tibet, and China, who attended the class regularly. The classroom interactions were video-taped once per month over a 14-month period and three interviews were conducted with the focal students. Based on her data, she maintains that power and identities are a matter of "positioning" that is strongly influenced by the "here-and-now" principle. The teacher is positioned as an authority as the interaction begins and the students begin to see themselves as good/poor language learners as they start to interact with others in the classroom. Because power and identities are related in ESL classroom interactions, she urges ESL practitioners to pay more attention to the empowerment of students in the classroom.

Both Morgan (1997) and Miller (2007) demonstrate important characteristics of ESL classrooms. As shown in Morgan's (1997) study, students are often immigrants or refugees who came to the English-speaking countries for a better life. Their new status as immigrants or refugees often makes them feel insecure and inferior for lack of knowledge of the dominant language and familiarity with the dominant culture. Even students who are not immigrants or refugees may feel this way. Since English is the power language, those who are still learning it tend to see themselves as less-powered, which affects their self-positioning in the ESL classroom and, by extension, their ESL learning (Miller 2007).

The view of the ESL classroom as a place for macro- and micro-power interplay is related to the perspective that the ESL classroom is an arena for contesting various types of identities. Leung et al. (1997) examine the relationship among ethnicity, social identity, and language use in multiethnic urban ESL classrooms in England. They show that adolescent ESL students' language learning needs cannot be fully understood in terms of fixed concepts of linguistic and ethnic categories imposed on them, which may not accurately reflect their experiences; e.g., an Indian boy who was born in London and can speak several languages including English may have very different needs from those of a recently arrived immigrant. Based upon cultural theory, they argue that, in light of postcolonial diaspora, the

traditional notions of ethnicity, social identity, and language use cannot be broadly applied in current ESL classrooms. They further insist that TESOL professionals should question the pedagogical relevance of the notion of “native speaker,” and urge them to give more consideration to language expertise, language inheritance, and language affiliation.

What is notable in Leung et al. (1997) study is that the assigned categories of self-perception developed by others might not apply to ESL learners. Because they were devised by those holding a superior position in the English speaking context, ESL learners may be forced to locate themselves among limited categories, leading to passive self-definition. Inflexible, restricted, and unidimensional categories cannot fully explain the diversity of ESL learners’ identities. As Leung et al. (1997) assert, those categories should be contested and reframed from the perspective of ESL learners themselves. I strongly agree with their assertion that ESL learners ought to be recognized as acute critics of given power relations and active identity finders so that they can define themselves from their own perspective.

Thesen (1997) discusses the interplay between the perspectives of others and the identity formation of ESL learners. She studied five Black South African English language learners in a historically White, Anglophone college. Based upon in-depth biographical interviews with the participants who were all first-year college students, she found that the identities of the participants were heavily dependent upon language learning contexts, and their new identity formation in an English-for-academic-purposes class emerged according to their language use, ethnicity, and socio/cultural background. In addition, their extensive discourse revealed the complexity of identities as it is influenced by multiple levels of their social contexts. They were constantly negotiating their identities between assigned identity (e.g., disadvantaged, underprepared, minority, second language learner) and claimed identity (e.g., good student, aspiring member of mainstream contexts, hard worker) in the classroom. In conclusion, she emphasizes that the ESL classroom should be a responsible place for the English as a second language learners’ discursive and emergent identities.

The multiple facets of ESL learners’ identities are also well illustrated in Creese et al. (2006) study. They particularly focused on multicultural, heritage, and learner identities by investigating linguistically and culturally diverse students in East Midlands, England. For 20 weeks, the four researchers took field notes, observed, and recorded the classroom interactions of the participants, and interviewed them. They concluded that the participants’ multicultural and heritage identities were mostly related to their concept of ethnicity and the languages that they used. As bilinguals, the participants were content with the fluidity of their linguistic and ethnic multi-categorization, which was linked to their positive learner identities, emerging especially in the classroom interactions. The authors argue that teachers should be aware that students in the ESL classroom are constantly deconstructing and reconstructing their multiple identities based on their L1 and L2.

Creese et al.’s. (2006) study demonstrates why ESL learners’ identity ought to be reframed based on their perspective, not on categories given by socially powerful groups of the English dominant society. When ESL newcomers to an

English-speaking country start to learn English, they do not erase their past related to their L1. Rather, they add L2 characteristics to their L1 characteristics. Since they speak two languages, they come to have two different sets of characteristics related to each language-mediated context, making the process of their identity formation much more complex than that of monolinguals. Even though monolinguals may have power in the context, they do not have a clear idea of the complex nature of ESL learners' identities. Therefore, ESL learners should be the agents of expressing their identities, and their L1 and L2, as well as context related to each, should be considered in characterizing their identities.

