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Ethnolinguistically Minoritized Women as Bilingual Coaches in South Korea



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Abstract

Ethnolinguistically minoritized women, mostly Southeast Asians married to a Korean spouse, are subject to marginalization and subordination in South Korea. The local, subaltern knowledge garnered from their country of origin and the host country is frequently dismissed. One government-led initiative, the Bilingual Coaching Program in South Korea, however, has made it their mission to capitalize on ethnolinguistically minoritized women's subaltern knowledge. Given that they are marginalized to the degree that they feel pressured not to use their heritage language with their children, bilingual coaches play a pivotal role by promoting bilingualism for ethnolinguistically minoritized populations while uplifting other migrant women's ways of knowing and being in the South Korean context. We draw on border thinking to explore real challenges that six bilingual coaches encounter and how they straddle multiple sociocultural realms, localize bilingual education for ethnolinguistically diverse families, and combat prevalent Korean-only ideologies. Findings reveal that the coaches not only empowered themselves but also minoritized women, who have long yearned to find solidarity in countering marginalization and subordination in South Korea. The findings call for bilingual education centering local and subaltern knowledges, particularly, in under-researched contexts.

Keywords: ethnolinguistically minoritized women, South Korea, bilingual coaches, border thinking

Introduction

Ethnolinguistically minoritized women, mostly Southeast Asians with Korean spouses, are subject to marginalization and subordination in South Korea, which has traditionally been regarded as a

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predominantly patriarchal society. Often called marriage migrants, these women may experience a higher level of social discrimination if they have a darker complexion, as well as lower socioeconomic status, educational credentials, and proficiency in the Korean language (Lew & Choi, 2023). Their local, subaltern knowledge (Mignolo, 2000) — valuable knowledge and experiences they have garnered from their country of origin and the host country — is often treated as less valuable than that of their Korean counterparts. With their cultural capital questioned, gaining confidence in and full access to the host country is challenging. Although these women's employment rate is higher than Korean women (Ministry of Gender Equality and Family [MoGEF], 2019), they tend to work in low-paying and physically laborious jobs where their intellectual gifts and local knowledge are not valued.

One government-led initiative that capitalizes on ethnolinguistically minoritized women's subaltern knowledge is a Bilingual Coaching Program in South Korea. Part of the Fostering Bilingual Environment for Multicultural Families Project, this program has been run by local Family Centers¹ across the country as a pilot project since July 2014 and officially in 2015 (MoGEF, 2023). Migrant women with a four-year college degree and proven proficiency in Korean in the Test of Proficiency in Korean (TOPIK) and their heritage language (HL) are hired as bilingual coaches to help other ethnolinguistically diverse families raise their young children bilingually. Although this program is not without criticism (i.e., lack of training and resources (Yi & Kim, 2020)), it allows bilingual coaches to mobilize border thinking, which, in turn, will challenge the dichotomy between superior knowledge and subaltern knowledge (Mignolo, 2000). Ethnolinguistically minoritized women are socially marginalized to the degree that they feel pressured not to use their own HL with their children even when their Korean proficiency has not developed (Lew & Choi, 2022a; Lew & Choi, 2022b; Han & Price 2015; Park, 2008). Given this context, bilingual coaches have the potential to not only promote bilingualism but elevate the status of ethnolinguistically minoritized populations in South Korea through the celebration of women's ways of knowing, living, and being and uplifting them to be valuable members of their families and larger dominant society.

We, two university researchers who are originally from South Korea and have been living and working in the U.S. as immigrants, examine how six bilingual coaches from different regions in South Korea leveraged their subaltern knowledge in their work alongside other ethnolinguistically minoritized women. Drawing on border thinking (Mignolo, 2000) that elevates the ways of knowing the minoritized in society, we aim to explore the enactment of the bilingual coaches' border thinking in South Korea. The research question guiding our inquiry is: "How did the bilingual coaches in South Korea unlock the potential for border thinking and subaltern knowledge in their bilingual coaching context?"

Relevant Literature

Institutional Marginalization of Ethnolinguistically Minoritized Women in South Korea

Ethnolinguistic minority women in South Korea are often compelled to quickly learn and exclusively use Korean with their children to better integrate into mainstream society and reduce the risk of discrimination in this traditionally homogenous nation (Han & Price, 2015; Park, 2008). This issue affects marriage migrants in rural areas (e.g., Han & Price, 2015; Park, 2017; 2019) including those from well-researched Southeast Asian countries like Vietnam (e.g., Kang et al., 2019). These women frequently face traditional gender roles — such as wife, young mother, and daughter-in-law — in

¹ In this paper, we use the most current name for such community centers, Family Center. However, the same center used to be called Multicultural Centers and Health Family Support Centers.

a patriarchal family setup (Han & Price, 2015; Kang & Sohn, 2016; Lee et al., 2015; Park, 2019). Discrimination is particularly harsh for those with darker skin, lower socioeconomic backgrounds, or less valued native languages, leading to a loss of their HL among their children (Han & Price, 2015; Kim & Kim, 2015; Shin, 2019; Sohn & Kang, 2020). Chinese Mandarin is generally more socially accepted than languages like Mongolian or Nepalese due to China's sociopolitical influence (Sohn & Kang, 2020). Nevertheless, Chinese immigrant women's narratives (Kim et al., 2023) reveal that their experience of discrimination occurs primarily within the family. The immigrant women's disappointment with their Korean husbands, verbal/non-verbal violence, blame for child-rearing, and disrespect from Korean in-laws due to lack of cultural understanding attributed to patriarchal family structure, are prevailing. They experience social discrimination secondarily. Almost 40% of Chinese immigrant women experience discrimination in not only workplaces such as unequal pay and unfair treatment, but also in neighbors, public places, government offices, and childcare centers, including schools.

