A Case Study of a North Korean Defector Student's Identity (Re)Construction in Her Writing

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I. Introduction

In Korean language education research and that related to multicultural education and multicultural literacy, scholars have explored issues including language education policies (Jeon, 2009; Won, 2014), curriculum and programs (Suh, 2011; Won, 2009), and reading materials and/or learning materials (Kwon, Kim, & Lee, 2008; Park & Choi, 2006; Won, 2015). This work has significantly contributed to understanding, conceptualizing, and improving multicultural education in South Korea. However, it has been difficult to find studies which focus on North Korean defector students among other multicultural students.

According to the Ministry of Education (2017), the number of North Korean defector students enrolled in elementary, middle, and high schools has increased from 1,417 students in 2010 to 2,517 students in 2016. Previous studies have pointed out a unique problem of North Korean defector students such as the concealment of their North Korean origin (Han, 2009; Kim, 2016). "According to a survey conducted by Hana Foundation in 2014, more than half of the defector students were unwilling to disclose themselves as 'defectors,' and the percentage of those who would 'never disclose' increased as the

settlement in the South became longer" (Kim, 2016, p. 609). In order to conceal their past, they strove not to use a North Korean accent or words and did not actively participate in their classroom activities (Han, 2009). Considering their common problems in identity representation and lowered engagement in language classrooms, exploring the possibility of their identity construction through writing practices would be valuable.

Based on recent theories regarding identity as changeable and multi-faceted and writing practices as a tool for identity representation and construction, this study aimed to examine how one North Korean defector student represented, explored, and negotiated her identities and relevant tensions and conflicts between the authoritative discourses of North and South Korea in her writing before and during an afterschool multicultural writing program.

II. Theoretical frames

This study is informed by research on the cross-cultural conflicts, the nature of identity, and the relationship between writing and identity.

1. Cross-cultural conflicts

With regards to the issue of power relations, Bakhtin (1981) distinguishes between two major categories of social languages: authoritative discourse and internally persuasive discourse. "Authoritative discourse is a traditional discourse, which generally acknowledges truths, the official line, the voice of authority."… "Internally persuasive discourse is the discourse of our personal beliefs, the ideas that move us, that shape us and create the stories we tell ourselves about the world and who we are." (Landay, 2004, p. 109). Bakhtin (1981) points out that there are not one but many authoritative discourses. That is,

when people enter into a different culture, they encounter dominant discourses that are different from those in their former culture, and as a result, become affected by that new authoritative discourse in the process. These changes in turn, bring about tensions and conflicts with their internally persuasive discourses, many of which are co-constructed by their lived experiences in their former culture and its authoritative discourses. North Korean defector students in South Korean schools may, therefore, experience serious tensions and inner conflicts because of the authoritative discourses dominant in South Korea which collide with their own internally persuasive discourses, that are also products of their prior experiences with North Korean authoritative discourses.

According to Bakhtin (1981), the social interactions that are most effective in promoting learning are those that are filled with tension and conflict. Bakhtin (1981) argues that struggles are needed for people to come to new understandings: "the importance of struggling with another's discourse, its influence in the history of an individual's coming to ideological consciousness, is enormous" (p. 348). As Bakhtin noted, social interaction and struggles are important for learners to develop their own ideologies.

However, Sperling and Freedman (2001) point out that in culturally and linguistically complex classrooms, there is an increased possibility that cross-cultural conflicts can occur that negatively influence a student's identity development, particularly when these students' expressions of individuality and cultural ways of communicating are suppressed. In the case of North Korean defector students, who usually attempt to conceal the fact that they came from North Korea and, therefore, do not express themselves for fear of revealing linguistic and cultural differences, it can be assumed that they experience serious inner tensions and conflicts, and as a result, their positive identity construction is interrupted.

2. The nature of identity

Most contemporary perspectives on identity view it as a fluid and dynamic entity (Ball and Ellis, 2008). Bakhtin (1986) points out that "identity is shaped through the voices we have encountered in the past". This notion is similar to Anzaldua's (1999, p. 15) notion of "identities as clusters of stories that we tell about ourselves and others tell about us". Her notion is useful for understanding the influence of society, even including the possibility of identity as having been constructed through different stories according to individual experiences.

According to Moje, the nature of identity is that of a hybrid (McCarthey & Moje, 2002). To support this claim, she examined a Latino student who was situated in two different classes and seemed completely different in an English-dominant science classroom from the classroom taught by a fluent Spanish-speaking Latin teacher. Based on her research, she concluded that a person's identity can become a hybrid as that identity becomes complex in the process of that person moving from space to space and from relationship to relationship.

McCarthey & Moje (2002, p. 230) have argued that "when we consider identities to be social constructions, and thus always open for change and conflict depending on the social interaction we find ourselves in, we open possibilities for rethinking the labels we so easily use to identify students." If we consider that the nature of identity is changeable and multi-faceted, we should rethink the labels that teachers commonly use to identity students, especially minority students like North Korean defector students.

