"This May Create a Zero-lingual State": Critical Examination of Language Ideologies in an English Learning Blog

Rayoung Song

Abstract

Given the importance of the blogosphere for autonomous language learning, many studies on computer-assisted language learning (CALL) have vigorously investigated the use of blogs in language learning. Noticeably lacking in these endeavors are investigations of language learners' social engagement with others in online spaces to define and negotiate their own meanings of language and language learning. To fill this gap, this study investigated the language ideologies disseminated in a Korean blog that has become a collaborative online English-learning community. Focusing on this blog owner's ideas and her followers' responses, I explored the language ideologies disseminated and negotiated in conversations on language learning and using. This is part of a larger virtual ethnographic study. I analyzed online posts and comments using Gee's situated meanings. Findings suggest that the Korean bloggers subscribe to monolingual ideologies because they are acutely aware of the ideological contexts in Korea surrounding English and are critical about their own language learning and using practices. The current study asserts that the blogosphere can create opportunities for language learners to contest existing knowledge and voice their opinions on issues that matter to them as language learners and members of a society.

KEYWORDS: CALL; LANGUAGE IDEOLOGIES; BLOG; ENGLISH LEARNING

Introduction

Online spaces have become an indispensable venue for knowledge sharing and opinion building. In particular, the blogosphere allows an individual to

Affiliation

The University of Massachusetts Amherst, USA.
email: rsong@educ.umass.edu

equinoxonline

share information and to engage in discussions with others in writing. Given the importance of the blogosphere for autonomous language learning, many studies on computer-assisted language learning (CALL) have vigorously investigated the use of blogs in language learning (see Reinders & White, 2016; Wang & Vasquez, 2012). However, much research on CALL has not paid attention to the crucial role of the blogosphere in this democratic social engagement for language learning. Rather, the overwhelming majority of the research has focused on the cases in which blogs were employed as pedagogical tools for teaching specific linguistic skills such as writing (Aljumah, 2012; Chen, 2016; Zhang, Song, Shen, & Huang, 2014), or enhancing social development such as identity (Bhavana, 2009; Sun & Chang, 2012) and intercultural skills (Elola & Oskoz, 2008; L. Lee, 2011; Melo-Pfeifer, 2015). Moreover, in most of these studies, the use of blogs was initiated by teachers or researchers rather than learners.

Noticeably lacking in these endeavors are investigations of language learners' social engagement with other learners in online spaces to define and to negotiate their own meanings of language and language learning. An examination of this metalinguistic discussion, which has been initiated by the learners themselves, can provide crucial insights into how ideas about language shape learners' agentive language learning in these free online spaces. Such insights will contribute to a critical examination of CALL in understanding the opportunities for and limits of the democratic process of knowledge sharing and opinion building within the blogosphere.

To fill the gap, this study investigated the language ideologies disseminated in a Korean blog that has become a collaborative online English-learning community. Focusing on this blog owner's ideas and her followers' responses, I explored the language ideologies disseminated and negotiated in conversations on the meaning of language and the ways in which language is learned. Yejin, the blogger, is highly admired by her followers because of her advanced English fluency, relentless efforts at language learning, and collaborative endeavors to study with other learners. She has become the leader of this English-learning community. Examining the Korean bloggers' language ideologies addresses the gap in the research on blogs and language learning because Yejin's blog has become a venue to create and negotiate language ideologies while engaging in collaborative English learning. I further emphasize that in the era of *influencers* and *followers*, leaders in online spaces have a great impact on the audience because: (a) online environments, which are not constrained by time and space, facilitate communication with a wider audience; and (b) the followers are more likely to be influenced by the leaders' ideas because they tend to follow the leaders out of admiration. The following section explicates language ideologies and bilingualism models as the theoretical framework underpinning this study.

Theoretical Framework: Language Ideologies and Bilingualism Models

Various definitions of language ideologies have been discussed widely in linguistic anthropology and sociolinguistics; nevertheless, language ideologies are broadly defined as beliefs, notions, and attitudes about language structure and use through experiences of the members of a society (Irvine, 1989; Rumsey, 1990; Silverstein, 1992; Woolard, 1992; Woolard & Schieffelin, 1994). Because language ideologies deal with the structure and use of language, they do not operate in a vacuum and are often normalized to serve the interests of a dominant group (Bauman & Briggs, 2003).

Language ideologies are important in a society in which a variety of languages are spoken because language maintenance, planning, and policing are performed and discussed at the levels of the society and the individual as people negotiate their daily lives (Kroskrity, 2000). For example, central to the macro- and meso-level processes of language (i.e., language maintenance, planning, and policing) in multilingual communities are questions such as whether there is an identifiable language, what counts as a language, how a particular language variety becomes prestigious or stigmatized, and what kinds of assumptions are made about a specific ethnic or national identity associated with a specific language (Makoni & Pennycook, 2007; Woolard, 1998).