Bilingual Coaching in South Korea

Research related to the effectiveness of the bilingual coaching program (Y. Lee, 2020; Yi & Kim, 2020), as well as experiences and perspectives of bilingual coaches (Lee, 2016; S. Lee, 2020; Park, 2015; Yi & Kim, 2020) has increasingly emerged. Research has also documented the inequitable structures related to training, pay, promotion, and overall work conditions (S. Lee, 2020; Yi & Kim, 2020). Yi and Kim's (2020) study, whose participants included one bilingual coach, pointed out that the bilingual coaching program does not adequately prepare bilingual coaches for the job, failing to help them develop professionalism. Yi and Kim (2020) further argued that bilingual coaches are often understood and regarded as volunteers, rather than professionals helping other families raise their children bilingually. Although Yi and Kim (2020) highlighted the bilingual coach's dissatisfaction with the job, other studies have pointed out more positive aspects of the job, such as bilingual coaches' growth and gained confidence in the job (Lee, 2016; Park, 2015). More pertinent to the current study, S. Lee (2020), in her master's thesis, examined experiences and perspectives of five bilingual coaches and five translators working at Family Centers across Daegu, a city in Southeast of South Korea. Her interview study of the five bilingual coaches who were originally from Vietnam and China revealed that this occupation gave them a sense of pride as full participants in South Korean society, and they considered their job to be contributing to the well-being of other fellow ethnolinguistically minoritized women in South Korea. Although they were not satisfied with the working conditions and pay, they felt they could leverage their experiences and knowledge from their country of origin and South Korea in counseling and helping other women. The bilingual coaches considered this occupation beneficial to their growth and family and also essential in uplifting other fellow women. For instance, one bilingual coach from China returned to the job initially after quitting as she had the mission of continuing to make an impact in other women's lives. In other words, bilingual coaching was more than a job where they are improving bilingual practices of the children. Rather, they felt that they were indispensable and equipped with unique knowledge and experiences in their advocacy work for other fellow women.

Monolingual, Korean-only practices are prevalent in schools, homes, and communities as a result of South Korea's predominant assimilation-oriented immigration policies and practices (Lee, 2018; Shin, 2016). The 2018 National Survey on Multicultural Families' Condition showed that since 2012, the support for HL usage and teaching at home among immigrant mothers' spouses and other family members has dropped as well as the children's positive attitude toward HL learning (MoGEF, 2019). Over 50% of the children are raised in an environment where it is not favorable to use the HL, and only 25.1 % of them actually learn it. The most recent report by MoGEF (2023) also shows that the number of families that use or keep HLs has lowered compared to a similar survey conducted in 2018.

The concerning results show the urgency raising awareness of the importance of HL education and establishing familial, institutional, and social environments to develop HLs.

Nevertheless, the major government policies have made efforts to reflect an asset-based perspective on immigrant mothers' first languages and their children's potential bilingualism. For instance, the 2010 Multicultural Family Support Policy Basic Plan prioritized developing and maintaining the children's HL to prepare them to be global citizens for South Korea's economic and political prosperity. This government initiative had been rendered as a "Linguistically Gifted Class" at local Family Centers since 2011 (J.Y. Kim, 2011). This class is conducted in the six main languages of the countries of origin of marriage immigrants: Chinese, Japanese, Vietnamese, Russian, Cambodian, and Mongolian, targeting mainly young children from multicultural families (i.e., ages 3 to elementary school students). However, the policies on multicultural families made an important shift in 2015, in which bilingual education exclusively for children turned their focus to the entire family from ethnolinguistic minority backgrounds with a recognition that fostering bilingualism for the children must begin in the communities and the families. Since 2015, the language classes for the children have been replaced with bilingual coaching services for ethnolinguistic minorities under the initiative called the Bilingual Education Environment Fostering Plan.

In this initiative, bilingual coaching entails the following areas: Bilingual Parent Coaching, Parent-Child Interaction Program, Bilingual Class, Bilingual Applied Program, and Family Coaching (MoGEF, 2023). While the first four are compulsory, Family Coaching is voluntary for bilingual coaches to implement depending on the local context of individual Family Centers. Bilingual coaches educate families about bilingual education, teach parents strategies for interacting with young children in their HL, foster a community for the families, and provide further on-site guidance to families about bilingual practices. Bilingual coaches not only provide practical tips on bilingual upbringing to other migrant women and their families but also persuade and educate family members who may oppose using the mother's HL.

Each bilingual coach needs to recruit a total of more than 40 families, spending a total of 160 hours with the families per year. Most of the bilingual coach's time, 120 hours, is allocated to train migrant mothers on how to interact with their children bilingually. There are a total of 210 bilingual coaches working across Centers in 17 regions in South Korea (MoGEF, 2023). Coaches work and are paid for 12 months, although they are not eligible for promotion or salary increase with more experience. Bilingual coaches receive from 10 to 43 hours of training offered by 한국건강가정진흥원 [the Korean Institute for Healthy Family, KIHf]. Marriage migrants who have been living in South Korea for more than two years with proven bilingual proficiency (i.e., Level 4 or above in TOPIK) are qualified for the bilingual coaching position. Preferences are also given to marriage migrants with certificates to teach the "linguistically gifted class." Coaches invite the participating families to the Center in a group session while they also make home visits individually. Immigrant families with children younger than 12, including expectant mothers and children who were not born in South Korea, are eligible for bilingual coaching services. Families can repeat these services.