3. Relationship between writing and identity

A broad spectrum of research reveals directly or indirectly the close relationship between writing and identity (Ball and Ellis, 2008), and there is general consensus that writing practices help students

understand and explore their identities. In their case study, Fecho and Green (2002) examines the ways in which an African American male student in tenth grade, Aaron, uses his writing to explore his identities. Fecho and Green (2002) found that writing allowed the focal student to express himself beyond the conservative limits of the mainstream. It allowed him to question the values of Primary and Secondary Discourses (Gee, 1996, quoted in Fecho and Green, 2002, p. 112). Based on the study, Fecho and Green (2002, p. 98) argue for the role of writing, to serve as a key means for critical thinking about ourselves and understanding ourselves in relation to the world around us.

Furthermore, several researchers suggest that writing practices play a pivotal role in identity construction and negotiation. Ivanic (1998) examined the issues of identity which arise in academic essays of continuing education students written during their second or third years at a university, documenting the discourse choices they made, the origins of these choices, and the dilemmas they faced as they wrote these essays. Through her research, she argues that identities are constructed in one's writing through what is said and through discourses in which the writer has already participated. She also argues that "writing is not a neutral 'skill,' but a socio-political act of identification in which people are constructed by the discoursal resources on which they are drawing, construct their own 'discoursal identity' in relation to their immediate social context, and contribute to constructing a new configuration of discoursal resources for the future" (Ivanic, 1998, p. 345).

As mentioned above, through writing practices, students can broaden their understanding about themselves related to a world, increase critical thinking, and construct their identities.

III. Methods

This section discusses selection of research participants including one focal student, data collection, and data analysis.

1. Selection of research participants

In this article, in order to examine North Korean defector students' identity construction, I chose an eighth grade focal student, Moon,[1] for several reasons. First, I was able to collect six writing samples that she had written for classroom assignments from elementary school through middle school. When I showed interest in her writing at the beginning of an after-school multicultural writing program, she brought and shared them with me.

Second, in her writing she consistently revealed a distorted South Korean identity. She not only concealed that she had defected from North Korea, but also kept emphasizing that she did not know anything about North Korea in her writing. Other language arts teachers in the school informed me that identity representation as a South Korean and identity concealment as a North Korean defector were common in North Korean defector students' written products.

Third, her writing before and during the after-school multicultural writing program explicitly revealed tensions and conflicts between her identities as a South Korean, North Korean, and North Korean defector in relation to her other identities such as her student identity. Over time, her writing showed how she comparatively resolved these tensions and conflicts and negotiated her identities. Expressing tensions and conflicts resulting from their North Korean origins and representing the negotiation of their identities were common patterns shown in North Korean defector students' writing during the program.

Lastly, in comparison to most students who were reluctant to use

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1   Pseudonyms are used for the names of students throughout this article.

their writing as research material, Moon felt proud when I showed interest in her writing products and was willing to share her writing for this study. As a result, I decided to examine North Korean defector students' identity representation and negotiation by focusing on Moon's writing.

In the program that Moon joined, there were four eighth-grade students. Table 1 provides an overview of basic information about participating students in the after-school multicultural writing program.

Table 1. Four participating students in the program[2]

Name	Gender	Period Living in South Korea	SES of Family	Comprehensive Academic Performance	Performance in Language Arts
Snow	Female	3 years	Middle class	Medium	Low
Moon	Female	5 years	Working class	Medium-low	Low
Wind	Female	2 years	Working class	Low	Very Low
Sunset	Female	3 years	Middle class	Medium-low	Low

The selected focal student, Moon, was a 14-year-old eighth-grader who came to the South Korea from North Korea when she was nine years of age. Her family came to South Korea by way of China after fleeing famine and near-starvation in North Korea.

The after-school multicultural writing program was designed to run for nine months from March to November, and the members of the group generally met twice a week except during the midterm and final exam periods. At the end of each month, students had a writing conference in which they were allowed to write on any topic

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2   Each student chose pseudonym by herself. The sections for 'Comprehensive Academic performance,' and 'Performance in Language Arts' were developed from the official grade information. The middle school students took academic tests four times a year and this table is based on their ranks and scores on these four tests when they were seventh grade students. The column for "SES of Family" was based on the information the class teachers offered me about their home environment.

they wanted. In order to help students consider what they wanted to explore and write about, every month one core book was read and discussed. The topics of the books were primarily related to cultural diversity, history, identity, and students' lives. Table 2 shows the core texts that were selected for the after-school multicultural writing program that Moon joined.

Table 2. Core Texts of the After-school Multicultural Writing Program

Month	Core texts
1	The Little Prince by Antoine de Saint-Exupery
2	The House on Mango Street by Sandra Cisneros
3	To Kill a Mockingbird by Harper Lee
4	Tale of Hong Gil-dong by Hyo Gyun
5	The Autobiography of Martin Luther King
6	The Story of Barack Obama
7	Animal Farm by George Orwell
8	The Division History of South and North Korea
9	Recent newspapers relating to North Korea or North Korea defectors

Ms. Lee, a teacher in the program, created an environment where students could freely share their ideas. She also provided positive feedback and approval of students' free writing assignment selections.