Against this backdrop, the language practices and competency of a bilingual person are often fraught with contention. Thus far, many researchers have problematized linguistic prescriptivism, which determines how two languages should be used within a monolingual ideology. The monolingual prescriptivism regarding bilingual practice has been conceptualized as semilingualism (Cummins, 1976, 1994) and languagelessness (Rosa, 2016). Semilingualism describes bilingual students' "low" proficiencies in both languages, particularly in discussion of minority students' school failures resulting from alleged deficiencies in the academic language. However, this idea has since been debunked (Edelsky et al., 1983; Martin-Jones & Romaine, 1986). Similarly, Rosa (2016) criticized the ideology of *languagelessness*, how language standardization "stigmatize[s] particular linguistic practices understood to deviate from prescriptive norms" (p. 162) and calls into question not only an individual's linguistic competence but also the individual's personhood. In the discussions surrounding these two terms (i.e., semilingualism and languagelessness), the point of contention lies in their prescriptive nature that imposes a certain way a given language *should be* spoken for one's linguistic competency and personhood to be considered legitimate.

Blackledge and Creese (2010) suggested two models for explicating bilingualism from two distinct perspectives: separate bilingualism and flexible bilingualism. First, separate bilingualism contends that an "ideal bilingual"

person is two monolinguals in one body; thus, bilingualism or multilingualism requires monolingual fluency in two or more languages. As with semilingualism or languagelessness, separate bilingualism does not adequately present the reality of a bilingual person's use of language. It prescribes language use from a monolingual ideological perspective (Blackledge & Creese, 2010; Garcia, 2009; Shin, 2012). In contrast, flexible bilingualism views bilingual uses and competencies from the perspective of the users; thus, it promotes the flexible use of language across linguistic boundaries.

Studies exploring monolingual language ideologies have continued to question the concept of language as a separate entity, and it has been argued that the focus should be the various linguistic repertoires that language users draw upon (Makoni & Pennycook, 2007). This perspective is embodied in several terminologies, for example, translanguaging (Garcia & Wei, 2013), translingualism (Canagarajah, 2013), and metrolingualism (Pennycook & Otsuji, 2015). The central argument of these concepts is the need to explore language from the perspective of the users: to consider different languages, registers, and varieties as a whole linguistic repertoire rather than as the institution of a language or languages. Garcia and Wei (2013) introduced the term *translanguaging*, which they defined as bilingualism without separation. It often includes the concept historically referred to as *codeswitching* (Garcia & Sylvan, 2011). Thus, translanguaging is the dynamic ways in which bilingual individuals speak in their daily lives.

Language Ideologies and Language Learning in Online Spaces and the Blogosphere

Acknowledging the growing diversity of communication options and the increasing importance of informal learning spaces, there is a need for research that explores these new communication forms and language ideologies beyond the classroom (McGroarty, 2010). However, online spaces have not yet been included as venues for exploring language ideologies. Most of the research on CALL has focused on micro-level analyses of specific teaching and instructional methods that incorporate technology. A notable exception is Blommaert's (2009) research on language policies in internet courses that teach American accents. In an analysis of internet-based American accent training courses, Blommaert showed how one accent variety was essentialized and normalized and all other forms were considered deviations from the norm.

Even with this exception, no study has yet examined language ideologies in the blogosphere as a venue for people to freely exchange their ideas about language and language learning. Despite its great popularity as the most investigated Web 2.0 technology (Wang & Vasquez, 2012), the blogosphere has

been studied mainly to enhance specific linguistic skills, for example, writing (Aljumah, 2012; Chen, 2016; Zhang et al., 2014), or to facilitate social relations, such as identity development (Bhavana, 2009; Sun & Chang, 2012) and intercultural competence (Elola & Oskoz, 2008; L. Lee, 2011; Melo-Pfeifer, 2015). Most studies have examined the cases in which blogs have been used by teachers as class assignments. Even in the cases where blogs were explored for their utility as an informal learning tool, the learners were asked to use the blogs for research (Rashtchi & Hajihassani, 2010). In the studies investigating learners who have their own blogs, the focus has tended to be the affordance of or the users' perceptions of blogs as a language learning tool. Therefore, the current study fills the gap by investigating the language ideologies articulated and negotiated on a learning blog that was created as a free space for sharing knowledge and opinions. The guiding research questions for the examination are:

1. What situated meanings (Gee, 2014) of *language learning* and *using* are observed on the leader's blog?
2. What language ideologies of bilingual practices are being disseminated?

Methods

This section introduces the methods used in the study. First, I describe virtual ethnography as my study design and the researcher positionality as a participant-observer. Then, I explain the participants and contexts. Finally, I detail my data collection and analysis strategies.

Virtual Ethnography and Researcher Positionality

The data used in the current study came from the first part of a larger virtual ethnographic study started in 2015. This first portion includes the analysis of the blog data from 2014 to 2017. Virtual ethnography (Hine, 2000; Kozinets, 2010) rejects the traditional notion of a "field" bound by a geographical location; instead, it considers cultural practices and social relations as its field. Thus, the internet is not merely a collection of cultural artifacts but rather a culture in and of itself. Reflecting on the increasing importance of the internet as a site and culture, many researchers have employed virtual ethnographic designs. For example, Kidd (2013) examined blog sites in which new teachers in the United Kingdom shared their experiences of full-time employment. Carter (2005) explored the virtual community Cybercity and its culture, including the human relationships formed within it.

