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Translingual Approaches as Institutional Intervention: Implementing the Single-Language Writing Group

Yu-Kyung Kang

GONZAGA UNIVERSITY

This chapter describes the development of a single-language writing group in a U.S. university writing center where 80% of its clients are international students. A single language writing group challenges ubiquitous immersive language philosophies and offers a monolingual means of engaging students in translingual dispositions. Specifically, this chapter reviews the author's own ethnographic research on Korean students' English encounters and illustrates how a Korean single-language writing group helped students experience their first language as a resource rather than a barrier in developing academic writing. Notably, the group workshops fostered translingual dispositions as they allowed the students to situate their language ideologies and practices in their history as Korean transnationals. The author argues that non-conventional literacy support acts as an institutional intervention contributing to the literate ecology of students' transnational experiences.

Keywords: translingual disposition, language ideologies, U.S. higher education, writing center, international students

The number of undergraduate international students attending U.S. higher education institutions has risen sharply over the past decade. Reflecting this nationwide trend, the total number of foreign students at the University of Illinois Urbana-Champaign (UIUC) has doubled (from 4,964 in fall 2005 to 10,381 in fall 2015); these students make up 22.3 percent of student enrollment. With such growth, students, faculty, and staff have scrambled to adjust and attend to dramatic demographic changes in and outside of the classrooms. To compensate for such dramatic increases, units, departments, and programs that provide literacy services and support (e.g., the first-year writing program, the linguistics department) frantically and substantially increased the number

of classes and instructor/graduate TA hires. But despite efforts of people on the frontlines, many multilingual international students are without sufficient language resources and literacy support to develop academic writing skills at the university. Consequently, in an institutional space that is both welcoming and exclusionary, international students become more socially, culturally, and academically segregated.¹

The Writers Workshop (WW), the campus writing center at UIUC, is a primary source of campus-wide literacy support for all members of the university. Reflecting the very sharp increase in the number of international undergraduate students, between fall 2005 and spring 2014, the percentage of the undergraduate students with ESL/multilingual backgrounds coming to the WW increased from 54.7 percent to more than 80 percent. In response to this dramatic increase in demand for literacy support for our culturally, educationally, and linguistically diverse student body, WW put efforts into providing improved academic services for the growing population. For instance, the WW revamped regular in-house services, developed new services, and collaborated in new ways with units and programs across campus (Kang, 2018, p. 133). The ESL writing groups, a new service, were part of the WW's broader efforts to accommodate the increasing number of international students visiting the writing center. Specifically, the Korean *single-language writing groups*, which are the focus of this chapter, were first facilitated in spring 2012, and were a continuation of "ESL writing groups" that were offered in previous semesters at the WW.

In this chapter, I describe the Korean *single-language writing group* (SLWG) and argue that, in this writing group, Korean international undergraduate student writers were able to develop a translanguing orientation to their English academic writing, even as they spoke predominantly in Korean. This translanguing orientation countered the deficit ideologies that dominated their English writing experiences in their transnational journeys. The writing group, taking place as a series of workshop sessions, fostered translanguing dispositions as they allowed the students to situate their current academic writing experiences within Korean language ideologies and their history as Korean transnationals. Although most second language research stresses

1 The time period focused on in this chapter coincides with my time at UIUC. As of fall 2017, according to the Office of International Student and Scholar Services at UIUC, the number of international students reached 10,834 with a slight decrease (by 7 percent) in the undergraduate enrollment from the previous academic year. This is the first sign of decrease in the enrollment of international undergraduate students in more than a decade.

the effectiveness of immersion learning (i.e., that the target language is best acquired through immersion in the target language), this chapter illustrates how the SLWG helped students experience their first language, Korean, as a resource rather than a barrier in honing English rhetorical flexibility. This chapter, thus, seeks to contribute to the current conversation on and development of translingual approaches and pedagogies by highlighting the importance of providing learning spaces (both physical and psychological) and by suggesting that a translingual approach to writing, can invite and empower multilingual students to negotiate and unsettle existing language ideologies through the mixing of languages and by using one's first language.

I elaborate on the Korean SLWG as an experimental undertaking that aimed to hone a translingual disposition among the students by helping them break away from the deeply rooted self-deprecating English ideologies acquired over the course of their national and transnational educational journeys. In the following sections, I describe the research that led to the idea for SLWG, including my research with jogi yuhak students at the university, which demonstrates that these students need a space where they can explore their past and present ideas and practices surrounding English and language in general. By understanding and respecting individual literacy experiences, I contend that the writing group helped students reflect on ideologies that debilitated their own English language learning, thus helping students take ownership of English and their English literacy practices. I suggest that such unconventional methods of literacy support, such as the Korean SLWG, act as institutional interventions, which contribute to the development of students' transnational experiences.