Studies About the Minoritized Through the Lens of Border Thinking

Mignolo's (2000) border thinking provides the theoretical framework to understand how bilingual coaches from immigrant backgrounds straddle multiple cultural and linguistic identities while engaging in continuous processes of negotiation and resistance in South Korea. We understand that Bhabha's *third space* (Gutiérrez, 2008) and hybridity (Um, 2019), intersecting with border thinking, also provide similar insights into transforming the views towards the languages, knowledge, and experiences of the minoritized. These three notions collectively explain the complexities of physical, metaphorical,

linguistic, and cultural border crossings the minoritized constantly make. Our work is particularly grounded in border thinking as it explains more adequately moments of rupture where ethnolinguistically minoritized women recognize systemic injustices, challenge dominant ideologies, and seek alternative ways of living (Alcoff, 2007; Anzaldúa, 1987; Mignolo, 2000) in their bilingual coaching practices in South Korea. The goal of border thinking is for individuals to practice decoloniality as a way of living from and within the “cracks [that] enable us to re-configure ourselves as subjects outside [the] us/them binary...to construct alternative roads...to look at the world with new eyes, use competing systems of knowledge, and rewrite identities” (Mignolo & Walsh, 2018, p. 83). Those who are living between two or more contradictory cultures or experiencing oppression rooted in race, ethnicity, identity, language, and class, can critique their own traditions, and those derived from other epistemologies. Instead of merely being on the other side of the border, border thinking means living inside and outside of marginal spaces with double consciousness and agency (Giroux, 2005).

The framework has traditionally been used to dismantle Western colonialism in various global contexts, its ways of knowing, and borders or boundaries such as standards, policies, language ideologies, cultural practices, and discourses. Therefore, it is also applicable to the South Korean context where ethnolinguistically minoritized women counter dominant Korean monolingualism and sociocultural oppressions. In the South Korean context, Eurocentric ideologies (Jackson, 2016; Mignolo, 2011) and Korean-only practices categorize knowledge owned and produced by Koreans and Westerners as superior to local knowledge from other parts of the world (Flores & Rosa, 2015). In our study, border thinking provides a framework for us to analyze how bilingual coaches use their border thinking as a way of “de-subalternizing knowledge” (Mignolo, 2000, p. 12) in their workplace by crossing boundaries between their home countries and South Korea, as well as transforming their marginalized cultural and linguistic knowledge and practices into the most legitimate and valuable ones to perform bilingual coaching.

Border thinking invites researchers to illuminate the efforts and experience of the minoritized who have been forced to abandon their ways of being in the dominant global system. Studies capture moments of rupture where the minoritized recognize systemic injustices, challenge dominant ideologies, and seek alternative ways of living (Alcoff, 2007; Anzaldúa, 1987; Mignolo, 2000). Dyrness and Sepúlveda III (2020) examined how Latinx diaspora youths excavate their transnational cultural knowledge and develop decolonizing citizenship through participatory research methods. Carrillo and Karvelis (2023) used “Border Thinking Reflexivity” consisting of strategic epistemic disobedience and curricular, pedagogical de-linking to theorize the experiences and reflections of teachers who work as teacher-activists in historically conservative U.S. states.

Many studies that have utilized border thinking have stemmed from the idea that there is a disconnect between schools and communities of minoritized students, primarily in the U.S., which negatively affects academic and identity development. Therefore, studies have examined how teachers have mobilized border thinking to traditionally underserved and underrepresented students in the educational context. Specifically, the focus has been on Latinx students who have experienced subtractive schooling (Valenzuela, 1999), especially those living in the U.S. and Mexico borderlands (Cervantes-Soon & Carrillo, 2016; de los Ríos, 2013; Espinoza et al., 2021; Ramirez et al., 2016; Romo & Chavez, 2006;). For instance, Espinoza et al. (2021) examined 16 Latinx bilingual preservice teachers’ mobilization of border thinking, their integration of the community’s local knowledge in their social studies lesson plans, and their perspectives as they were in their student teaching context in dual language elementary school classes (i.e., instruction offered in Spanish and English). The teachers found “intentionally decentering the official standard-based knowledge” (p. 13), as a way of decentering the top-down curriculum where they often ignore local knowledge and experiences of teachers. Furthermore, Cervantes-Soon and Carrillo (2016) and Ramirez et al. (2016) examined how high school Latinx

students, through border thinking, were situated as “co-creators of knowledge and agents” after the students began to recognize injustices (Cervantes-Soon & Carrillo, 2016, p. 299).

More pertinent to our study, Ramirez et al. (2016) studied two Latinx high school teachers’ enactment of border thinking in a border area in Southern California by examining teacher interviews, classroom observations, and student work samples. Both teachers shared their bilingual and bicultural backgrounds and experiences of having lived in the borderlands with their students who look like them. Through the notion of authentic care, one social studies teacher conversed with his students about the contributions of their ancestors and how they were not mentioned in the books, but they are living history. He also made sure that the student’s voices were heard and their identities as bilingual and being a Latina were valued. The teacher engaged his students to talk about their identities living in borders, which are often negatively portrayed, and issues happening in the border community to write them in a school magazine. His advocacy works empowered Latina girls “[to emerge] as border intellectuals that name and challenge status quo practices that negate their rich lived experiences,” important steps in creating cracks in the students’ realities (Ramirez et al., 2016, p. 320).

Gaps in the Literature

The literature reviewed indicates that the studies about bilingual coaches are still limited and focused more on their general experiences without being analyzed according to theories. In addition, existing research has been conducted on immigrant women working in the Family Centers, not focused specifically on bilingual coaches and their distinctive work context. To understand the unique position and work of bilingual coaches, it is essential to examine their lived experiences through a more solid theoretical framework, such as border thinking. At the same time, the literature about the minority’s mobilization of border thinking is limited to the Latinx populations in the U.S. context and focused on bilingual teachers and high school students. It is worthwhile to examine how this framework is used to investigate under-researched groups, bilingual coaches serving ethnolinguistically minoritized women, in more under-researched contexts such as South Korea. Our study examines how bilingual coaches in South Korea, ethnolinguistically minoritized women themselves, empower themselves as they de-subalternize their knowledge as well as help fellow migrant women while privileging their own local resources and experiences (Cervantes-Soon & Carrillo, 2016).