According to some virtual ethnographic studies, there are two methodological considerations in employing virtual ethnographic designs: (a) the participants' authenticity and the trustworthiness of their online identities and (b) the researchers' lurking and possible abuse of the participants (Johnson

& Humphry, 2012; Shumar & Madison, 2013). Because of the inevitability of a researcher's interpreting and constructing the participants' reality (Geertz, 1973), I will explain where I stand in the study and how I mitigate these two concerns that have been raised in previous virtual ethnographic studies.

I have been an avid blogger for nearly 10 years. I discovered Yejin's blog in 2014 and casually built a rapport with her as a fellow blogger and language learner. When Yejin started her first virtual study groups in 2015, I became interested, more as a researcher, in her endeavors to collaborate with other language learners and received her permission to be a participant-observer in her study groups. Since 2015, I have been participating in blog conversations and weekly study group meetings.

Owing to my extended exposure to this community as a participant-observer, I argue that the issues of participant authenticity and researcher lurking have been mitigated. I have known most of the core members of this community for at least three years. By revealing myself as a researcher, blogger, and member of the community, I was able to build close relationships and trust with the participants. When I participated in the study groups, I made sure that each member understood that I was a researcher as well as a member. However, because blogs, by their very nature, tend to attract visitors continually, I was unable to disclose my positionality as a researcher to all of Yejin's followers. Hence, I collected only publicly available posts and comments on Yejin's blog.

Participants and Setting

This section provides details on the participants and the context of the study. Yejin is the central participant in this study and leader of this blog community. She grew up in Korea and is a fluent English speaker. Yejin studied Spanish in college in Korea and moved to the United States upon graduation. She has been living and working on the West Coast of the United States since 2011. At her work, English is the major medium of communication, but many employees are more comfortable communicating in Spanish.

Yejin started learning English in middle school in Korea as a part of the school curriculum. In addition, she studied English on her own by using pop songs to improve her proficiency. She first came to the United States at age 20 for two months for a seasonal job. Yejin said she was already quite fluent in English when she arrived.

Yejin started her blog on one of the most popular Korean blog websites in January 2014. She has posted on this blog regularly, writing an average of 12.5 posts per month. The blog has focused on language learning, especially English and Spanish. Yejin has shared study tips and has suggested books and other language learning materials. She has also shared recordings of her

reading the transcripts of American television shows to stimulate interest and participation from her followers. Her English proficiency is very advanced, and many followers have complimented her "perfect English," which was a crucial factor in their joining this community.

As a new way to facilitate her language learning and that of her followers, she launched multiple language study groups in 2015 based on a weekly virtual meeting. Even though each group features different topics and uses different study methods, the formats of the study groups are similar:

- Each group has a weekly meeting via Skype and runs for 8–12 weeks.
- Each week, a different member leads the session.
- All sessions are conducted entirely in English.
- Through a Skype group chat window after each one-hour meeting, the study group members often chat about what transpired in the meeting and how they felt during the meeting.
- The Skype conversations are conducted primarily in Korean.
- Most of the weekly meetings have been recorded and archived by the members for monitoring their progress.

These virtual study groups have boosted community building around Yejin's blog. As a participant-observer, I noticed that interesting conversations emerged in relation to the meaning of language and language learning. I undertook this research to focus on Yejin's articulation of language ideologies and her followers' responses.

Due to the nature of online spaces, differentiating between the members of this community and non-members was difficult. Yejin had more than 4,500 followers by the end of 2017, and just about anyone can access the blog, regardless of whether that individual follows it.[1] Moreover, the total number of members who had participated in the study groups at least once was almost 100.

Data Collection and Analysis

For the larger virtual ethnographic study, my data collection and analysis strategies were similar to those of other ethnographic studies employing participant observations, ethnographic interviews, and field notes to yield "thick descriptions" (Geertz, 1973) of a community's culture. The data sources and the collection and analysis strategies are further described below.

The sources of the data used in this paper were the posts and comments on Yejin's blog, interviews with Yejin, and my fieldnotes. Yejin had written 597 posts by the end of 2017. I have been visiting Yejin's blog since 2014 whenever she would write a new post, and I have checked each post at least one additional

time to observe the comments. I also conducted two one-hour interviews with Yejin in 2015 and 2016 to discover why she was blogging and organizing study groups, and what she was gaining from the study groups. Last, I made notes about my observations, including specific features that stood out, as I participated in her blog and study group activities.

I used discourse analysis to probe the data, specifically employing situated meanings (Gee, 1999, 2014). The concept of situated meanings refers to "the specific meaning a word or utterance takes on in a specific context of use" rather than the stable and general meanings of a word (Gee, 2014, p. 151). I examined the meanings regarding learning and using language that were signified in Yejin's discourses in her blog. Out of 597 posts, 183 were about English learning, 64 were about Spanish learning, 11 about Japanese, and 15 about Korean. Moreover, 119 posts were about the online study groups that she had organized.