During the program, I worked as an observer and assistant. Through this study, I sought to understand the identities of North Korean defector students from their own point of view. Thus, I expected my role to be that of observer, listener, recorder, receptor, and interpreter of all information concerning my research participant.

2. Data collection

I collected data from multiple sources in order to confirm the emerging themes and make a more plausible interpretation possible. Throughout the data collection period, I observed the classroom in-

teractions during the program every week, interviewed the focal student at least four times a month, and analyzed her writing more than once a month. The data sources included the focal student's writing, field notes, video-recordings of the classroom, and audio-recordings of interviews with the focal student, the teacher in the program, her language arts teacher and her mother. Among the data sources, the focal student's writing products have a special position since I chose textual analysis of her essays as the first phase of discourse analysis. Table 3 provides the overview of my data sources.

Table 3. List of Major Data Sources

Data Sources	Contents and Location
Focal student' writing	The assignments for the program The assignments for her Language Arts classroom
Field Notes	The classroom interactions during the program
Video recordings of classes	The classroom interactions during the program
Audio recordings of Interviews	Focal student (38 times) Program teacher (6 times) Language Arts classroom teacher (2 times) Mother of the focal student (2 times)

3. Data Analysis

My research focuses on examining how one eighth grade North Korean defector student represented, explored, and negotiated her identities in her writing before and after an afterschool multicultural writing program. To analyze the data, I adopted Fairclough's (1995) framework of three-dimensional discourse analysis (see Figure 1) that entails three components, namely: description, interpretation, and explanation.

Based on Fairclough's framework of the three-dimensional discourse analysis, I attempted to examine the process of identity negotiation of my focal North Korean defector student. First, I chose the student's essays for analysis and then I coded the distinctive words or
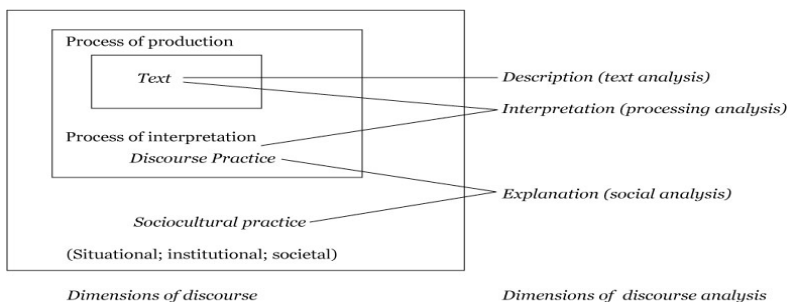
Figure 1. Dimensions of discourse analysis (Fairclough, 1995, p. 98).

phrases that might reveal the student' identity issues.

In moving to the interpretation stage, I examined the relations between the specific situation in which the texts were produced and the discourse practices in the student' writing samples. In other words, I investigated how the student' identities were being affected by the specific situation in which the texts were produced through the observation of the writing program and interviewing the focal student and other relevant people.

Following on the foregoing analysis, I expanded research into the level of explanation through examining the student's essays in terms of social contexts. I sought to understand how my focal student perceived her social contexts and how she responded to them by analyzing the student's essays and interviewing her. My analysis was particularly focused on the authoritative discourses the student perceived and the struggles between the authoritative discourse and internally persuasive discourse she revealed in her written products and dialogues.

Through conducting the aforementioned three-dimensional discourse analysis, I paid attention to finding my focal student's identity representation and construction patterns as revealed in her writing. As Fairclough (1989) argues, this three dimensional analysis involves a combination of what is present in the data and what the researcher contributes as an analyzer. After interpreting the student's texts and

dialogues in the program, I conducted interviews with my focal student, the writing program teacher, and other relevant individuals. I frequently asked my focal student to "explain more about" her responses in relation to the texts that she produced. These responses consciously confirmed, reshaped, changed, or enriched my interpretations and explanations about her identification. These different paths and recursive processes of analysis that moved in and out of different dimensions of discourses contributed to having a better understanding of the North Korea defector student's identity representation, exploration, and negotiation.

IV. Findings

By analyzing the four writing samples of the focal student which explicitly reveal her identity negotiation pattern, this section describes how Moon represented, explored, and negotiated her identities and relevant tensions and conflicts between the authoritative discourses of North and South Korea in her writings before and during the afterschool multicultural writing program. Figure 2 shows the identity negotiation pattern that was found in her writing products.