Studies by Morgan (1997), Miller (2007), Leung et al. (1997), Thesen (1997), and Creese et al. (2006), which focus on the ESL classroom context, reveal the complexity of the identity formation process in second language learning and the importance of raising the teacher's awareness of unequal macro-/micro-level power relations in relation to ESL learners' identity. ESL learners are often positioned as unpowered, marginalized, and stigmatized in the English speaking context (Morgan 1997), and they are forced to choose among over-simplified linguistic, ethnic, and cultural categories that do not take into account the multi-faceted aspects of their identities (Leung et al. 1997). These categories imposed by the socially powerful group cannot explain the real identities of ESL learners, since the complex process of their identity formation involves learning a new language, adjusting to new social/cultural contexts, recognizing the power relations, struggling between the given categories and their own perceptions, balancing between the previous self (L1 related) and new self (L2 related), and finally, reconstructing new identities (Creese et al. 2006).

These are important insights in terms of shedding light upon what should be considered when we study ESL learners' identities. ESL learning is not just second language learning but involves the establishment of new identities. English is a necessity for learners to be integrated into these new social/cultural contexts, but at the same time, it restricts their identity and its symbolic power. As for Korean early study-abroad students who came to the U.S. in their elementary/secondary school years, classrooms are the primary contexts for their English as a second language learning since they spend most of their time in school. While learning English and adjusting to a new school environment, they go through the process of reconstruction of identities balancing themselves in between L1 related context and L2 related context.

One limitation of these studies (Creese et al. 2006; Leung et al. 1997; Miller 2007; Morgan 1997; Thesen 1997) is that they look only inside ESL classroom contexts. However, as mentioned earlier, identities are formed by multiple interplays of various social contexts (Tajfel 1974, 1981). The ESL classroom is definitely one important context for ESL learners; however, there are other contexts outside the ESL classroom that affect their identity formation intensively. For Korean early study-abroad students who had lived with their families in South Korea until they came to the U.S, contexts outside classrooms, where they live apart from their families, are also novel and influential in terms of their identity

reconstruction as well as their English language learning. Therefore, these outside contexts should also be considered in order to delve into ESL learners' identity formation process.

2.2.2 *Outside the ESL Classroom*

Gander and Gardiner (1981) define adolescence the age span from approximately 12–18 years, during which adolescents are supposed to develop peer-relationships, internalize values, and become accustomed to prevailing social ideology. While before adolescence relationships are mainly restricted to family, now new relationships (i.e., peer-group and school) emerge and affect their life strongly. Based upon the notion of expanding social realms, Phelan et al. (1996) have developed a model of multiple worlds for adolescence, in which the self is at the center surrounded family, peer, and school domains. They explain how meanings, perceptions, understandings, thoughts, feelings, and adaptation strategies of the self are influenced by norms, values, beliefs, expectations, and actions of the three main domains.

Thus, identity formation is a significant part of adolescents' lives. As Conger and Petersen (1984) point out, "identification of identity" is the essential problem of adolescence and it should be accorded great importance. However, identity formation is not a "unitary and all-or-nothing" (p. 80) process that can be easily explained. Conger and Petersen (1984) also mention that patterns of identity formation may vary widely among individuals or groups of adolescents as a result of many influences, ranging from parent–child relationships to cultural or subcultural pressures, and even the rate of social change. And since adolescent ESL learners experience dramatic changes in terms of language, family-relationships, cultural differences, and social adjustment, their identity issues should be studied with consideration of these multiple contextual changes. Many studies regarding adolescent² ESL learners' identity in out-of-classroom contexts stress the role of family and home as a main context for their identity formation. This is quite different from the studies that focus on the workplace of adult ESL learners (D'Amico and Schnee 1997; Hull 1997); but again, this is connected to the concept of language socialization (Schieffelin and Ochs 1986). Adolescent ESL learners soon learn that their home is different from their classroom context where all use English. Their immigrant parents want their children to be fluent in English, but at the same time, they want their children to keep the racial, cultural, and linguistic identities based on their heritage (Kim 2006; Suarez-Orozco and Suarez-Orozco 2001; Zhou 1997). Thus, studies

²The term, adolescent includes not only the population with age range 12–18 (Gander and Gardiner 1981) but also those who are under age 12, since many relevant studies do not specify the age range of the participants. Adolescent ESL learners group means the population who are under age 18 in this study. Therefore, the terms adolescents, children, young learners in this paper all refer to this specific population.

regarding this population reveal the complexity of identity formation between their L1 and L2 in accordance with different roles and expectations.