Method

Qualitative, semi-structured interviews (Spradley, 1979) were used to probe details of coaches’ life experiences used in coaching and nuances of their perspectives on immigrant women’s HL education conditions. Data for this study primarily came from 70- to 120-minute-long individual interviews with eight bilingual coaches. The interviews were conducted in Korean and transcribed in Korean afterward by both authors, who are fluent in Korean and English. Predetermined questions focused on participants’ experiences of both raising their children as bilinguals and working with immigrant mothers and families as bilingual coaches. Despite only one interview for each participant, extended time and the semi-structured nature allowed the participants to speculate about their experiences and reveal their deeper thoughts. While we admit that the best language for the interviews would be the coaches’ first language, the coaches were fluent in Korean as evidenced by their TOPIK proficiency required for the job and their tertiary degrees earned in Korean universities.

Participants were recruited from one Family Center and using snowballing sampling. Since we established a working relationship with one Family Center in Seoul for several years, the director of the Center assisted in contacting and recruiting bilingual coaches employed in the Center as well as in

other Centers through her personal contact. The bilingual coaches also introduced their colleagues in other Centers for the research.

Following research ethics guidelines approved by the researchers' university Institutional Research Bureau, we recruited two coaches from China, two from Japan, and four from Vietnam. We initially interviewed three coaches in 2019. The interview data elicited the themes beyond bilingual education, which motivated us to recruit five more coaches to interview in 2022. While we recruited eight bilingual coaches, we excluded two Japanese coaches from this research as their national background does not align with the focus of our research on migrants from the Global South. Chinese migrants are not from the Global South; however, we still included these East Asians since they are more minoritized ethnically, socially, and economically in the South Korean context compared to Japanese. Three coaches have college degrees in their home countries and three have earned college degrees in South Korea, with one coach having college degrees in both countries. Their previous jobs varied from manual labor worker, teacher, and industry employee. In addition, only one spouse had some proficiency in their wife's first language. Table 1 below is the participant profile.

Table 1 *Participants*

Coach	Country of origin/Mother Tongue and other languages	Age	Length of residence in Korea (Years)	Education (prior to Korea/in Korea)	Previous occupation before bilingual coaching (prior to Korea/in Korea)	Spouse proficiency of wife's language	Age (gender) of participant's children
Tran	Vietnam Vietnamese	32	10	College dropout (Marketing)/NA	Cosmetic sales/ Translator	N	7(M)
Linh	Vietnam Vietnamese	32	10	College dropout (Early childhood education)/ Pursuing college degree in Korean language	College student/ Vietnamese language instructor	N	10(F)
Xiang	China Mandarin	48	12	NA/College degree in Korean language education & social work	Manual labor/ Multicultural education instructor	N	No children
Hoa	Vietnam Vietnamese & some English	43	12	College degree/ NA	Elementary teacher/ Vietnamese instructor, Multilingual education instructor	N	14(F) 11(M)
Chen	China Mandarin & English	37	12	College degree in pharmacy/NA	Employee in a pharmaceutical company/ Bilingual instructor, Multicultural education instructor	N	9 (F) 5 (M)

(Continued)

Table 1 (Continued)

Coach	Country of origin/Mother Tongue and other languages	Age	Length of residence in Korea (Years)	Education (prior to Korea/in Korea)	Previous occupation before bilingual coaching (prior to Korea/in Korea)	Spouse proficiency of wife's language	Age (gender) of participant's children
Mai	Vietnam Vietnamese	36	10	College degree in music education/ College degree in early childhood education	Music teacher in elementary school, Working at an event planning company/ Translator, Bilingual instructor	Y	9 (F) 6 (M)

Note. The bilingual coaches' names are pseudonyms, and other information about them included in the table, such as age, is based on the time of the interview. The first four coaches interviewed in 2022 were working in Daegu whereas the last two coaches interviewed in 2019 were in Seoul.

A qualitative method of analysis through a grounded theory approach (Bogdan & Biklen, 2003) was used to analyze data. Each author listened to the recordings of the interviews and began initial coding with analytic memos. Then, the authors discussed emerging themes and codes they generated and organized them into larger categories. Through multiple sessions, we generated additional codes and reorganized categories into larger themes. This iterative data analysis continued as we were revising drafts. We also attempted to triangulate using member checking with participants via email and/or via messaging in which we shared a portion of our manuscript.

The authors' unique experiences and positionalities impacted the analysis of the data and drawing findings. Both authors are immigrant professionals, Korean transnationals, and bilingual education researchers. Common traits (i.e., living in two cultures and using multiple languages) encouraged participants to relate to the authors and allowed us to interpret the participants' positions and challenges. In addition, the first author raised her children in three languages, with two of them being minoritized languages in the U.S. The second author was a former public-school teacher in South Korea. These experiences and perspectives afforded them to be more sensitive to demands in bilingual education across home, schools, and beyond.

Findings and Discussion

Guided by border thinking, we first discuss how bilingual coaches experience and articulate institutional, social, and ethnolinguistic issues they have confronted. Then, we analyze how they engage in the process of negotiation and resistance to combat those issues as they reclaim and validate their cultural and linguistic practices in the borders they straddle. We further discuss how they empower themselves and fellow minorities who are ethnolinguistically minoritized in South Korea.

Challenges Bilingual Coaches Encountered

With their personal lives between multiple languages and cultural worlds as well as professional careers in a government-supported entity like a Family Center, the participating bilingual coaches developed critical perspectives about the discriminatory policies and structures against ethnolinguistically minoritized women existing in institutional policies, social climate, and language

ideologies within the South Korean society. The coaches were acutely aware of multiple levels of the challenges they had to navigate.