Evidence-Informed Theory

In the field of Writing and Composition Studies, the 1974 College Composition and Communication resolution "Student Rights to Their Own Language" was NCTE's first call to embrace language diversity. With this initiation, the exploration and pursuit of linguistic diversity has been active in Writing Studies and its adjacent fields. In January 2011, with the publication of "Language Difference in Writing" in *College English*, "translingual," a relatively new term to the field, took center stage. Horner et al. called for a paradigm that promoted linguistic diversity and opposed traditional *monolingualistic* approaches to writing (i.e., those approaches which fetishize Standard English or Edited American English) in our college writing classrooms. As translingual scholars acknowledge, the movement to promote, accept, and practice non-*monolingualistic* orientations to language has long been explored

across various disciplines (e.g., bilingual studies, translation studies) under labels such as “bilingualism,” “multilingualism,” and “plurilingualism.”

Although the big ideas behind the translingual approach have been gaining attention and momentum in the past few years, more recently, there have been tensions over what the outcomes of the approach might (or should) look like in our college classrooms, and in students’ writing. For example, within composition classrooms, Matsuda (2014) criticized translingual scholars (“tour guides”) for promoting translingual writing which he views as a “problematic trend . . . luring” scholars and teachers (“tourists”) with alien writing . . . obscure[ing] more subtle manifestations of the negotiation as well as situations where writers make the rhetorical choice not to deviate from the dominant practice” (pp. 482-483). I see his concerns as understandable; many pedagogical strategies of the translingual approach have so far more or less focused on code-switching or code-meshing as their end product. And, although translingual scholars have presented *living* translingual literacy practices in various communities in the United States and around the world (e.g., Bou Ayash, 2013; Canagarajah, 2002; Young & Martinez, 2011) and introduced pedagogical applications providing tools, evidence, and guidelines for teachers, tutors, and learners (e.g., Hanson, 2013; Jerskey, 2013), much of this research has exemplified “putting together diverse semiotic resources for meaning” (Canagarajah, 2013a, p. 6). Through my experience as a teacher-scholar with training in both L2 and writing studies, I see the translingual approach as a productive tool in helping L2 student writers make conscientious rhetorical choices whether to deviate or confirm to the dominant practices (e.g., Standard English or Edited American English).

The motives and rationale behind the Korean SLWG emerged well before the current “turf battle” broke out between second language studies and translingual approaches (see Canagarajah, 2015; Matsuda, 2014). In fact, the writing group emerged initially less from a theoretical alignment with translingual theory than from a felt sense that Korean students needed a space where they could be mentored in fluent Korean about their linguistic, literate, and rhetorical practices and ideologies. In addition to the visible aspects of translingual literacy, such as the meshing of languages in writing, the translingual approach also points to the less-visible *dispositions* that “constitute assumptions of language, attitude toward social diversity, and tacit skills of communication and learning” (Canagarajah, 2013a, p. 5). This orientation, according to Canagarajah (2013a), “includes an awareness of language as constituting diverse norms, willingness to negotiate with diversity in social interactions, and attitudes such as openness to difference, patience to co-constructed meaning and acceptance of negotiated outcomes in interactions” (p. 5). Not only was

this disposition scarce in the Korean undergraduate students, but, as my own research revealed, their narrow perceptions of the language was stunting their English literacy usage and development overall at the university. Thus, the SLWG was an experiment to address the students' specific ideologies. My exploration of the Korean SLWG dovetails with conversations that are surfacing in the growing body of translingual literature, not solely because the writing group used the Korean language, the students' first language, as the main medium to talk about language and writing, and not because the study presents how students used their more familiar semiotic resources to produce writing—in fact, they did not code-mesh in their academic writing. Instead, I argue that the writing group developed *translingual dispositions* by understanding and attending to their particular monolingualistic English language dispositions, which had been shaped by national and transnational experiences. I claim that the Korean SLWG was a translingual site for Korean undergraduate students with particular language ideologies and literacy practices.