Edwards and Nwemely (2000) look into how different cultures impact adolescent ESL learners' perceptions of literacy and views of the world. They compared two different religious groups, lower middle class fundamentalist white Christians in the U.S. (group 1) and Muslim and Chinese families in the UK (group 2), to find differences among these groups in regard to L1/L2 literacy teaching and learning and the values attached to their literacy practices. Children in the Christian context were introduced to their L1 written English at a young age, mostly in religious contexts such as Sunday schools, while children in Muslim and Chinese communities were first exposed to their L1 written language either in a religious context or at home. The groups contrasted in the way they practiced their L1 written language, Muslim and Chinese practices being very rule based, while the learning of English literacy by children in the Christian context was interaction based. The authors stress that children from Muslim and Chinese communities bring their own perspectives on literacy and the world into the mainstream classes where their L2 (English) is used. Cultural differences among communities are a crucial factor in learning a second language and positioning the self among the community groups.

Although Edwards and Nwemely (2000) do discuss it explicitly, it is meaningful to consider why cultural differences among communities influence ESL learners' English learning and their identities. The two groups, the lower middle class fundamentalist white Christian in the U.S. and the Muslim and Chinese families in the UK, represent the unequal power relations in English dominant societies. It is interesting that the lower middle class fundamentalist white Christians are also a marginalized group from the mainstream in terms of their socio-economic class and religion, but they still hold a position superior to that of Muslim and Chinese groups with respect to English literacy learning. The former may be one step away from power, but the latter's position is even farther. The cultural difference of ESL learners means unequal power relations, which are directly related to their identity as members of their groups. Those who are in the least powerful group cannot see their cultural background positively due to the power difference.

It is noteworthy that there are differences even within the least powerful cultural community. Reese and Goldenberg (2008) investigated the relationship between Spanish-speaking children's language and literacy development and its relationship to communities. They examined 35 Spanish-speaking communities in California and Texas by surveying and interviewing parents and principals, interviewing teachers in a focus-group, and looking into students' achievement data. They distinguished two different communities, one with a lack of printed materials, most of whose members were Spanish speakers, and the other with more literacy materials in English. Interestingly, the participants who were kindergarteners or the first graders demonstrated strong association between community language characteristics and their literacy development in Spanish and English. The former, who were influenced by the value their parents placed on Spanish language and literacy, excelled over the latter in a Spanish literacy achievement test, whereas the latter

group tested better in English due to their early and frequent exposure to English literacy materials. The authors assert that the result is ultimately related to the tensions between maintaining the language and culture of their families and integrating into U.S. society.

Reese and Goldenberg's (2008) study shows how cultural communities function in relation to family and home contexts as they influence ESL learners' identity formation (Choe and Park 2006; Jeon 2007; Pease-Alvarez 2003; Reyes 2008; Schecter and Bayley 1997). Cultural communities are larger units in which family and home contexts are embedded. Some communities emphasize L1 maintenance over L2 learning or vice versa, and the emphasis on L1 maintenance or L2 learning affects how ESL learners position themselves among many linguistic, ethnic, and cultural categories. Another interesting point in Reese and Goldenberg's (2008) study is that the community's emphasis on L1 maintenance or L2 learning can be determined by external factors, such as limited financial resources. The Spanish-speaking community with few printed English materials may not have much choice in favor of L2 learning.

Both Edwards and Nwenmely's (Edwards and Nwenmely 2000) and Reese and Goldenberg's (2008) studies show the close relationship between ESL learning and culture, but each represents one of two phases of cultural identity identified by Hall (1990). Edwards and Nwenmely's (2000) study is grounded in the first phase of cultural identity, which emphasizes "oneness" or commonalities. In this study, ESL learners' origins are an important factor that influences how they learn L2 (English) and how they see themselves in bilingual contexts. Reese and Goldenberg's (2008) study is linked to the second phase of cultural identity, which focuses on diversity within one cultural group. They show how Spanish-speaking communities in the U. S. can be different despite a common classification. These studies demonstrate that the notion of community is very flexible: it can be as small as a subgroup of one cultural group (Reese and Goldenberg 2008), but it can be as big as nationality or cultural heritage (Edwards and Nwenmely 2000).