At the institutional level, the coaches were working in under-resourced conditions. The training that the coaches received did not provide concrete examples and differentiated resources to teach immigrant mothers from various language groups how to raise their children bilingually. Therefore, the coaches had to create a great deal of materials and activities by themselves. Nevertheless, a low budget was allocated to the bilingual coaching program compared to other programs Korean employees run in the Family Center. The coaches struggled to purchase materials and teaching aids. During the interview, Linh addressed this hardship:

그리고 자료 같은 거 없어요 구하기도 어렵고...한국에서...한글 알파벳 영어 이런 거 쉽게 구매 할 수 있지만은 베트남거는 그렇게 쉽지 않아. 게다가 제가 담당하고 있는 이중언어코치...예산은 정말로 많지 않아서...원래는 우리 ...서울에서 같이 교육 받으러 가요. 교재 같은 거도 있긴 한데 조금 제한이 됐어요

And there are no materials, it's hard to find... In Korea, I can easily purchase materials related to the Korean and English alphabet..., but it's not that easy to locate the Vietnamese alphabet. Plus, the bilingual coaching program I'm in charge of does not have enough budget... Usually, we [bilingual coaches] go to Seoul to receive training. We are provided with textbooks [for our program], but they are a bit limited.

Although Vietnamese is one of the most spoken languages among immigrant populations in South Korea, bilingual coaches like Linh experienced a lack of materials and resources for minoritized languages.

The issue of the budget for the bilingual coaching program was voiced again by Xiang, who also problematized the discriminatory wage and promotion system for bilingual coaches compared to Korean employees working at the Center:

조금 처우 개선 사업비 지원 이 두가지 더 조금 했으면 좋겠어요...우리는 [이중언어 강사들은]...호봉제는 하지 못 했어요. 해마다 최저 임금으로 받고 있고...사업비 부족해요.

I wish there was a little more support for these two, the treatment improvement and support of project expenses... We [bilingual instructors]... cannot have a seniority system in terms of pay. We receive the minimum wage every year... The project expenses are insufficient.

At the societal level, minoritized women encountered very limited job opportunities regardless of their credentials and education. These institutional challenges unique to what the minoritized women do as bilingual coaches at Family Centers are linked to pervasive social issues. Xiang articulated this systematic inequity:

사실은 아무리 대학교 다니고 있고 전공 뭐 상관없이 대한민국 외국 이주여성 받아들이는 회사는 조금 좁아요 ...이만큼 많은 이주여성들이 아무리 한국어 공부해도 대학교 다녀도 마지막으로 취직 가능한 곳이 드물어요

In fact, it doesn't matter how much you study or what your major is. The range of companies accepting foreign immigrant women in South Korea is rather narrow... Even if many migrant women study Korean and even if they attend [a Korean] university, there are few places that hire them.

Although the coaches were poorly paid and not entitled to a salary raise with experience, this office job might be the best opportunity that these immigrant women might have in South Korea, as Xiang alluded. Xiang was aware of the vicious cycle in which immigrant women are forced to start to work without acquiring sufficient Korean language and end up with poorly paid and undervalued manual labor jobs. Based on this critical awareness, Xiang wanted to transform her material realities by strategically resisting the factory jobs for which immigrant women can easily be employed, persisting in earning a college degree and various certificates, and further developing her Korean language skills.

In addition, the dominant language ideology that does not value minoritized languages over Korean as an ethnolinguistic challenge was another hurdle in bilingual coaching for the immigrant mothers. With the first focus area in their job being Bilingual Parent Coaching, bilingual coaches prioritized changing negative perceptions that ethnolinguistically diverse families might have about bilingual education for their children. They witnessed many immigrant women not using their HL at home, just speaking Korean for various reasons. This environment leads their children to learn their mother's language as a foreign language, not as a HL, which in turn causes them to experience difficulty and lose interest in learning and using it. Chen explicitly connected HL teaching and its use to language rights, which are an essential component of human rights, by stating:

집에서 자기 나라 말 못 쓰게해요. 그래서 그거는 인권적인 문제가 될 수 있고, 그래서 되게 안쓰럽고 우리도 경험을 해 봤으니까...

They [immigrant women] are not allowed to use their own language at home. So, that could be a human rights issue, and that's why it's so sad, and we've experienced it too...

As Chen alluded, bilingual coaches also experienced their HLs not being supported in their own families. Linh noted that her own Korean family did not approve of her use of her HL with her child, which led her to experience resentment, sorrow, and regret to this day. Linh's in-laws explicitly stated to her that other than English, they would not support teaching the child another language. The ongoing denigration Linh faces from her in-laws regarding her HL has led to her feelings of self-denial about her own language. Linh noted:

저희 같은 경우는 저는 시댁 식구들은 그렇게...이중언어 에 대해서는 영어 아니면 그냥 안 했으면 말로는 안 했으면...좋겠다 라고...그래서 사실은 저희 아기한테는 베트남어는 안타까운 게 잊어버렸어요...저는 못 해줬기 때문에 지금 가장 아까웠어요.

In my case, my in-laws are like that... Regarding bilingualism, they hope that I just don't say other languages verbally if they are not English, ... So, indeed, it is unfortunate for my baby to forget Vietnamese... I felt the greatest regret right now because I couldn't [teach Vietnamese].

While working as bilingual coaches who promote bilingualism for immigrant populations, the coaches posed a problem within the environment where teaching the HL is opposed by their family at home. This individual language ideology is reflective of the ideology that does not value minoritized languages with less socioeconomic values in the larger society.