Research Informing SLWG

The felt sense I note above prompted a path of inquiry for my research and pedagogy. I proposed, designed, implemented, and studied the Korean SLWG guided by preliminary findings from my larger longitudinal ethnographic and auto-ethnographic research on the literacy and rhetorical practices of South Korean (henceforth “Korean”) undergraduate students with *jogi yuhak* experience prior to their matriculation at UIUC. *Jogi yuhak*, which literally means Early Study Abroad in Korean (traditionally, the phrase “study abroad student” referred to students studying abroad for undergrad or grad school), is a popular transnational educational migration trend that has been prevalent in Korea since the mid 1990s, and that has also been gaining popularity in other East Asian countries, such as China and Taiwan. This trend has sent thousands of pre-college students, even as young as elementary school, to English-speaking countries—including the US, Canada, New Zealand, Singapore, and Malaysia—for their schooling. The purpose of my research was to examine this Korean phenomenon at UIUC, where Korean students had become the second largest international student group (second to Chinese international students). More than 80 percent of approximately 700 Korean undergraduate students had gone through some part of their elementary and/or secondary educational years studying abroad in a school where English is the official language before enrolling at the university (Kang, 2018).

My curiosity about the *jogi yuhak* and the literacy practices of Korean undergraduate students with pre-college study abroad experience also stemmed

in part from my own personal and professional experiences. As a Korean with *jogi yuhak* experience in the 1980s and as a returning international student in the early 2000s, I was fascinated by the changing characteristics of the Korean student population during my graduate studies at UIUC. Through teaching and tutoring in ESL classrooms, first-year writing classrooms, and the WW, I was intrigued by the subtle and stark differences of their literacy and language practices and needs in comparison to traditional Korean undergraduate students without *jogi yuhak* experience. Thus, from fall 2011 to spring 2013, I looked into the ways these students' literacies and literate selves developed as they negotiated and navigated U.S. college life. In order to understand and provide an in-depth articulation of their literate lives, I collected and analyzed data from numerous informal and formal observations in learning and social settings, conducted individual and group interviews of students, faculty and administrators, and collected various personal and institutional artifacts.

During my research, as well as in my personal and professional encounters with many traditional and Korean international students with *jogi yuhak* experience, I discovered that it was rare to see these Korean students using English amongst their Korean peers. It was as if it was an unspoken rule. This insight is what led me to consider a university academic writing group facilitated not in English but in the students' first language (L1), Korean. To most second language (L2) scholars and teachers, the decision to use the students' L1 as the primary oral communication in an English-language learning context might seem counterintuitive; however, to others the use of one's L1 may seem obvious, considering its convenience to the speakers. My decision to use Korean in the writing group, was based on neither L2 literature nor convenience, but on the particular English ideologies these students carried with them. To understand the literacy and rhetorical practices of these students, it is important to understand how the language ideologies that shaped these practices were constructed in the history and context of the local and global.

First, one must consider a key characteristic of the Korean students with *jogi yuhak* experience (henceforth post-*jogi yuhak* students). Most of the students in the study felt that they lacked the English competency they thought they should have acquired during their many years studying abroad. Students did not feel that they had lived up to the promise of the *jogi yuhak* project—a nationally fetishized transnational education project premised by the belief that earlier is better (and immersion in the target language is best) for language acquisition. Because they believed they did not accomplish the goal of acquiring “perfect” English skills, they hid their English language (abilities) from others, other Koreans in particular, as much as they could (Kang, 2016). So, in their everyday literacy practices among their Korean peers, English

words and phrases may have come up sporadically in casual settings, but elsewhere, Korean was the language of choice.

Such literacy practices—the choice not to use the English language amongst Korean peers—of the post-jogi yuhak students should not only be understood within the U.S. university context alone, but also within the Korean national context—how English has been taken up, how it is used, and why people choose to use the language in Korea (Shim & Park, 2008). In other words, it is important to understand the language ideologies behind the practices constructed locally and globally. In Korea, English has come to be perceived to be one of the key “skills” to a successful life (on the personal level) and as part of the nation’s survival strategy (on the global level). This strong belief has plagued the nation and its people with *yeongeo yeolpung* (“English Fever”), the relentless pursuit of English exemplified by the massive English education market, English villages, English-only kindergartens, split-tongue surgery,² and jogi yuhak—to name a few expressions of this “fever”. It has become so extreme that the value of English exceeds its practical use, as English is more or less contained within specific linguistic domains such as popular culture but not used much in the everyday lives of the people (Park, 2009; Park & Abelmann, 2004). According to Park (2009), many Koreans have a “strong belief about English and Korean’s relationship to the language [which has] led [to] a heavy pursuit of English at all levels of society, thus constructing English as a hegemonic language” (p. 4). Within this social construct, another important aspect is that English has been equivalent to the “white” west. In other words, many South Koreans consider white people in and from the western nations (specifically the US and UK) to be “native” speakers and the owners of the English language. This is exemplified in the common hiring practices of English private institutions in Korea: for marketability, “white” instructors/teachers are preferred regardless of their educational background and teaching qualifications.