The notion of community gets even broader in Kanno's (2003) study. She investigated four Japanese returnees (who, after spending their teenage years in North America because of their father's job, had gone back to Japan as young adults) in terms of their positioning between two languages (Japanese and English) and two different cultures. She argues that the participants went through three stages to achieve a fully bicultural identity: sojourn, reentry, and reconciliation. At first, struggling to reposition themselves, they suspended themselves between the old and new cultural contexts. After some passage of time, they started to look at their situation more objectively. They recognized that they were in the middle and could choose where they wanted to stand between those two contexts. The final stage was that they embraced their "hybridity" (p. 123) and enjoyed their bicultural identities. Kanno (2003) emphasizes that having two different contexts based on linguistic and cultural difference means living in different "communities" at the same time, which led the participants to form their identities as members of both communities.

Kanno's (2003) notion of hybridity is particularly useful to understand how the imaginative community that the participants in her study created functioned as a

real community in which they located themselves. In trying to find their best position between the Japanese and North American contexts, the participants did not view those two contexts as irreconcilable but rather regarded them as complementary in creating their own context. However, the nature of hybridity needs to be carefully considered. In this case, it is not a simple half-and-half blending of Japanese and North American elements. In addition to characteristics from each context, the participants also create new characteristics by reinterpreting the contexts, creating their own unique hybridity.

As seen in Edwards and Nwemely's (2000), Reese and Goldenberg's (2008), Kanno's (2003) studies, community can be a concrete unit that encompasses the family and home domain. To put it simply, we can expect that the identities of second language learners whose parents joined them later may be different from the ones of those whose parents remained in the home country. But at the same time, it can be a rather abstract unit derived from family and home, school, concrete community, and culture, and this broader meaning of community is ultimately related to the concept of language socialization and identity formation.

Thus, community here refers to a collection of individuals sharing mutually defined practices, beliefs, and understandings over an extended time frame in the pursuit of a shared enterprise (Lave and Wenger 1991). According to Lave and Wenger (1991), this community of practice is the basic unit of "learning," and they also maintain that learning viewed as situated activity has as its central defining characteristic a process they call legitimate peripheral participation. Learners participate in communities of practitioners, moving toward full participation in the sociocultural practices of a community. The concept of legitimate peripheral participation provides a way to speak about crucial relations between newcomers and incumbents and about their activities, identities, artifacts, knowledge, and practices. The L1/L2 learning by ESL learners is legitimate peripheral participation in both languages and cultural communities and it necessarily entails the matter of where to position themselves among those communities.

Again, Edwards and Nwemely (2000), Reese and Goldenberg (2008), Kanno (2003) demonstrate how outside the classroom communities influences adolescent ESL learners' biliteracy learning (L1 maintenance and L2 learning) and their identity formation. Communities are on the extended line of family and home, and also connected to society and culture. Different communities represent different power relations so that being in the ESL learners' community might mean having a less powered and marginalized position in the English dominant context (Edwards and Nwemely 2000).

When this marginalized group goes back to their non-English speaking country, the power relations get even more complex (Kanno 2003). Although they have not been in the center in the English dominant context, they expect to be in an empowered position in their home country due to their superior access to English and English-speaking contexts. Unfortunately, however, they become "different Japanese" after staying several years in an English speaking country, and this stigma hinders them from integrating into Japanese society where the majority of people have lived only in a Japanese-mediated context. Having access to English

and English-mediated contexts might be one advantage for entering a powered position; however, there is a high probability that distances returnees from Japanese society linguistically, culturally, and psychologically. As a result, they start to establish their own context (“hybridity” in Kanno’s term) based upon the two contexts that they have experienced.

The participants in Kanno’s (2003) study have some similarities with and differences from Korean early study-abroad undergraduates, who are also from a non-English speaking country where English and admittance to English speaking contexts are considered as an access to the power. Also, both groups spend their adolescent years in English speaking countries as ESL learners. However, unlike the Japanese returnees who come to the English speaking context because of their parents’ employment, Korean early study-abroad undergraduates come to the U.S. for educational purposes. Also, Korean early study-abroad undergraduates do not have to return to Korea based upon their parents’ situation. In spite of these differences, however, Kanno’s (2003) concept of hybridity still has very important implications for Korean early study-abroad undergraduates, especially in terms of their sense of “different Korean-ness.” In the Korean context, Korean early study-abroad undergraduates may be compared to Japanese returnees who are distanced linguistically, culturally, and psychologically from the majority of Japanese, who have only Japanese socialization. It is likely that Korean early study-abroad undergraduates would also establish their own “hybridity” from the two contexts in which they have been socialized. The next section deals with this concept of hybridity more in detail, especially focusing on the theoretical frameworks of borderlands identities and cosmopolitanism.