The bilingual coaches recognized and elaborated on the societal structures and injustices such as unequal pay, workload, and conditions as well as limited opportunities and access to jobs, which have been imposed on immigrant women even with college degrees and their bilingual proficiency. These challenges in the workplace manifest indisputable socioeconomic discrimination toward marriage

immigrants (Kim et al., 2015). They are identified, labeled, and objectified by the government as “multicultural” (J. S. Kim, 2011) and perceived as the “other” from other Koreans (M. Kim, 2013), which reveals the society’s ingrained raciolinguistic ideologies. The coaches’ critical awareness echoes how practitioners operating within border thinking are able to name “power differences, historical circumstances, social and cultural discourses, and various forms of marginalization” (Cervantes-Soon & Carrillo, 2016, p. 288). Working in the borderlands where dominant and marginalized cultures, languages, and knowledges collide, the coaches questioned asymmetrical and unjust power relations between marriage immigrants and Korean nationals evident at multiple levels.

To combat the three levels of challenges, bilingual coaches reclaim and validate their own physical, linguistic, cultural, and epistemological positions (Cervantes-Soon & Carrillo, 2016) and de-subaltern their knowledges, practices, and lifeways (García et al., 2021), which empower other ethnolinguistically minoritized women as well as themselves. The coaches navigated the difficulties primarily in three ways: (a) localizing bilingual education to ethnolinguistically diverse families in the South Korean context, (b) changing the dominant language ideology, and (c) empowering themselves and other minoritized women. Beyond merely articulating this inequity, they further navigate and pave the ways to resist the structure that maintains the status quo and confines them, and envision alternative narratives and practices, which leads to critical hope (Duncan-Andrade, 2009).

Localizing Bilingual Education to Ethnolinguistically Diverse Families in the South Korean Context

To respond to limited financial and material support from the institutions such as the Family Centers and the KIHf-led training, the bilingual coaches used their positions straddling different systems, languages, ideologies, and policies (Cervantes-Soon & Carrillo, 2016) and constructing alternative ways of bilingual coaching by de-subalternizing their knowledge. In fulfilling their responsibilities of the three areas in their job, Parent-Child Interaction, Bilingual Class, and Bilingual Applied Program, the bilingual coaches localized bilingual education to be relevant to the ethnolinguistically minoritized families in South Korea by building on their own knowledge and experiences. In running and preparing for class materials, the bilingual coaches did not just go by the manual or training they received from upper administration. Rather, they navigated the interests and needs of the mothers enrolled in the program and created differentiated and new materials. In addition, they elicited those mothers’ feedback and input in designing their lessons by listening to the participants’ experiences regarding how they applied what they learned. By valuing their voices, the coaches lifted the immigrant mothers’ status as the knowledgeable and resourceful as well.

Due to lack of materials in the minoritized languages in Korea, coaches often spent a lot of time creating materials in those languages. For example, Linh created literacy material in Vietnamese, especially for returning families to the program, for whom Linh had to differentiate materials among newly participating families:

그 신규같은 경우는 오히려 더 쉬워요. 그냥 우리 사업 뭔지 모르니까 .근데 다시 돌아온 가정은 알잖아요. 그러면 새롭게 하던지...완전 글씨를 가르쳐 주던지

In the case of new members, it's actually easier because they don't know what our curriculum is. However, in the case of returning families, they already know. So, you either do something new, or teach writing.

To differentiate lessons for the returning members, for whom materials and resources are more lacking, Linh created biliteracy materials that mothers and their children could use together to facilitate conversations and learn the written scripts in both Korean and their HL. During the

interview, Linh enthusiastically showed to the researcher the pictures of the literacy materials that she created based on the needs of the mothers, and how it was well received by them:

...이게 제가 직접 만들어서 이제 결혼이주여성들한테 나눠줬어요...아기 병풍...
엄마들 정말로 인기 많았어요...직접 그림도 붙여 넣고...위에는 베트남 걸로
밑에는 한글로 그것도 엄마들도 한국어로 배울 수 있고 아이랑 같이 되게
상호작용도 할 수 있는 거라서 나름대로 주제별로 다 해 가지고...그리고 맨날
똑같은 거 활용 하면은 엄마들한테 해도 도움 되지 않아서...이렇게 개발해
가지고 만들어 왔어요

I made this myself and distributed it to marriage migrant women... a baby folding screen... these materials were really popular among mothers... I pasted the pictures myself... Vietnamese words above and Korean words below. So, mothers can learn Korean as well and interact with their children. So I made all by topics... And if you use the same thing over and over, it won't be helpful to mothers... I developed it like this and made it.

As indicated in this quote, after recognizing the lack of Vietnamese literacy materials in South Korea, Linh encouraged families to work on the Vietnamese writing system beyond speaking and listening at home. Linh's work on literacy, extending beyond oracy in Vietnamese, represents the alternative teaching methods she seeks, informed by her experiences with returning families.

In addition to creating their own materials based on their knowledge and other mothers' needs, the bilingual coaches made explicit efforts to lift the status of other women by acknowledging their knowledge and resourcefulness as curriculum leaders, developers, and implementers. As part of the Parent-Child Interaction Program, the coaches were required to create play-based language learning for the mothers with their children at home based on early childhood education theories on which they received training. Instead of passively using the curriculum given to them, which could have been more fitting to the Korean mothers, or from Western play-based language learning with young learners, the coaches invited traditional play that they do with children in their respective countries.

Tran created opportunities for mothers to bring their own cultural activities to share, which values their knowing and empowers them as knowers. Although utilizing traditional play around the world is encouraged in the training manual for the bilingual coaches, the bilingual coach actively capitalized on the participating mothers' knowledge, which is otherwise underutilized and undervalued. This is just one example of de-subalternizing their local knowledge from the participating mothers into the bilingual education in South Korea:

제가 처음만 준비 하고 나머지는 두회기 삼회기부터는 엄마가 적극적으로
준비해 줘요. 자신있으니까...모든 프로그램 첫 회기만 꼼꼼하게 준비하고. 그
다음부터 엄마들 알아서 가져와요. 중국에서 이런 전통놀이 있고 캄보디아는
전통놀이 있고. 그러면 공통점 우리 같은거 하나 있어요.