Considering this dominant linguistic ideological construct, it is understandable that post-jogi yuhak students, despite the geographical, cultural, and educational heterogeneity of the students’ pre-college experience, share homogeneous notions of “good English” or rather “doing English well”—lit-

2 A oral surgical procedure known as frenectomy, eliminates the presence of the lingual frenum (muscular tissue that connects the bottom center of the tongue to the floor of the mouth). Mostly in the early 2000s, Korean and western media reported on the use of this procedure on children ages 0 to 9 to “enhance” their English pronunciation (the “R” sound, in particular) in the midst of jogi yeongeol yeolpung (“Early English Education Craze”) which persists today.

erally translated from Korean “영어를 잘하다.” For most of the participants in the study, regardless of the foreign country in which they were educated in English, “doing English well” means doing English like an American, or to be more exact, doing English like a bek-in (a Korean word that literally means *white person*).

This is how Sun, one of the participants in my study, responded to my question about what it means to do English well.

Sun: To me, doing English well is communicating, no, I mean no difficulties in communicating, exchanging intentions/meanings when talking with foreigners, and also, for me, when the pronunciation is good. I tend to think that [someone is] doing [English] well if the pronunciation is good when communicating.

Me: *Do you mean when talking like American (mikook Saram)?*

Sun: Yes, sounding like an American.

Me: *Whom do you mean by Americans exactly?*

Sun: American white person (bek-in) without question.

Sun spent most of his teenage life in Malaysia (with frequent visits to Korea during breaks like most transnational Korean students). Since the age of 11, until coming to college in the US about a month before, Sun attended international schools with classmates from countries such as China, India, Korea, Malaysia and the US. Although he lived in a demographically and linguistically diverse environment both in and out of school, he was very firm about what was acceptable and what was not in terms of “doing English well,” particularly among white people and in official school settings.

When I’m by myself, when I go to a restaurant or in my [first-year composition course] and there are more “bek-in,” then I feel extremely “insecure.” I don’t feel “secure.” Although I know how to do the English, I get this feeling right smack at the beginning, “I am not good at English compared to them.” And when I feel I’m lesser than them, it makes me freeze and I don’t say anything. You know, I talk a lot, I’m a VERY talkative kid but when I’m with “bek-in,” I don’t talk.

Sun’s insecurity with English language use can be explained by English language ideologies shared by Koreans—*self deprecation*. According to Park (2009), *self deprecation* is an “ideology that views Koreans as lacking sufficient compe-

tence to pursue English meaningfully” and a term applied to “cultural and social constructions of linguistic competence in order to understand how a community may subordinate itself within a hierarchical relation of power through the mediation of such constructions” (p. 26). Interestingly, the students in the study demonstrated lack or avoidance of English language practices not only among white peers, but also more frequently among their Korean peers with whom they spend most of their time. Because they do not want to be judged or evaluated poorly for their English competency, they rarely speak English with one another (Kang, 2015). This “white gaze” that hinders the students from using English among Americans is also imagined among their Korean peers.

Most Korean undergraduate students in the study felt they lacked the English competency that they should have acquired during the many years studying abroad. The negative sense of their own English abilities and their representations of English as owned by white Americans led me to implement the SLWG with the Korean undergraduate students. I chose the Korean language as the main medium to accommodate the students’ practical and psychological language preference because my research showed that, in terms of academic English support, these students did not have a space for fast, fluent, meta-talk about language, about literate practices, and about rhetorical issues (Kang, 2016). They needed the richness and comfort of their first language to negotiate the complexity of their academic immersion in English. As evidenced in my research of a Korean student organization’s achievements, the students, who carried self-deprecating English language ideologies, needed Korean, the language that helps them feel confident and respected (Kang, 2015). With these preliminary findings from my research, I was motivated to explore, design, and facilitate a literacy learning experience that took into account this ambivalence towards English and explored the educational, cultural, and linguistic histories these students brought with them.