In her writing, Moon's identity positioning and repositioning in relation to her national identities[3] such as South Korean, North Ko-
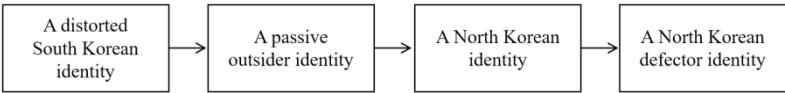

Figure 2. Identity negotiation pattern that revealed in Moon's writing

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3   Smith (1993, p.15) argues that "national identity and the nation are complex constructs composed of a number of interrelated components–ethnic, cultural, territorial, economic and legal-political." In spite of limitation due to the historical and special situation between South and North Korea, in this article I viewed identity related to North and South Korea as a national identity since North Korea and South Korea have evidently different social and economic ideologies and government and economic systems.

rean, and North Korean defector were conspicuous. In the six classroom writing assignments which she brought to me at the beginning of the program, Moon always positioned herself as a South Korean who had limited information about North Korea regardless of the assigned topic. As her first writing sample shows, her strong emphasis on limited information about North Korea revealed her distorted South Korean identity. In an interview, her language arts classroom teacher shared that other North Korean defector students in her current and previous classrooms often revealed a distorted South Korean identity in their writing assignments in order to conceal their past experiences in North Korea.

At the beginning of the after-school multicultural writing program, Moon avoided writing any type of personal, factual story such as one might see in a diary or personal essay, which were more common among the rest of the students. She preferred to write fictional stories and revealed her identities in the stories with virtual main characters such as a low-achieving student, a shy adolescent, and a passive outsider. Representing her identities with virtual characters in fictional stories was her unique pattern. However, other North Korean defector students in the program often explored their other identities such as student identity and adolescent identity in their writing.

Around the middle of the program, Moon started explicitly revealing her identity as a North Korean. Representing themselves as North Koreans was a common pattern for other North Korean defector students during the middle of the program. However, considering that Moon had already been in South Korea for around 5 years, it was surprising that she still represented her identity as a North Korean and revealed the authoritative discourse of North Korea, such as the Juche Ideology of North Korea, in at least some of her writing.

At the end of the program, Moon gradually positioned herself as a North Korean defector student in her writing. After expressing and exploring their North Korean identities and relevant authoritative discourses, which created tensions and conflicts in their understand-

ing of themselves, others, and the world they live in, representing themselves as North Korean defectors and trying to accept their North Korean origin and past experiences were common patterns in other North Korean defector students' writing in the program.

In the following section, I discuss how these identity representations, explorations, and negotiations were revealed in Moon's writing by focusing on four selected writing samples which explicitly show the above pattern.

1. Moon's identity as a distorted South Korean

Moon wrote the essay which I will discuss in this section, when she was in 7th grade in response to a school assignment. The essay topic was given in the week of June 25th. That week, all students at her Middle School were required to write an essay on the topic of the peaceful reunification or coexistence and prosperity between South and North Korea.

In this essay, Moon used a method of organizing paragraphs that was different from that of commonly used by many students in South Korea. Most middle school students usually show similar characteristics of organizing paragraphs by enumerating the reasons why the two Koreas have to reunify or the merits of reunification of two Koreas. In contrast to these organizing patterns, Moon organized almost every paragraph in the following order as evident in her Writing Excerpt 1.1: 1) casting a question; 2) finding information in order to give an answer to the question; 3) comprehension or recognition of the answers.

[Writing Excerpt 1.1 (lines 4-13)]
1) I could not understand why they were holding each other in such a manner.
2) I typed the key words, "the North Korea and South Korea" on the blank.

3) The search showed detailed information including the reasons. I also asked my parents about some more clarification. The reason of their crying was simple. They were too happy and too sad at the same time when they actually met their family members on the other side of Korea who have been separated since the Korean War. Now I came to know what happened to the South and North.

This organizing pattern shows her endeavor to identify North Koreans as strangers. In the beginning of each paragraph, she emphasized the fact that she did not know something relating to North Koreans or her feelings, such as astonishment or weirdness, on hearing new information about North Korea. And then she intentionally notes "television programs, Internet, or books" in order to show the process she used to get new information about North Korea. Following that, she concluded each paragraph by noting her opinions and ideas about the aforementioned information.

Furthermore, in this essay, Moon positioned her national identity as a South Korean. Between lines 19-21 and 29-31, Moon noted "South Korea" and "South Korean" with the determiners, "our", underlined below.

[Writing Excerpt 1.2 (①lines 19-21, ②29-31)]
① Then I found out an astonishing fact that the North Korea also wants unification. I could not believe it. I have been thinking that <u>our</u> South Korea is the only side who makes efforts to unify the two Koreas.
② When I read a book, I noticed that the accent of the words is different. "An-Nyung-Ha-Se-Yo", a greeting word of <u>our</u> South Korean is pronounced "An-Nyung-Ha-Sep-N-Gga" in North Korean.

She usually compared and contrasted life, linguistic characteristics, values and cultural norms between South and North Koreans and used the first person plural form, 'our' in front of "South Korea" and "South Korean" to position herself as just a South Korean and to pretended that she had no idea why the dispersed families were

crying out at the reunion meeting that was specially arranged by the International Red-Cross.