I only prepare for the first time, and mothers actively prepare for the second and third sessions. Because [the mothers become more] confident...I meticulously prepare only the first session of every program for mothers, and then, mothers bring their own. They bring traditional games in China and traditional games in Cambodia. Then, we have one thing in common.

Another example of localizing bilingual education is by asking the mothers' opinions about how they want the program to be run instead of running it as it had traditionally been run with existing and given

materials. For example, Linh noted, “I ask married immigrant women their opinions once in a while to run it depending on how they want to operate it. To run not the way that I want to run, but the way migrant women want.” In addition, the coaches’ attempt to honor the immigrant women’s knowledge is demonstrated when Xiang deliberately promoted her pedagogical vision that mother’s language expertise is valued and cultivates their children’s pride in their mothers. Although migrant women are experts in their HL, their children tend not to consider their mother as a resource when learning the HL. With this dominant social climate, children who learn the language from a bilingual teacher do not necessarily perceive their mother as the authority at home. Xiang talked about how she directs children’s questions about their mother’s HL by saying: “When encountering ethnolinguistically diverse children, they would ask me, ‘What if I forget my Chinese?’ [I would answer them] ‘How about going home and asking your mom?’” This quote indicates that Xiang challenges the deficit views toward the immigrant mothers and validates the mother’s expertise and authority.

Despite the lack of institutional and financial support, the bilingual coaches took the initiative to make the coaching program more relevant to the mothers in the regions where they were working. Considering various institutional challenges related to lack of resources and allocated budget, it is noteworthy that they exerted self-authorship and took on additional responsibilities in terms of creating activities and even purchasing their own coaching materials. It is even more significant that they transformed their often-devalued and -stigmatized knowledge and experiences into legitimate knowledge. The coaches show that knowledge can be produced from the margins rather than at the center. This shift in perspective leads to the creation of new narratives and presents alternative ways of viewing the world by reframing marginalized thinking. (Mignolo, 2000).

Changing the Language Ideology

The bilingual coaches centralized their work on dispelling the prevalent language ideology that favors the Korean language among immigrant populations and the Korean society in general. The coaches realized that improving the mothers’ awareness of the necessity of HL teaching is most critical and emphasized the use of the mother’s language in communication with their young children. They encouraged participating mothers to use both languages with their children to be a model for them and also to maintain genuine communication with them. Bilingual coaches’ promotion of HL education challenges monolingualism and restrictive family language policies that silence these languages. It also confronts oppressive barriers to more expansive language ideologies. Coaches not only urged immigrant mothers to understand the importance of bilingual education at home but also reached out to and met with their husbands and other family members. This is because bilingual coaches talking to other family members with the goal of encouraging bilingual practices at home was encouraged in their job. However, if they deemed necessary, they met not only once but multiple times for longer hours. The Extra hours that they invested were beyond their job responsibilities. Tran noted:

... 집에서 방문해서 가족 코칭 같은 것도 반대하는 가족은...남편분도 한번 상담해 보고 그래야 적극적으로 참여해요...한번 그렇게 찾아가서 할머니하고 말씀을 드렸는데 할머니가 그렇게 한 번 가서 거의 3시간 걸렸거든요. 보통 1시간 찾아가는데 3시간 걸렸어요...얘기하고 ...다른집 동영상도 보여주고 그리고 그 사례, 아이 베트남어로 대회 나가는 모습도 보여 주시고 그리고 그 그 아기 베트남어로 말 대회 나가는 거 모습도 보여주시고 여러방법 하니까 아 알겠다고 하니까 .. 메시지 왔어요...그 일본어 하고 베트남 하는 동영상 보여 주고...유명한 아이들 먼저 보여주고...그리고 그 베트남 알파벳 영어 비슷하거든요...그래서 베트남 알면 영어도 쉽게 배운다고

...I do home visits and family coaching if the family is against bilingual education. The husband has to be on board. Then, they participate in the program more actively. I went to visit one family, and I talked with the grandmother for almost three hours. I usually schedule one hour, but it took three hours, then. We talked, and I showed videos of other families. And I showed examples of kids going to competitions in Vietnamese. After I used various examples, she messaged me that [she now agrees to teach the language of her non-Korean daughter-in-law]. I showed examples of famous kids talking in Japanese and in Vietnamese. And the Vietnamese alphabet is similar to English... so I told her that learning Vietnamese helps learning English.

As the coaches operated within the guidelines of the manual provided to them and drew on their local knowledge of raciolinguistic ideologies in South Korean society (Flores & Rosa, 2015), it is noteworthy that Tran began by showcasing well-known bilingual children from television as a persuasive method, followed by introducing lesser-known bilingual children using Vietnamese. Tran understood that Koreans would be more familiar with the children of celebrities shown on TV, as well as with languages that hold higher status, such as Japanese. Gradually, Tran progressed to showcasing Vietnamese, as spoken by typical children on the Internet and her own child. She also utilized the fact that Koreans overall think favorably of English (Lee, 2018), so she used the fact that learning the Vietnamese alphabet, which is Roman-based, will be advantageous to the child learning English later. Her skillful tactics involve maneuvering her knowledge of not only two languages and cultures but also the social contexts and prevailing language ideologies related to the unique bilingual education of Southeastern Asian languages in South Korea. Indeed, Tran uses her border knowledges from straddling positions between the two systems and between two knowledges when persuading Korean family members in the ethnolinguistically diverse families. Tran is clearly aware of what Koreans like and how she can approach them strategically to accept the use of HL in their homes. In addition, coaches' investing extra time – three times more than it is typically taken for a home visit – and using numerous methods in their resources in persuading other family members who might oppose their non-Korean family to use their HL with the child demonstrates their commitment to changing the dominant language ideology. On the other hand, the two additional hours that the coach spent during the home visit were not compensated, which indicates institutional limitations. Tran did not challenge the institution for her extra work. Rather, she sacrificed her time to create cracks in the pervasive monolingualism in families.