I first selected any explicit instances of Yejin's writing about *language*, *language learning*, and *language using*. I then analyzed each post for her definitions of how language is learned and how it should be used. The analysis was then compared with my fieldnotes and the data from the interview with Yejin. In making sense of situated meanings, previous experience and knowledge of the topic are crucial; therefore, my prior knowledge of the leader and the community through my participant-observation allowed for a deeper understanding of the situated meanings of language and language learning. I also undertook member-checking with Yejin to better represent what she was trying to convey in her posts.

Findings

Situated Meanings of How Language is Learned and Should be Used

Yejin seemed to believe that language is best learned by purposefully analyzing and intentionally repeating the characteristics of good models of a language. This understanding of the learning of language is very different from the commonly held belief that language is "naturally learned" by living in an immersive environment. In fact, Yejin confessed that her tireless efforts to improve her English were not well understood by many, particularly "native English speakers." Excerpt (1) was taken from Yejin's post "Secretive Language Lover." She wrote that her American friends did not understand why she was studying English the way she did (e.g., organizing study groups), so she would not talk about it to her friends. This shows the difference in understanding how a language is learned.

(1)   Those whom I met in the U.S. were baffled by my efforts to improve English. In particular, they found my shadowing method strange […] Americans don't understand why I don't have an accent, how I can speak English so fluently […]

> When I explained how I studied English, Americans would often react: "You use English in the U.S. Why don't you just naturally learn the language in your life instead of studying it like that?" Since then, I normally don't tell my American friends that I study English every day […] But I was sure that there are other language lovers like me everywhere. Don't feel lonely. We have each other :)
> (January 2017, "Secretive Language Lover")[2]
> **Commenter 1:** I'm leaving this comment because it really struck a chord with me. I made all [my language study] a secret because I don't want to be told that I am overdoing it. So now the people that I do [language learning] study groups with have become my best friends.

Yejin concluded this post by acknowledging other language lovers who were in a similar situation. She has often cited this as her reason for blogging and doing the study groups: to create a community of language lovers who take a similar approach to language learning. In fact, this post was one of the most engaged posts, recording 193 likes and 120 comments. Half of the comments were written by blog followers, such as Commenter 1, who agreed with her, sympathized with her, and encouraged her.

Excerpt (2) further reveals Yejin's beliefs about language study and use. The excerpt is from her interview in a podcast on English language learning. This podcast was made by a Korean company that matches Filipino teachers and Korean learners of English to improve their speaking skills. In each episode, the host interviews fluent Korean speakers of English about their experiences and tips for English learning. Yejin, a fairly well-known blogger on English learning, was invited to speak in one of the episodes. In this excerpt, she is responding to a request to recommend a study habit or strategy. Instead of suggesting a good strategy, Yejin shared a habit she discouraged.

> (2)   I would rather like to tell you about a habit that I discourage. […] Especially, for those living overseas, there are many who mix Korean and English. […] But in the long run, this does not help in language learning. The reason is that I think the maximum level you can reach in a foreign language depends on the level of your first language. So if you mix languages in this manner, you then end up forgetting the Korean vocabulary that is equivalent to the foreign language vocabulary. In the end, this may create a zero-lingual state. (October, 2015, Yejin's interview with English King)

In this excerpt, Yejin problematized the translanguaging practice of mixing Korean and English, especially for Koreans living overseas, and insisted that each language be used separately. Yejin argued that the practice of translanguaging may lead to a "*zero-lingual* state." The word she used for "state" was *satae,* which can be translated as state or situation in English. However, the Korean word *satae* is used primarily for negative situations, such as an

economic crisis or the outbreak of an epidemic, with far-reaching conse-
quences. Her choice of the word *satae* thus accentuates her negative attitudes
toward translanguaging and its consequences.

Yejin's strong disagreement with translanguaging stems from her belief that
an individual's first language dictates the level that the individual can poten-
tially reach in a second language. She has frequently shared this belief on her
blog. This stepwise development from a first language to a second reflects her
belief in strict boundaries among different languages. This belief was evident
also when she compared learning English with learning Spanish.

In excerpt (3), Yejin wrote that she always had a higher standard for her pro-
ficiency in English than for the other languages she had studied. This is under-
standable because she now lives and works in English-speaking environments.
However, she confessed that she studied Spanish "defensively" when it was her
major in college in Korea because she feared that Spanish would be "harmful"
to her English language development.