De-constructing Ideologies

With evidence and justification provided by my ethnographic study and from my administrative work at WW as the ESL Services Coordinator, in spring 2012, I organized and began a SLWG for Korean undergraduate students. The writing group was one of many services that the writing center provided to students, faculty, and staff on campus. Despite campus-wide general and target promotions, only eight students came to the information session; seven students participated until the end.

As stipulated in the announcement/flyer (see Appendix B), the overarching goal for the SLWG was to attend to students’ own questions pertaining to

U.S. academic writing. To participate in the writing groups, the students had to attend the information meeting before the first session and agree to attend all four sessions of the workshop. At the information meeting, I handed out a student information sheet (see Appendix C) to collect their personal information, including English literacy/education background and their personal goals for the workshop. At the hour-and-a-half workshop sessions, the first half was used to introduce and go over the topic of the day and do some controlled practice with resources found on writing websites (e.g., Purdue OWL). For example, in the first session, we reviewed elements of *rhetorical situations*. Students then analyzed the rhetorical situation of a sample paper individually and then as a group. In the second half of session, the students had to analyze the rhetorical situation of their own writing and discuss the resultant analysis as a group.

Although the structure of each one-and-a-half-hour session was relatively fixed, the development of topics for each session was a fairly organic process. The topic of the following session was decided through discussion during the previous session. If during a session, however, a topic other than the topic previously decided upon should come up, we would adjust our discussion and attend to student concerns by discussing and/or searching for resources online. The topics we considered included organizing ideas, understanding different kinds of writing tasks, understanding instructors' responses, and using sources. In this process, students were encouraged to explore and reflect on their English literacy experiences. In the sections that follow, I explore the how SLWG became a translingual site where students were able to identify and navigate the largely monolingualistic ideologies behind their language development.

Judgmental English

Although I had designed the workshop for the students to use Korean as their primary medium of communication, I did not announce this during the information session nor did I make it explicit in the workshop. As anticipated, the students' reluctance to communicate/speak in English was noticeable from the beginning. It was in a part of the workshop, which was devoted to peer review activities, when the students' avoidance of using English in their sharing (or not sharing) of English writing became clear. Despite several in-person and email reminders to bring their current in-progress writing to the second session, only one student arrived with his writing (and that writing example turned out to be a polished edited version already submitted for a course in the previous semester). My curiosity as to why the students did not bring their

papers was partially answered during that same session. As I elaborated on the usefulness of peer reviews and asked what the students thought, there was silence. Then Min, who did his early study abroad in New Zealand, broke the silence in a quiet voice: “I don’t show it to my Korean friends because I think they are just going to judge [my English].” All smiled and nodded at Min’s response. Then Hyun jumped in right away and said, “It’s not only that but I don’t think the writing will get any better [with their feedback].” And all nodded again. In addition to the fear of being judged, the students refrained from seeking help from their Korean peers because they had doubts about not only their own English, but also about their peers’ as well.

Getting to the Roots

As we were reviewing one student’s draft on the fourth day of the workshop, Dahae, a senior in psychology, expressed frustrations with her repeated use of the word “because” and her inability to diversify sentence structure. As she began to talk about her frustrations, she partly blamed the “habit” of using “because” on her past “TOEFL Training.” When I encouraged her to elaborate, she said:

I think because I lack “expressive ability,” when I want to add explanation I think I use “because” a lot. I used *because* a lot [in TOEFL writing]—to show the relationship [between sentences]. [We were taught in the TOEFL writing training that we] needed to use a lot of *reasoning* [in U.S. academic writing].

With Daehae’s remark, something clicked and the group had a lively discussion about the influence of “TOEFL training.” TOEFL (Test of English as a Foreign Language) is a standardized English proficiency test that, according to ETS (Educational Testing Service³), “measures your ability to use and understand English at the university level. And it evaluates how well you combine your listening, reading, speaking and writing skills to perform academic tasks” (“About the TOEFLiBT,” n.d.). Although the cut off score might vary, most higher education institutions require TOEFL scores. I use the phrase “TOEFL Training,” commonly used by Koreans as TOEFL is not

3 ETS is the world’s largest private nonprofit educational testing and assessment organization that develops and administers various achievement and admissions tests, including TOEFL and GRE, in the United States and 180 countries (ETS, n.d.).

only required in applying to higher education institutions abroad, but it is pervasively used as a gatekeeper in the education and corporate world in Korea. Furthermore, most Koreans preparing for the TOEFL exam and all the students in the group had one experience or another with rote TOEFL training at a TOEFL hagwon—private English learning institutions ubiquitous in Korea and perceived as mandatory to receive high scores on the TOEFL exam. The students acknowledged that the TOEFL training gave them the impetus to start thinking about the American academic essay, but also how the past training had been a deterrent in writing in college. They resented how the training limited the ways they structured and organized essays and stymied their word and phrase choices.