2.3 Theoretical Frameworks

ESL learners develop an extended language socialization continuum from L1 to L2 along which they can position themselves differently from their options in their L1-mediated context. This section provides the theoretical frameworks to illustrate Korean early study-abroad undergraduates’ self-positioning on the L1/L2 continuum.

2.3.1 *Living in Borderlands*

To define identities, especially in second language learning contexts, I will draw upon Gee (1996) and Norton (2001) first. Both Gee (1996) and Norton (2001) emphasize the role of language and social relationships in one’s identity formation. Gee’s (1996) notion of “big D,” Discourse, explains the interrelations of language, social contexts, relationships, and self-perception/identity. By Discourse, Gee (1996) means not only language itself but also ways of “behaving, interacting,

valuing, thinking, believing, speaking and often reading and writing that are accepted as instantiations of particular roles (or ‘types of people’) by specific *groups of people...*”(p. 8). He further defines Discourses as “being people like us,” “ways of being in the world,” or “forms of life.” In other words, Discourses are not just linguistic but go beyond the language itself into ways of thinking, behaving, and relating to others.

Gee (1996) also points out that Discourses always entail the ideologies behind them. By ideology, Gee (1996) means the tacit theory that is taken for granted in each Discourse, which shows “what counts as a ‘normal’ person and the ‘right’ ways to think, feel, and behave” (p. 9). Through the interplay of Discourses and ideology, one can position oneself in a certain situation in a way that affects self-perception and identity. What is important here is that identity is not solid and unitary but flexible and multiple depending on relevant Discourses. Gee (1996) emphasizes the variety of social contexts that can lead to multiple identities based upon the contextual differences.

Gee’s (1996) emphasis on social context in relation to Discourse, ideology, and identities can be closely connected to Norton’s (2001) idea of second language learners’ identity. As a second language teacher and a researcher, she views the world in terms of power, by which she means “the socially constructed relations among individuals, institutions, and communities through which symbolic and material resources in a society are produced, distributed and validated” (p. 7). This goes back to Gee’s (1996) definition of ideology as “what counts as a ‘normal’ person and the ‘right’ ways to think, feel, and behave” (p. 9). The notion of normality and rightness are decided in a given context by multiple interplays of power, which Norton (2001) states are “not a fixed, pre-determined quantity but can be mutually generated in interpersonal and intergroup relations” (p. 9). She further points out that relations of power can serve to enable or constrain the range of identities that language learners can negotiate in their classrooms and communities.

In short, identities are always based upon the contexts and relationships in the individual’s life. Language is the core factor of social relationships because it enables, maintains, and shapes relationships. This intimate connection between language and social relationships is the essence of Discourse, which refers to language and its outer context as well as inner influences. Since Discourse includes language and social relationships, it necessarily entails “positioning.” How one decides to position oneself or how one is positioned by others in certain contexts is directly related to one’s identity; one perceives oneself as oneself by taking certain actions in relation to others. And positioning is always influenced by ideology acquired explicitly or implicitly from experiences and social contexts or categorizations, another manifestation of power. This is how language, social relationships (which together constitute Discourse), ideology, social contexts, and power are embedded in identity formation. Second language learners’ identity formation is more complex than that of first language users since they are exposed to both L1 and L2 social contexts (and powers). Therefore, all those factors—language, social relationships, ideology, social contexts, and power—should be dealt with layer by layer to investigate the identity of second language learners.

This second language learners' identities can be explained with Anzaldua's (2007) concept of "borderlands." In her book, *Borderlands, La Frontera: The New Mestiza*, she delineates what it means to live in borderlands, between different worlds. She talks about being a hybrid or mixture, and being in the middle. As a Chicana lesbian activist and writer in Texas near the U.S.-Mexico border, she describes her own experience of being alienated from her mother culture while also being an alien in the dominant culture, and being in the space between the different worlds she inhabits. This space is a no man's land occupied by people who fit neither here nor there, who are caught between worlds, and who mentally negotiate at least two identities at the same time, without being confused or hurt (Anzaldua 2007, p. 18). In other words, having borderlands identities does not simply mean being between two different worlds. It is the process of establishing positive identities in marginalization, a perspective from which inhabitants become acute observers of dominant cultures who refuse to be assigned powerless identities by the powered group and who build their own identities by using their advantage of being unrestrained border crossers.