(3)   I think I set different levels of expectations for English and other languages. For
      English, I long to have near native fluency; that is, I have the ambition for my
      English to be as good as my Korean. … My partiality to English has a long his-
      tory. As some of you might already know, I majored in Spanish in college, but I
      cared more about my English courses than my Spanish courses. I studied Span-
      ish defensively, worrying that it would be harmful to my English proficiency.
      (January, 2015, "Why Do I Always Have a Higher Standard for English?")
      Commenter 2: I think I am similar. I can speak Spanish confidently although I
      make a mistake, but English … there's some sort of pressure. […] English is like
      a school subject, such as language arts and math. But Spanish feels like a lan-
      guage for communication, so it's more comfortable

She articulated a similar idea in one interview with me when she talked
about a Spanish-English bilingual grammar book. Yejin said she liked the
book because she always feared she would forget English when she stud-
ied Spanish, but because the book compares the grammars of the two lan-
guages, she did not have to worry about forgetting English. This excerpt
again reveals Yejin's belief that mixing two languages is harmful and det-
rimental to language learning and that there are strict boundaries around
languages.

Several followers again sympathized with Yejin and confessed that they too
had higher standards for English than for other languages they studied. The
commenters also shared the reasons for their strict standards for English. For
instance, Commenter 2 mentioned that English felt like a school subject. The
commenter's reasoning reflects the local ideological contexts in Korea sur-
rounding English. English test scores have been important to the academic

and career success of Korean students and job seekers (Jang, 2015). Therefore, it is understandable that Commenter 2 felt that English was more like a school subject than a language.

Language Ideologies on Bilingual Practices

Excerpt (4) is from Yejin's somewhat controversial post that engendered mixed reactions from her followers. The excerpt is from her post "Complete Rambling," in which she talked mostly about her thinking and her daily life. A section of it shows her trying "to mix two languages." In the first paragraph, Yejin discusses why people mix Korean and English and offers to try it to find out what happens:

(4) […] Suddenly, I was curious about the thoughts/intentions/feelings of those who mix Korean and English. Do they want to show off that they know such a difficult word in English? Are they just giving up on thinking about the word in Korean? Or is using an [English] word in their daily life a strategy for remembering a new word they've learned? Because I am curious, I'm going to write the rest of this post mixing Korean and English….
[…]
그동안 labor law에 근거해 실제 court cases between employers and employees 를 찾아 보았다. For example, 이번 주에는 회사에서 sexual harassment 에 관한 complaint가 들어와서 precedents를 찾아 보았다. ³
[…]
I feel I sound obnoxious while writing this. If I speak like this, I might get slapped on the mouth. Let's just not mix languages. Let's speak one language at a time. (January, 2017, "Complete Rambling")

After Yejin made a few guesses about why people mix Korean and English, the second paragraph of Excerpt (4) was her attempt at translanguaging in Korean and English. It is notable that her mixing of Korean and English was tongue-in-cheek, exaggerating how translanguaging is usually done by Korean speakers. Korean speakers normally intersperse a few English words in otherwise Korean utterances; however, Yejin's attempt had almost equal portions of English and Korean. This was pointed out by one of her followers: "Your mixing has too many English words!" Moreover, at the end of the translanguaging paragraph, Yejin gave up on translanguaging altogether, saying that she sounded "obnoxious" and that she "might get slapped" on the mouth if she spoke this way. This attempt concluded in her strengthened resolve not to mix languages.

Many commenters seemed to feel judged by Yejin's post. Six of the 13 commenters confessed that this was indeed how they spoke in their bilingual work environments and added that they "regretted" their mixing practices and "should be more careful from now on":

(5)   **Commenter 3**: I work at a trading firm, and a majority of my co-workers mix English [when speaking Korean]. … I see that it is to show off, so I feel appalled, but I end up imitating them because I don't want to lose. But after reading your post, I made up my mind. I'm not going to mix Korean and English.
Commenter 4: I feel regretful after reading this post … I mix Korean and English a lot. I should be careful from now on.

The fact that many followers admitted to translanguaging lends credence to the fact that this is indeed how most bilingual people speak. However, the followers were still affected by Yejin's argument probably because they admire her English proficiency and take her opinions about English learning seriously.

Because the post stirred strong reactions from her followers and it is an issue that interested me as a multilingual person and researcher, I decided to engage in the discussion with Yejin directly. I commented on her post privately because I respect her position in the community and am aware of the power I have as a researcher who is considered to have expertise on this topic. First, I explained my personal stance: that I found translanguaging natural. I told her about the recent academic debate around translanguaging to let her know about the different perspectives on translanguaging and then solicited her opinion. Excerpt (6) is Yejin's response to my comment.

(6)   Thank you for sharing the research trends! What I was wondering was why people use English words when they speak Korean, but they don't use Korean words when they speak English. I was not trying to enforce monolingualism. I have a personal belief that I want to speak each of the languages I know, including my native language, without the intrusion of another language. I also believe you need regular exposure even for your native language, so I think I have a stricter standard.

Yejin explained that she did not try to "enforce monolingualism" but wanted to be able to speak each language, including her first language, without the intrusion of other languages. This is also why she has run Korean book clubs in which the members read Korean books and have discussions in Korean. As her remarks have repeatedly shown, Yejin wants to have monolingual fluency in each language that she speaks, including her first language.