The lively conversation naturally extended to other English learning experiences in Korea and their transnational educational journey. The TOEFL training was just one small window into the culture of English language in Korea—how English language is taught, how ideologies surrounding English are constructed, and how (narrow) conceptions of the language are reinforced in Korea by Koreans at home and abroad. As post-jogi yuhak students who were brought up and educated in the eye of the English fever/tornado, it was a chance for them to step back and view the metalinguistic landscape and factors that influenced their English language lives. As they were reviewing their own and peers' writing, they were also reflecting on their related past and current literacy educations. One student shuffled through vague memories about his first private tutoring experience before kindergarten, another frowned remembering his strict middle school English teacher posting test scores for all to see, and one even shed tears as she recalled her first week studying abroad in a foreign land. During this animated session, the students went through their papers eager to identify other remnants of the TOEFL training and their English "training" in Korea and abroad. With this motivation, the students were now eager to share their papers. It was an opportunity for the group to think about language and language use with their own past experiences and literacy histories; it was an opportunity for them to engage with their existing dispositions and to make room for translingual ones.

Rhetorical Flexibility through Translingual Dispositions

Many of the students wrote on their information sheets that they wanted to learn "writing skills," and improve their "expressions." Despite these students' secondary education in English speaking countries and first-year writing requirements at the university, it was disheartening (but not that surprising), to find students with confined definition of what good writing is—in their

words, paragraphs of “native-like perfect English” with flawless “expressions,” grammar, and mechanics. As they had longed to talk “accent-free” like a *bek-in*, their long-term goal was to write “accent-free” like an American. Because the students were overtly concerned about getting pronunciation and writing “right,” they had been missing the opportunity to critically explore and experiment with the language in the meaning-making process.

With continuous encouragement and discussions about the benefits of peer-review and their own culturally-conditioned conceptions surrounding English, the group gradually became a space that was safe enough for most of the students to share their rougher drafts. Encouraging students to consciously and continuously put aside their concerns about being judged resulted in spending more of our time talking about the rhetorical use and impact of phrases and words at the sentence level. For example, we would stop at a seemingly simple word like “about” and use dictionaries and thesauri to explore the connotations involved in the use of other options such as “regarding,” “concerning,” or “with reference to” and the consequent impacts on sentence-level meaning. Or students would compare words like “next” and “following” and examine which word might best suit the writer’s intentions. At this point, their concerns were not about sounding or writing like a *bek-in* but more about making rhetorical choices and thus developing a rhetorical identity for themselves in learning and using the English language in their writing. As the students were now open to translingual *guidance*—a pedagogy that encourages rhetorical identity above “perfect” English—it afforded them with the opportunity to find themselves not as incompetent language users through their white gaze, but as legitimate users of English making rhetorical choices.

In a follow-up individual interview, Won expressed how it was very refreshing to “spill her secrets to the world.”

Wow! I had so much to say. I really like the way we conversed. It was good just for the fact that I was able to share my concerns. I, first, felt that I gained something, gained confidence and will. [I thought to myself] so, it’s not just me but others have these worries too. I realized by talking about such issues and I look back [on my past experiences]. I don’t think I could this could have happened if it was done in English.

The writing group sessions, at one point or another, all seemed like therapy sessions. It was a space for students to share their concerns, reveal anxieties, and also devise strategies to cope with their literacy realities. Overall, the sessions provided a safe space to process their language and literacy practices.

Won affirmed my initial hypothesis regarding the writing group with her last statement: use of L1 would facilitate the writing development process by lowering students' anxieties that were driven by self-deprecating English language ideologies. The use of L1 lowered language anxiety and promoted deep thought and honest expression between the members. But more importantly, the Korean language afforded them the opportunity to break out of their self-deprecating ideologies and deficit identities as English language learners because the use of L1 enabled them to develop rhetorical identities in the language learning process. Using English became just more than memorizing, regurgitating, and mimicking the language of the *bek-in*. The students' L1 provided them with the conceptual space to explore and use English on their own terms and with their own intentions.