Lastly, I analyzed one excerpt in the essay in order to show how her writing revealed her understanding of South Korean cultural values. In the last part of her writing, she pointed out the difference in the accent of the greeting words between South and North Korea and then she hoped for the reunification of the two Koreas for the following reasons:

[Writing Excerpt 1.3 (lines 32-37)]
We have the same features and why do we speak the same words in a different way? Then I found out that the greeting words were identical at first. However, the people who live in divided nations become distant from each side, and as a result the way people talk has changed. I thought that my country would develop, become stronger, and the accents will become identical when the reunification happens.

The excerpt shows that she held the view that speaking with identical linguistic characteristics is a goal that needs to be achieved through unification. Her view reveals an authoritative discourse of South Korea: homogeneity is better than heterogeneity. This social value might have an impact on Moon's writing content. Connolly (1991, quoted in Ivanic, 1998, p. 14) points out that the adoption of one identity and rejection of others is in itself a political act, involving a power struggle. In this case, we might deduce that Moon's positioning as a distorted South Korean in her writing might be connected with the emphasis on homogeneity in South Korea.

2. Moon's identity as a passive outsider

During the first month when Moon participated in the after-school multicultural writing program, she often showed negative reactions to other North Korean defector students' conversations. She said, "It's

odd. Their accent sounds like a 'Pansori.' I cannot understand the words they use."

However, a month later, her attitude had shifted. It was in the early second month when Moon began talking about her past life in North Korea in the classroom. After reading 'The House on Mongo Street' by Sandra Cisneros, Moon showed a great interest in the writer's ethnic background of Mexican-American and Cisneros used her different, perspectives and experiences from her cultural differences as her resources in her writing. The following conversation took place between Moon and Snow (another student in the program) after they read the book.

[Classroom Discussion Excerpt 2.1]

Moon: Like Esperanza, I hated my name. In our school, the person whose name is 'Moon' is only me. Whenever I meet someone for the first time in South Korea, I must tolerate an embarrassing moment due to my awkward name. Some teachers even told me that there must be no one who has the same name with me. I really want to have a common name like Su-zin, Zi-su, Un-jung……

Snow: Isn't the name 'Moon' common? I met a few people who have the same name with yours several times.

Moon: Yes, in North Korea. But, where do I live in now? It's South Korea. In South Korea, I haven't seen anyone who has the same name with mine, Moon.

It was the first time that Moon talked about her past experience related to North Korea. In the last week of the second month, each student had a writing conference with the teacher in order to decide a topic and genre for a writing assignment. Moon who really enjoyed reading the stories in 'The House on Mango Street' emphasized that she wanted to write a fiction.

In an interview, she described more specifically the reason why she preferred to choose the genre of fiction.

[Interview Excerpt 2.1]

Moon: I wanted to write an episode like one of 'The House on a Mango Street'. However… I hate revealing me directly. It's shameful…. I have to worry about how other might think of me. Tales…. I remembered that tales that I heard many times when I was a child from my mother. If I use a tale, it is much easier to write in that… I don't need to talk about my real life story, and I can say whatever I want in my story. It sounds like more… enjoyable.
[From an individual interview on April 30, 2009]

Moon compared fiction and personal essay, and deliberately chose fiction. This choice of a textural genre shows that she was reluctant to expose her experiences under her real name.

Her story was entitled "Hermes, Hermes". In this section, I analyze the characteristics of her essay on the basis of the concept of process types that were presented by Halliday (1994) since this concept is effective for understanding the distinctive features of Moon's second sample writing.

Halliday (1994, p. 106) notes that "The clause plays a central role, because it embodies a general principle for modeling experience – namely, the principle that reality is made up of *process*." He divides types of processes into six grammatical categories: three main types of *processes of material, mental, and relational*, and three subsidiary types of *processes of behavioral, verbal, and existential*. The *material processes* are processes of 'doing'. They express the notion that some entity 'does' something. The *mental processes* are processes of 'sensing'. They express the notion that some entity 'senses' such as feels, thinks or perceives something. The *relational processes* are processes of 'being'. They express the notion that something is being said to 'be' something else. The *behavioral processes* are sharing characteristics of material and mental processes. The participant who is 'behaving' is typically a conscious being; but the process is grammatically more like one of 'doing' like looking, crying, smiling. The *verbal processes*

are processes of saying which shares characteristics of mental and relational processes. They express the notion that some entity (sayer) 'says' something (quoting or reporting). Lastly, the *existential processes* are the sharing of characteristics of relational and material processes. They express the notion that something (entity or event) exists or happens (for a more extended discussion of these constructs, see Halliday, 1994).

Moon's story begins as follows:

[Writing Excerpt 2.1 (lines 1-7)]
Once upon a time, a girl named Hermes lived in the country called Herdel. Although the people in the country did not know the place where she was from, they liked her because she seemed not only to have a sincere personality but also was good at cooking and needlework. As she was getting more matured she became more beautiful; and thus, the people's interest in her grew even bigger. Many people asked her of her name and the place where she was from.