In Excerpt (6), Yejin also questioned the practice of using English words in Korean discourse when the same person might not use Korean words when speaking English. Given the prominent status of English and English speakers in Korean society (J. S. Lee, 2006; Song, 2011), Yejin might be opposed to using English words when speaking Korean because, as she opined in Excerpt (4), it is done to "show off." Therefore, Yejin's strong opposition to translanguaging between English and Korean might be directed toward Korean elites who publicly display their English skills and, in turn, their social status.

Discussion

The discussions engendering in this blog illustrate different perspectives that may contest the research literature on language learning and using. Much research on online linguistic practices of young people revealed that they engage in translingual practices across linguistic boundaries to enact their cosmopolitan identity (Schreiber, 2015; Sultana, Dovchin, & Pennycook, 2015). In contrast, Yejin and her followers strongly believe in separate bilingualism and the rigid boundaries among languages.

At first glance, Yejin and her followers may seem to recirculate marginalizing perspectives toward bilingual speakers based on monolingual ideologies, particularly in light of the recent literature on translanguaging to promote diversity and respect bilingual learners' identities (Garcia & Wei, 2013). However, the closer observations suggest the possibility of an alternative interpretation of translanguaging in Korean contexts. Translanguaging between Spanish and English by Latinas/os in the United States has largely been looked down upon, and Latina/o bilingual students have been labeled deficient speakers and students (Rosa, 2016). Contrastingly, translanguaging between Korean and English is frowned upon because Koreans often believe that an individual mixes English words when speaking Korean to "show off" their English skills that often signify high social status in Korean society (M. W. Lee, 2016). In this context, Yejin's opposition to translanguaging might stem from her objection to Korean elitism, which is in line with her philosophy of sharing study tips and helping others to learn English through her blog at no cost to her followers. Similar views were echoed in some of the responses to her posts. For example, in Excerpt (5), Commenter 3 said that her coworkers were interspersing English words in their Korean language conversations to "show off." While not approving of this practice, the commenter still interspersed English words because she did not want to "lose." Therefore, Yejin and her followers' rejection of translanguaging is possibly to challenge English as hegemonic force of a dominant group (van Dijk, 1993) while they still feel pressured to have a good English proficiency to be competitive in Korean society.

Hanna and de Nooy (2009) have argued that despite the pedagogical potentials of online discussion in CALL, its *open* and *free* natures may exacerbate existing marginalization and social inequality. In this light, critical investigation of online discussion may also reveal *why* some marginalization is perpetuated. By taking heed of online discussions in the blogosphere, CALL researchers can illuminate what language ideologies are circulated as well as *why* such ideologies are taken up by learners. In so doing, the researchers can gain more nuanced understanding of language ideologies that shape and impact learners' language learning and using and can contribute to portraying

language learners as agents who are in charge of their own learning, and as members of society who are involved in democratic conversations on the issues that matter to them.

Conclusion

The blogosphere has been one of the most popular venues for sharing knowledge and opinions, contributing to the increasing importance of online discussions on cultural, social, and political issues. However, the research on CALL that has focused on the blogosphere has been limited to the exploration of blogs as a pedagogical tool and has not paid attention to the role of blog as a space to reflect what is involved in learning. Against this backdrop, the current study fills this gap by exploring blogs as a venue for the free flow of ideas and opinions.

Yejin and her followers' views on language may seem prescriptive and marginalizing to some bilingual speakers. However, their discussions also reveal that these bloggers are acutely aware of the ideological contexts in Korea surrounding English and are critical about their own language learning and using practices. The current study asserts that the blogosphere can create opportunities for language learners to contest existing knowledge and to voice their opinions. The discussions among bloggers and their followers can provide more nuanced insights for researchers and educators as they explore what impacts learner agency of their students.

The present study has some limitations. Due to the nature of online spaces, I was only able to interview Yejin and relied solely on the comments on Yejin's blog to represent the followers' opinions. This is why I made a decision to focus on the impacts of the leader's ideas on her followers. Adding some interviews with some followers would potentially have offered a deeper understanding of their perceptions and the impacts of the blog conversation.

Notes

1.   The website where Yejin hosted her blog had 434,278,990 subscribers in 2016 (Korean Communication Commission, 2016). However, anyone can use the site and browse all of the associated blogs without a subscription. Hence, the number of viewers of Yejin's blog would be much higher than the number of followers.

2.   All of Yejin's posts on her blog were written in Korean, and the posts were translated by the author.

3.   Given the fact that Yejin's blog is public, she could be easily found if I used her direct quotes in Korean. To protect her identity, I recreated this portion. Thus, it is not written by Yejin but my simulation to provide a visual juxtaposition of her translanguaging between Korean and English.

About the Author

Rayoung Song is a PhD candidate in language, literacy, and culture in the College of Education at the University of Massachusetts Amherst. Her research interests include multilingual speakers' use of linguistic and cultural repertoires to construct and negotiate identities, and their resistance and/or recirculation of language ideologies. Rayoung's dissertation research explores an online English learning community by Korean ESL/EFL speakers.