I had a chance to meet up with Won roughly a month after the writing group ended. During our hour-long conversation, Won reflected on her English experience during her *jogi yuhak* days in Arkansas and her experience after SLWG at the university. She mentioned that, now, whenever she felt inferior among her white peers because of her English, she consciously and intentionally reminded herself, "It's okay. I don't have to 'do English' that way [like a *bek-in*]. It's my second language. They don't know how to speak Korean. So it's okay." She admitted it was not easy to go against her "natural instincts." She also mentioned how she had more freedom to use English without being too worried about "sounding foreign." Although she seemed ambivalent and less confident from time to time about her stance even during our meeting, it was certain that her translanguaging disposition was growing—not only affecting how she used English, but also various aspects of her life as a U.S. college student and as a global citizen.

Translanguaging as a Process

Despite concerns that the translanguaging movement might be a "fad" prompting "linguistic tourism" (Matsuda, 2014), a translanguaging disposition is being welcomed by many who have been longing for explanations and remedies for working with the language diversities in their composition classrooms. Some second language scholars have expressed concerns that translanguaging pedagogies do not consider the students' choices—for instance, the choice to learn "Standard" written/spoken English—and that they, instead, will enforce using students' other language or languages. It is important to note that in the Korean SLWG, I did not tell students what language or languages to use. I simply indicated they could use Korean and created a context where that choice would include all present. I also did not encourage them to use Ko-

rean in their academic writing. Students negotiated and chose the linguistic resources that aligned with their learning goals. Use of LI allowed students to put anxieties aside and become more reflective about the process of writing in English. Ultimately, however, all academic writing produced and refined in this group was in English. As such, the Korean SLWG had no end-products/writing that had visible translingual semiotic elements.

I do not wish to argue here that the SLWG is a one-size-fits-all remedy for all international students or multilingual students. A series of Chinese SLWGs that the writing center ran after the success of the Korean SLWG offers a useful perspective here. The first of these groups had a Chinese facilitator, and the latter two groups each had a non-Chinese speaking facilitator (me and another WW tutor). Although the groups were successful in attending to student writing needs, the use of the Chinese language was not a key element in terms of tapping into their language ideologies and practices. Compared to the Korean students, Chinese undergraduates in the group were less concerned about not being able to produce “perfect” English. According to McNamara (2018), Chinese students at UIUC are more focused on asserting their power as consumers to “secure some yield on their educational investment” (p. 4). Thus, they inadvertently acknowledge their level of English competency (or lack thereof) by proactively claiming literacy support to broaden their “linguistic and cultural horizon” (McNamara, 2018, p. 9). Therefore, the Korean SLWG, which catered to the specific language ideologies derived from a particular transnational educational experience (*jogi yuhak*), may not provide specific tools for teaching all multilingual students; rather it offers evidence for the importance for teachers to investigate, acknowledge, and utilize the language ideologies and practices of a particular group or groups of students by “[resisting] thinking of identifying students and our teaching in terms of fixed categories of language, language ability, and social identity” (Canagarajah, 2015, p. 622).

The writing group, during its development stage, was scheduled for one hour-and-a-half workshop per week for four weeks. Upon students’ request, however, it was extended to two hours a session for six weeks in total. The six-week period was a valuable time for identifying students’ past and present literacy contexts and the language ideologies that they had been exposed to or had conformed to. Rather than hiding behind their anxieties of incompetency, overwhelmed by the power of monolingualistic English ideologies, the students used the space to negotiate their Korean and English literate identities. The group offered an example of what Pratt (1991) calls *safe houses*, “social and intellectual spaces where groups can constitute themselves as horizontal, homogeneous, sovereign communities with high degrees of trust, shared

understandings, temporary protection from legacies of oppression” (p. 40). For Korean undergraduate students, the SLWG was a *translingual safe house* “for hearing and mutual recognition . . . to construct shared understandings, knowledges, claims on the world that they can then bring into the contact zone” (Pratt, 1991, p. 40). Thus, helping them “move beyond a consideration of individual or monolithic languages to life between and across languages” and language ideologies (Canagarajah, 2013b, p. 1). SLWG functioned as a safe house where Korean students, as they proceeded on their transnational education journey, began to acknowledge and negotiate pre-conceived monolingual and translingual language orientations in their own past and present literacy and rhetorical practices.