In her story, there are contrasting subjects: Hermes vs. other village people including a witch. In the above paragraph, the clauses which have a subject of Hermes almost made up of 'process of being': she "*has*" a sincere personality but also "*was good at*" cooking and needlework, she "*became*" more beautiful, etc. In contrast, the clauses that described village people consisted of diverse process types: the people in the country "*did not know*" the place (process of sensing), they "*liked*" her (process of behavior), "the people's interest in her *grew*" (process of sensing), many people "*asked*" her (process of verbal).

In the next paragraphs, the clauses that described Hermes continuously show the limitation of types of processes. Especially noteworthy is the lack of process of sensing related to Hermes. So, it is difficult to know what exactly the main character thinks or feels. Also, the process type that most frequently describes Hermes is the process

of behavior: "Hermes just *smiled* sweetly without saying a word (line 8)", and "Hermes *cried* so much to the extent that her tears became a bucket full (lines 24)."

When it comes to analyzing 'process of doing,' the contrast between Hermes and other village people including a witch is more concrete. In most processes of doing in her writing, the actors are usually village people including a witch and the goal is Hermes: "the people *looked for* a witch who could make Hermes confess" (line 13) or "the evil witch *took* her to the village people and *interrogated* her" (lines 14-15). There is just one time that Hermes is an actor in the process of doing, but there is no goal: "Hermes cried bitterly and *ran* keeping her eyes covered with her both hands" (lines 26-27).

The lack of the process of doing related to Hermes shows that Moon described a very passive main character. Analysis of types of processes reveals that Moon represents her main character as a passive person in contrast with other village people.

Second, in her story, she describes the main character, Hermes as an outsider and emphasizes the reason why Hermes became an outsider. In this section, I analyze excerpts from her writing in detail:

[Writing Excerpt 2.2 (lines 20-29)]
Oh, my! Suddenly, they started to laugh with their head off.
"Hermes? Her name is Hermes!"
In this village, 'hermes' meant a restroom. They laughed out loudly. Furthermore, because her voice was very unusual, they more mocked her. Hermes cried so much to the extent that her tears became a bucket full. Hermes means a beautiful goddess in the place where she used to live. The people even laughed at her crying voice. Hermes cried bitterly and ran keeping her eyes covered with her both hands. But… few steps ahead of her were a cliff and Hermes fell down from it. Since then nobody was able to see her any more. .

In line 20, the village people started to laugh because of her

name: the meaning of her name is considered ridiculous in the village. To add insult to injury, the people showed no sympathy and even laughed at her crying voice. The above excerpt shows that the reasons why Moon described the main character as an outsider are related to her linguistic differences.

Third, she ended her story as follows:

[Writing Excerpt 2.3 (lines 30-34)]
This story is a remake of a fairy tale. This story shows that your misjudgment of another's name or voice may lead him or her to death. You should realize that your unconscious sneering laughs may cause a tragic death of a vulnerable girl like the death of a feeble butterfly. It can kill both body and mind.

At the end of her story, she added an expository comment in order to express her thoughts about the story. This comment shows how she negatively considered others' responses to her name and what she wanted to say to the people who had sneered or laughed at her.

After writing the story, Moon revealed her changing ideas about writing as a place for expressing her experiences and thinking in her interview:

[Interview Excerpt 2.2]
Moon: I never felt comfortable… even with my close friend… because I felt that there seems no place in which I could be a fit… However, in here I made a main character and described the scene. Like me… as an outsider. In writing, I can do something. I can estimate… show my opinion…. criticize others… Writing looks like a place of freedom… It's enjoyable.

Her interview shows that she had begun to express her thoughts and feelings in her writing, and she felt pleased by writing about her experiences, as well as about her inner tensions and conflicts.

Last, I investigated cultural values that Moon's writing revealed. The reasons why Hermes was excluded by the village people also show the cultural values of South Korea which emphasize on the values of homogeneity and rejected diverse social identities, such as those in her first writing sample. However, unlike her first writing sample in which she just tried to conceal her past and her thinking as it relates to this cultural value, in this current sample she expressed her experiences and feelings as well as her other identity as a passive outsider through the fictional genre.

3. Moon's identity as a North Korean

When she began to participate in the program, Moon showed an assimilation of identity to that of being a South Korean. However, as time went by, she began writing authoritative discourse from her North Korean identity. The last week of June was the first time that Moon explicitly revealed the authoritative discourse of North Korea in her writing. That is, she positioned herself as a North Korean and wrote the essay from the North Korean perspective through which she strongly accused South Koreans' actions.

First of all, in her writing, she continuously contrasted the two nominal groups: South Koreans and North Koreans.