References

Aljumah, F. H. (2012). Saudi learner perceptions and attitudes towards the use of blogs in teaching English writing course for EFL majors at Qassim University. *English Language Teaching*, *5*(1), 100–116.

Bauman, R., & Briggs, C. L. (2003). *Voices of modernity: Language ideologies and the politics of inequality*. Cambridge, England: Cambridge University Press. https://doi.org/10.1017/CBO9780511486647

Bhavana, A. R. (2009). Honing language skills using blogs. *Journal on School Educational Technology*, *4*(3), 30–33. https://doi.org/10.26634/jsch.4.3.585

Blackledge, A., & Creese, A. (2010). *Multilingualism: A critical perspective*. London, England: Bloomsbury Academic.

Blommaert, J. (2009). A market of accents. *Language Policy*, *8*(3), 243–259. https://doi.org/10.1007/s10993-009-9131-1

Canagarajah, S. (2013). *Translingual practice: Global Englishes and cosmopolitan relations*. New York, NY: Routledge. https://doi.org/10.4324/9780203120293

Carter, D. (2005). Living in virtual communities: an ethnography of human relationships in cyberspace. *Information, Communication & Society*, *8*(2), 148–167. https://doi.org/10.1080/13691180500146235

Chen, P.-J. (2016). Learners' metalinguistic and affective performance in blogging to write. *Computer Assisted Language Learning*, *29*(4), 790–814. https://doi.org/10.1080/09588221.2015.1068813

Cummins, J. (1976). The influence of bilingualism on cognitive growth: A synthesis of research findings and explanatory hypotheses. *Working Papers on Bilingualism*, *9*.

Cummins, J. (1994). Semilingualism. In R. E. Asher & J. M. Y. Simpson (Eds.), *The Encyclopedia of language and linguistics* (pp. 3812–3814). New York, NY: Pergamon Press.

Edelsky, C., Hudelson, S., Flores, B., Barkin, F., Altwerger, B., & Jilbert, K. (1983). Semilingualism and language deficit. *Applied Linguistics*, *4*(1), 1–22. https://doi.org/10.1093/applin/4.1.1

Elola, I., & Oskoz, A. (2008). Blogging: Fostering intercultural competence development in foreign language and study broad contexts. *Foreign Language Annals*, *41*(3), 454–477. https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1944-9720.2008.tb03307.x

Garcia, O. (2009). *Bilingual education in the 21st century: A global perspective*. Hoboken, NJ: Wiley-Blackwell.

Garcia, O., & Sylvan, C. E. (2011). Pedagogies and practices in multilingual classrooms: Singularities in pluralities. *Modern Language Journal*, *95*(3), 385–400. https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1540-4781.2011.01208.x

Garcia, O., & Wei, L. (2013). *Translanguaging: Language, bilingualism and education*. London, England: Palgrave Macmillan.

Gee, J. P. (1999). *An introduction to discourse analysis: Theory and method*. London, England: Routledge. https://doi.org/10.4324/9781315819662

Gee, J. P. (2014). *How to do discourse analysis: A toolkit*. New York, NY: Routledge.

Geertz, C. (1973). *The interpretation of cultures*. New York, NY: Basic Books.

Hanna, B. E., & de Nooy, J. (2009). *Learning language and culture via public Internet discussion forums*. Basingstoke, England: Palgrave Macmillan. https://doi.org/10.1057/9780230235823

Hine, C. (2000). *Virtual ethnography*. Thousand Oaks, CA: SAGE. https://doi.org/10.4135/9780857020277

Irvine, J. T. (1989). When talk isn't cheap: Language and political economy. *American Ethnologist*, *16*(2), 248–267. https://doi.org/10.1525/ae.1989.16.2.02a00040

Jang, I. C. (2015). Language learning as a struggle for distinction in today's corporate recruitment culture: An ethnographic study of English study abroad practices among South Korean undergraduates. *L2 Journal*, *7*(3). https://doi.org/10.5070/L27323591

Johnson, N. F., & Humphry, N. (2012). The teenage expertise network (TEN): An online ethnographic approach. *International Journal of Qualitative Studies in Education (QSE)*, *25*(6), 723–739. https://doi.org/10.1080/09518398.2011.590160

Kidd, W. (2013). Investigating the lives of new teachers through ethnographic blogs. *Ethnography and Education*, *8*(2), 210–223. https://doi.org/10.1080/17457823.2013.792510

Kozinets, R. V. (2010). *Netnography: Doing ethnographic research online*. Thousand Oaks, CA: SAGE.

Kroskrity, P. V. (2000). *Regimes of language: Ideologies, polities, and identities*. Santa Fe, NM: SAR Press.

Kroskrity, P. V. (2005). Language ideologies. In A. Duranti (Ed.), *A Companion to Linguistic Anthropology* (pp. 496–517). Oxford, England: Blackwell Publishing. https://doi.org/10.1002/9780470996522.ch22

Lee, J. S. (2006). Linguistic constructions of modernity: English mixing in Korean television commercials. *Language in Society*, *35*(1), 59–91. https://doi.org/10.1017/S0047404506060039

Lee, L. (2011). Blogging: Promoting learner autonomy and intercultural competence through study abroad. *Language Learning & Technology*, *15*(3), 87–109.