Conclusion and Implications

The US has been one of the most resistant countries in the world to embracing multilingualism. The world has been accommodating the dominance of our monolingualism for decades now, but that era is ending and we need to forge a new translingual stance in the anglocentric world and in our language pedagogies. As language diversity is becoming a norm in higher education institutions across the US, scholar-teachers have the obligation to advocate for and cultivate linguistic diversity in our students’ lives. Non-conventional literacy support, like the Korean SLWG, acts as an institutional intervention contributing to the literate ecology of students’ transnational experience and these translingual approaches must take into account the dynamic global and institutional contexts in which they are applied.

U.S. higher education institutions are seeing an unprecedented number of students from abroad. These students from abroad are bringing not only languages but also ideologies surrounding the English language. This chapter has examined how a Korean *single-language* writing group, an experimental learning group at the campus-writing center, was translingual in nature on a few different levels: students’ first language, Korean, was used voluntarily by the participants as the primary communication medium; their Korean and English language practices and ideologies were examined; and the participants were able to deal with monolingual ideologies that hindered their English language development. Talking about their literacy histories and the ways nationalism and global capitalism have influenced English language learning was productive in cultivating translingual dispositions in Korean undergraduate students, particularly with *jogi yuhak* experience. This group allowed these students to confront some of the self-deprecating English language ideologies they carried with them. The writing group provided a space

for students to explore and negotiate their preconceived notions about English language and its use, and thus was a tool to help them forge more flexible rhetorical identities (rather than limiting linguistic identities).

Many pedagogical textbooks emphasize the importance of *knowing* the students we teach. My study echoes this notion and further details what this *knowing* might entail for different student groups and individuals. In the case of Korean undergraduate students at UIUC, it was pertinent to examine and recognize students' literacy and rhetorical practices in both learning and social settings at the university, in Korea, and at their respective early study abroad locations. It was with in-depth knowledge of the particular and peculiar literacy and rhetorical practices, and the language ideologies behind the practices that I was able to create the SLWG for the Korean undergraduate students. Therefore, the writing group is not a solution that will necessarily help meet the needs of all multilingual international students. The results of this experience, however, should serve as an impetus for scholar-teachers to seek to learn the needs of our multilingual/translingual students from abroad and to use this knowledge in effectively designing writing curriculum and instruction.

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Appendix A

Korean Single-Language Writing Group Announcement Flyer

Navigating Academic Writing:

Writing Groups for KOREAN Undergraduate Students

Would you like to talk about U.S. academic writing in your own language?

Do you sometimes wonder what your writing assignments mean?

Do you struggle to talk with your professors and classmates about writing?

Would you like to practice U.S. conventions of using sources?

Then you would want to join Navigating Academic Writing, FREE writing groups hosted by the Writers Workshop. These groups are specifically for writers whose first language is Korean and will meet in a 4-week session. Topics will be tailored to your needs but may include organizing ideas, un-

derstanding different kinds of writing tasks, understanding instructors' responses, and using sources. The sessions will be led by an experienced Writers Workshop consultant who understands struggles with writing in English. In order to participate, you **must** attend the informational meeting on **February 2** (Thursday) at **3:00 pm** to sign up and you **must** attend all four sessions. Students who have participated in Navigating Academic Writing in the past are not eligible.

Informational Meeting:

Thursday, February 2, 2012

Writing group sessions:

Thursday, Feb 9

Thursday, Feb 16

Thursday, Feb 23

Thursday, March 1

3:00 p.m. to 4:30 p.m.

Room 251 Undergraduate Library

Email ykang5@illinois with the subject "Writing-Group-Korean" by **February 1** to attend the informational meeting.

Appendix B

Student Information Sheet

NAVIGATING ACADEMIC WRITING

KOREAN UNDERGRADUATE WRITING GROUP / Spring 2012

Name: _____

Email: _____

Phone: _____

Major: _____ Year in School: _____

Age: _____

Writer's Workshop ID Number (if you have one): _____

Our group will meet on Thursdays from 3:00-4:30 pm on February 9, 16, 23 and March 1. Attendance is required at all 4 sessions.

- What courses are you currently taking that require writing (please list)?
- How long have you been speaking English (When did you come to the States or another country where English is the first language to attend school)?

- How long have you been writing and/or reading in English?
- Have you received any specific writing instruction in English? What type (ESL classes, IEL, coursework elsewhere, etc.)?
- What kind of writing projects are you currently working on? Please describe in detail. (For example, course assignments.)
- What concerns do you have regarding writing in English and/or academic writing?
- What areas do you most want to improve in your writing?
- What writing subjects do you want our Undergraduate Writing Group to address? (For example: American academic writing conventions, citation and source use, paragraph organization, common English grammar areas that challenge Korean writers, etc.)