[Writing Excerpt 3.1 (lines 5-8)]
South Koreans often sneer and blame their president, but North Koreans always submit and obey the authority of the supreme leader assuming that he is a great figure. I think North Koreans are more clever and virtuous than South Korean.

In the first sentence, Moon compared the behaviors of two actor groups (South Koreans and North Korean) toward their presidents. Her lexical choice 'sneer' and 'blame' showed that she negatively evaluated South Koreans' expression of their thoughts about their presi-

dent's administration and policies. She makes specific lexical choices such as 'the supreme leader' and 'a great figure' both of which revealed her political ideals and values as related to North Koreans.

In addition, she describes her own visions and behaviors as the vision and behaviors of North Koreans.

[Writing Excerpt 3.2 (lines 9-12)]
The South Koreans tend to disregard and look down the North Koreans. Nevertheless, the North Korean people strive to make their dreams come true, that is, to become a hero or any other distinguished position in the society.

After having read the "Tale of Hog Gil-dong", Moon said that she wanted to become a person like Hon Gil-dong, who arose to fight for the injustice in the society that divided people into nobles and ordinary citizens.

In her conclusion, she clearly positioned herself as a North Korean and revealed the ideology and values of North Korea.

[Writing Excerpt 3.3 (lines 21-23)]
South Koreans are a group of people who is ungrateful, who knows too much, and complains all the time. It is the President who governs the nation for us and gives food and clothes to us.

She showed very negative reactions to anti-government opinions and the public's expression of their ideas to the president by saying that they know too much and complain all the time. Her essay also reveals a preponderance of phrases which are associated with the Juche Ideology of North Korea which requires absolute loyalty to the leader of North Korea. Two examples are: "governs the nation" (line 22-23) and "gives food and clothes" (line 23).

In this writing sample, she positioned herself as a North Korean, and she began to talk in the authoritative discourse of North Korea re-

lated to the Juche Ideology. We can infer, therefore, that her mind was not free from the influence of authoritative discourses of North Korea. Her adoption of North Korean authoritative discourse also reveals her inner tensions and conflicts because of the difference in authoritative discourses between South and North Korea.

Ivanic (1998, p. 32) notes that "writing is an act of identity in which people align themselves with socio-culturally shaped possibilities for self-hood, playing their part in reproducing or challenging dominant practices and discourses, and the values, beliefs, and interests which they embody." Moon also challenged South Korea's values by revealing North Korean's authoritative discourses. It is evident that writing became the place where her inner diverse voices could be heard. Through these writing practices, Moon revealed her cultural knowledge and began to compare the contradictory reactions of the two Korean peoples.

4. Moon's identity as a North Korean defector

In the last week of the eighth month of the program, Moon had a conference with the teacher in order to decide the topic and genre for a writing assignment. Moon, who had conspicuously changed her attitude toward writing, wanted to write a letter to students in Hanawon where there is the government resettlement center for North Korean defectors for the first two months after arriving in South Korea. She begins her writing with the following sentences:

[Writing Excerpt 4.1 (line 1)]
Hi! I'm the 65th class of the Hanawon.

Moon started her writing by revealing her class of the Hanawon. Revealing her class of the Hanawon shows her identity as a North Korean defector. She also used the pronoun 'we' for North Korean defectors and shared some experiences and feelings as follows:

[Writing Excerpt 4.2 (lines 3-5)]
Although we haven't met each other, we have many things in common. I was also in the same situation in which you are placed now in the past. I was nervous and worried like you.

In addition, in this particular writing sample, she pointed out that her linguistic and cultural differences influenced her to become a silent and poor student as follows:

[Writing Excerpt 4.3 (lines 27-38)]
It was so difficult for me to determine as to whether I may say or not, so I got more timid and silent as the days ensued. I had trouble focusing on the lecture and I was often day dreaming instead of learning looking out of the window in class. As a result, I was thought to be a poor student, although I had been a good student in North Korea. In a higher grade there were more friends who did not know that I am from North Korea. However, they still thought that I was a poor student. And the fact that they happened to identify me as an academically poor student disregarded me.
Do you know how I thought of the reason? I thought the reason why I was not welcomed by my classmates was because I was from North Korea.

Her writing shows that her responses had changed. While she usually emphasized that she is a timid person and she did not like to talk about something in the early part of the program, this letter shows that Moon discovered the connections between her North Korean defector student identity, her passive discourse identity, and her poor student identity.

Her positioning as a North Korean defector in her writing seemed to relate to her changed idea about her identity as a North Korean defector. The content in her letter, especially her tips for other North Korean defectors, clearly showed her change.

[Writing Excerpt 4.4 (lines 55-60)]

I am about to conclude this letter by giving you three tips. First, you may reveal your being a North Korea or not depending on the situation in which you are placed; however, I suggest that you not forget that you are a North Korean defector because you cannot change your past. . . If you endure the difficult moment in which you are about to give up everything, I think, you will be all right. Obviously! Definitely!