Lee, M. W. (2016). "Gangnam style" English ideologies: Neoliberalism, class and the parents of early study-abroad students. *International Journal of Bilingual Education and Bilingualism*, *19*(1), 35–50. https://doi.org/10.1080/13670050.2014.963024

Makoni, S., & Pennycook, A. (2007). *Disinventing and reconstituting languages*. Bristol, England: Multilingual Matters.

Martin-Jones, M., & Romaine, S. (1986). Semilingualism: A half-baked theory of communicative competence. *Applied Linguistics*, *7*(1), 26. https://doi.org/10.1093/applin/7.1.26

McGroarty, M. E. (2010). Language and ideologies. In N. H. Hornberger & S. L. McKay (Eds.), *Sociolinguistics and language education* (pp. 3–39). Bristol, England: Multilingual Matters. https://doi.org/10.21832/9781847692849-003

Melo-Pfeifer, S. (2015). Blogs and the development of plurilingual and intercultural competence: report of a co-actional approach in Portuguese foreign language classroom. *Computer Assisted Language Learning*, *28*(3), 220–240. https://doi.org/10.1080/09588221.2013.818556

Pennycook, A., & Otsuji, E. (2015). *Metrolingualism: Language in the city*. London, England: Routledge. https://doi.org/10.4324/9781315724225

Rashtchi, M., & Hajihassani, H. (2010). Blog-assisted language learning: A possibility in teaching reading to Iranian EFL learners. *International Journal of Language Studies*, *4*(4), 245–262.

Reinders, H., & White, C. (2016). 20 years of autonomy and technology: How far have we come and where to next? *Language Learning & Technology*, *20*(2).

Rosa, J. D. (2016). Standardization, racialization, languagelessness: Raciolinguistic ideologies across communicative contexts. *Journal of Linguistic Anthropology*, (2), 162. https://doi.org/10.1111/jola.12116

Rumsey, A. (1990). Wording, meaning, and linguistic ideology. *American Anthropologist*, *92*(2), 346–361. https://doi.org/10.1525/aa.1990.92.2.02a00060

Schreiber, B. R. (2015). "I am what I am": Multilingual identity and digital translanguaging. *Language Learning & Technology*, *19*(3), 69–87.

Shin, S. J. (2012). *Bilingualism in schools and society: Language, identity, and policy*. New York, NY: Routledge. https://doi.org/10.4324/9780203828670

Shumar, W., & Madison, N. (2013). Ethnography in a virtual world. *Ethnography and Education*, *8*(2), 255–272. https://doi.org/10.1080/17457823.2013.792513

Silverstein, M. (1992). The uses and utility of ideology: Some reflections. *Pragmatics*, *2*(3), 311–323. https://doi.org/10.1075/prag.2.3.11sil

Song, J. J. (2011). English as an official language in South Korea: Global English or social malady? *Language Problems & Language Planning*, *35*(1), 35–55. https://doi.org/10.1075/lplp.35.1.03son

Sultana, S., Dovchin, S., & Pennycook, A. (2015). Transglossic language practices of young adults in Bangladesh and Mongolia. *International Journal of Multilingualism*, *12*(1), 93–108. https://doi.org/10.1080/14790718.2014.887088

Sun, Y.-C., & Chang, Y. (2012). Blogging to learn: Becoming EFL academic writers through collaborative dialogues. *Language Learning & Technology*, *16*(1), 43–61.

van Dijk, T. A. (1993). Principles of critical discourse analysis. *Discourse & Society*, *4*(2), 249–283. https://doi.org/10.1177/0957926593004002006

Wang, S., & Vasquez, C. (2012). Web 2.0 and second language learning: What does the research tell us? *CALICO Journal*, *29*(3), 412–430. https://doi.org/10.11139/cj.29.3.412-430

Woolard, K. (1998). Introduction: Language ideology as a field of inquiry. In B. B. Schieffelin, K. A. Woolard, & P. V. Kroskrity (Eds.), Language ideologies: Practice and theory (Vol. Oxford studies in anthropological linguistics, pp. 3–47). New York, NY: Oxford University Press.

Woolard, K. A. (1992). Language ideology: Issues and approaches. *Pragmatics*, *2*(3), 235–249. https://doi.org/10.1075/prag.2.3.01woo

Woolard, K. A., & Schieffelin, B. B. (1994). Language ideology. *Annual Review of Anthropology*, *23*(1), 55–82. https://doi.org/10.1146/annurev.an.23.100194.000415

Zhang, H., Song, W., Shen, S., & Huang, R. (2014). The effects of blog-mediated peer feedback on learners' motivation, collaboration, and course satisfaction in a second language writing course. *Australasian Journal of Education Technology*, *30*(6), 670–685. https://doi.org/10.14742/ajet.860