2.3.2 *Being Cosmopolitans*

Being unrestrained border crossers is related to being cosmopolitans. Such mobility in this interconnected and interdependent globalized era (Rizvi 2009) necessarily produces transnationalists (Roudometof 2005; Tan 2004), those who cross national borders whether as "refugees, transmigrants, illegal immigrants or international students" (Beck 2002, p. 29). However, not every transnationalist achieves the same degree of dual- or multi- socialization (Schieffelin and Ochs 1986). Some continue to reside psychologically in their former nation, maintaining their home culture and ideologies even after they cross national borders, while others can live in a more "internally globalized" (Beck 2002, p. 17) space where they change their ways of thinking in accordance with the expanded context.

Cosmopolitanism refers to "the humanistic idea of universalistic identifications" (Park and Abelman 2004, p. 647) and "cultivated detachment from restricted forms of identity" (Anderson 1998, p. 266). In other words, it refers to ideas of globalization becoming internalized (Beck 2002), a series of state-of-mind changes that lead individuals to become "citizens of the world" or "cosmopolitans" (Heater 2000; Miscevic 1999). More specifically, cosmopolitans are the people who have one or more of the following characteristics in terms of their mindset:

- *Admit the co-existence of different nationalisms, ideologies, cultures, and identities* (Hannerz 1990). This characteristic is connected to the concept of "embracing diversity." Cosmopolitans can acknowledge and accept that there are various nationalisms, ideologies, cultures, and identities in the world.
- *Remain open to the partialness and pluralization* (Beck 2002), another way of expressing "embrace diversity." Embracing diversity starts with admitting

differences (Hannerz 1990), and the differences can be re-phrased as partialness and pluralization. An example of this principle is a colleague whom I met during a Fulbright workshop. Ute was born in Bangkok, Thailand and stayed there with her German father and Indonesian mother until she was 16. She spent 2 years of high school and 4 years of college in Munich, Germany; then, she came to the U.S. for her master's program in Art History. As she said, she was "a world citizen" who had "bits of this and bits of that." She added that since she had "those pieces," she could understand different cultures and perspectives and accept them as they were. It was her partial ethnicity and multiple exposures to plural cultures that made her a cosmopolitan who was open to differences and diversity.

- *Take a critical and reflexive stance to one's own national and local culture* (Turner 2002) which entails becoming a keen critic of one's L1 Discourses (Gee 1996). Cosmopolitans are not limited to their L1 context but can look at it objectively from outsider perspectives.
- *Are willing to be social activists who take critical actions against social injustices at both national and international levels* (Tarrow 2005), which, in the case of my participants, means taking responsibilities as financially privileged transnational elites. My participants have enjoyed a superior position in capitalistic Korean society, which is very likely enhanced by their transnational experiences in the U.S. I believe that their superior position should be considered as an opportunity to share what they have. As privileged individuals, they can be powerful in terms of making the society more equal and harmonious. Thus, as cosmopolitans, they should not merely enjoy their privileged position but develop a critical view of unequal power relations and take actions for the lessprivileged. And, as global citizens, they should not restrict their social activism to Korean society. They should be able to apply their critical social activism to the international level of inequality and injustice.

2.4 Summary

In this chapter, I reviewed previous studies that are relevant to the present study. To illustrate how Korean early study-abroad undergraduates have formed their identities in relation to their second language learning experiences in the U.S, I first explored types of identities. Then, in view of the U.S. as an ESL context for Korean early study-abroad undergraduates, I focused on identities in the field of second language learning. This section was divided into two major subsections, inside the classroom and outside the classroom, as both contexts are crucial in the formation of Korean early study-abroad undergraduates' identities. Lastly, I offered the theoretical framework of the dissertation, based on a definition of identities. I particularly drew upon borderlands identities (Anzaldúa 2007) and cosmopolitanism (Beck 2002; Hannerz 1990; Heater 2000; Miscevic 1999; Turner 2002;

Tarrow 2005) to conceptualize how Korean early study-abroad undergraduates in the U.S. position themselves in relation to two languages and two language-mediated contexts. The following chapter presents the methodology of this study including descriptions of the research setting, participants, data collection procedures, and data analysis.

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