In the interview, I asked Moon why she suggested other North Korean students to not forget that they are North Korean defector. She answered as follows:

[Interview Excerpt 4.1]

Moon: Um… In this program… make me think about what I can change. Even though other teachers told me that I have to become a South Korean quickly, I know that they could not change my past and they also think me as a North Korean defector… and as a poor student…. as a taciturn student…. I have thought that the things I can change and the things I cannot change. What's the result? You know…. I could not change that I came from North Korea…. I could not conceal that forever… I recognized that I have to accept myself. However, I also… recognized there are something I could change… such as becoming a better student according to my efforts. I want to share what I realized with others.

She said that she has to accept her identity as a North Korean defector and what she had to change is not her past or origin, but her thinking about her identity. It shows that she had negotiated her national identity between different and sometimes competing identities and has constructed more positive identity by accepting her past.

Steel and Aronson's (1995) studies imply that cultural identity can in fact be a motivation for academic success or a motivation for academic disengagement. In this case, we can see that Moon's identity as a North Korean defector became a motivation for academic disen-

gagement. However, extended writing practices helped her to understand herself more deeply and critically.

V. DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION

Several findings and questions emerged from the contrast analysis of Moon's written products and dialogues that she presented in her classroom discussion and interviews during the after-school multicultural writing program.

First, she clearly showed that her national identity was an important part of her identity construction by often positioning herself as related to one or more national identity such as South Korean, as North Korean, or as North Korean defector. One perspective that can be used to consider what Moon was doing, is what Merchant (2005, p.306) described as adopting an "anchored identity." Merchant (2005) notes that there could be the relative prominence of one identity over another as a matter of time and development. In the case of Moon, her national identity could be the relatively salient identity because it brought about her cultural and linguistic differences, and these differences often prevented her from participating in class.

In addition, I found a negotiable identity in Moon's writing. After participating in several writing practices, Moon changed the positioning of her national identity from that of a distorted South Korean to a North Korean who strongly criticized South Koreans' actions, to a North Korean defector who accepted her past. We cannot say that she newly constructed her national identity, because she already embraced multiple national identities which she could not easily express. However, her writing products and interviews clearly showed that she had newly negotiated her national identities.

In the last writing sample, Moon showed that she came to understand her past and identified herself as a North Korean defector. She said that she had to accept her identity as a North Korean defector

and what she had to change is not her past or origin, but her thinking about her identity. Her tips for other North Korean defector students in her letter clearly show that her national identity has been negotiated and she constructed a more positive identity by accepting her past.

Finally, the role of writing practices in Moon's identity negotiation was crucial. Through writing, Moon met the authoritative discourses of South and North Korea that were imbedded in her mind and she indicated that those discourses brought about tension and conflicts. Joseph Harris, cited in Lensmire (2000), notes, "writing is not simply a tool we use to express a self we already have; it is a means by which we form a self to express" (p. 62). Moon also expressed her thoughts through writing and critically reflected on her thoughts with regards to what respectable thoughts are. As a result, she gradually resolved her tensions and conflicts between the authoritative discourses of North and South Korea.

In her writing she showed her realization about interrelated identities. While she usually emphasized that she was a timid person with an expressionless face who was easily silenced in the early part of the program, she recognized that her linguistic and cultural difference influenced her from initially being a silent and poor student, to one who expressed her thoughts and feelings, and had a vision to become a person who contributes to making harmony in Korean society.

This study focused on a North Korean defector student. The case study of only one individual in a specific writing program has limitations in understanding North Korean defector students' identity constructions within multiple contexts. However, I hope and believe that this study contributes to extending our understanding about North Korean defector students and the possibly significant role that writing practices may play in their identity expression and construction. One of the main goals of educational research is to suggest better ideas to establish a healthier learning community by exploring unrecognized problems in educational environments (Ok, 2009, p. 123). I believe that establishing a healthier learning community begins with an in-

depth understanding of each student. This study shows a possible positive role that writing practices which enable students to engage in indirect self-analysis may also play in a student's identity representation, exploration, and negotiation.

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ABSTRACT

A Case Study of a North Korean Defector Student's Identity (Re)Construction in Her Writing

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The purpose of this study is to provide an understanding of North Korean defector students' identity representation and construction with the recognition that their stories are rarely told in educational research. Based on a literature review that describes identity as changeable and multifaceted and writing practices as a tool to explore and construct identities, this paper examines one North Korea defector student's identity representation, exploration, and negotiation in her writing before and during an after-school multicultural writing program. Data sources included the focal student's writing products before and during the program, field notes and video recordings of the writing program, and audio recordings of interviews. Collected data were analyzed based on Fairclough's (1995) framework of the three-dimensional discourse analysis. Results show that through particular writing practices that allowed fictionalized scenarios and identities which also enabled indirect self-analysis, the focal student was able to negotiate her national identity and critically reflect on her discourse and student identities; as a result, she was able to construct more positive identities.

KEYWORDS   Identity, Identity construction, Writing practices, North Korean defector students