In addition, having experienced power differentials and linguistic inequality when it comes to raising their own children bilingually in the South Korean context (i.e., their Korean in-laws and Korean husbands would have more say about mom speaking her own HL to the child), bilingual coaches were more adamant and passionate about changing negative perspectives that families might have about bilingual education. The challenges Linh faced while practicing bilingual education for her own children inspired her to advocate for other families, especially mothers who encountered opposition from their Korean family and relatives. Linh continued talking about how she is using her own experience of failure in her own family to armor other families against the injustices:

이제 경험으로서 결혼이주여성이 제가 대상자한테 무조건 시택들은 안 된다고 하더라도 제가 항상 자료 같은 거 보여 주고 이만큼 중요하다고...무조건 포기하지 말라고 저처럼 하지 말라고

Now, from my experience and by showing materials, I tell marriage migrant women that even if their in-laws do not allow it, it is this important.. 'Don't give up no matter what and don't do it like I did.'

The persuasion tactics were more personal and purposeful for the coaches who are living through the conflicts and contradictions in their own families when it comes to bilingual education for their children. The bilingual coaches knew how to navigate the terrain of bilingualism education for ethnolinguistically minoritized children in the South Korean society where bilingualism is reserved for other languages, such as English and other more socioeconomically powerful languages. They had to legitimize and sell the marketability of their HLs to Koreans by juxtaposing it against English (e.g., the Vietnamese script being similar to the English alphabet). Despite these limitations and confusions, their efforts to consistently use their HL at home with their children can challenge the linguistic hierarchy that favors Korean over ethnolinguistically stigmatized languages in South Korea.

Empowering Themselves and Other Minoritized Women

The bilingual coaches were not in the position to drastically change and eradicate institutional or societal difficulties for themselves. However, a sense of pride and self-worth the coaches have inculcated by working as bilingual coaches at the Center helped them continue to work despite various institutional, social, and ideological challenges.

The coaches still had problems with the low budget and resources. However, a deep sense of pride originating from being able to help other immigrant women and a sense of self-growth propelled them to overcome these challenges. While critically examining the inequitable working conditions, the coaches also recognized the significance of the job for their own self-development, highlighting its potential for emancipation. Xiang stated:

저 일 하게 돼서 많이 성장 했어요. 많은 부분은...알게 되어 있고 또 초기 입국 결혼이민자 한테 도움 줄 수 있었어요. 센터 있다는 거 누구 다문화센터 찾아 왔어도 저한테 도움을 청한다면 도와줄 수 있어서 ...

I've grown a lot since I've been working here, and a lot of that is because I've been able to help early-arrival marriage migrants, and I've been able to help anyone who comes to the Center and asks me for help...

The bilingual coach position allows the coaches not only to provide other immigrant women with language strategies to raise children bilingually but also to contribute to enhancing other people's lives. This experience that the coaches' border knowledge actually helps other people is particularly noteworthy because many immigrant women including bilingual coaches themselves are often positioned as beneficiaries of social welfare and services. By proving the legitimacy of their border knowledges, the coaches took pride in themselves and their work as Xiang said, "This is very fulfilling and important work."

The coaches also claimed that they are the most capable for the bilingual coaching job as Tran stated: "I think it would be better for a marriage immigrant to take charge of this job," and Xiang similarly said: "I don't think Koreans can do it." As an example, they confidently mentioned their counselor role using their border knowledge. When coaches make home visits to persuade other family members and help with bilingual coaching for the mothers, they counsel the families to untangle conflicts between family members stemming from linguistic, cultural, and ideological differences, as well as navigate ways to resolve conflicts. Hoa recognized that her job extends beyond bilingual coaching, and to create a healthy bilingual environment in the homes, it is inevitable that she counsels family members who might have conflicts with each other:

갈등이 분명히 있죠... 그렇게 남편 분한테 얘기하고... 가정을 위해서 남편도 이거는 좀 양보해주고 넘어가고...그렇게 가정도 갈등 좀 줄어요... 프로그램

참여 통해서 [갈등해결해가요.] 저는 이중 엄마 코칭만 가르쳐주는 것 아니고 종합, 통역역할도 있고 상담, 기초상담 거의 다 있어요... 프로그램에 대한 환경 만드니까 그런거 다 신경쓰게 되요.

There's definitely a conflict... I told a husband like that...for the sake of family, the husband needs to give up on his stance... That way, family conflicts decrease. Well, through participation in the program, they come up with a way to solve it...I don't only provide coaching to mothers, but play comprehensive roles. There's a role of interpreter and counselor like basic counselor. I do pretty much everything. Because this is to create an environment for bilingual education, I care about all these.

Through their comprehensive and multifaceted efforts, the bilingual coaches asserted that they were key contributors to the ongoing social changes and evolving language ideologies regarding ethnolinguistic minorities. This involvement not only fostered a sense of pride in being valuable members of society but also helped them reclaim the dignity they had lost as marginalized individuals in the dominant culture.

The coaches envisioned their futures and the multicultural children's futures hoping that not only more immigrant women but also multicultural children are empowered as confident members of this society. The coaches' goals in bilingual coaching and the meaning of their job were not limited to their individualistic pursuits of professionalism or social mobility, but rather were extended to the breaking of the stigma on people like them and lifting of the social condition of them, their families, and their communities. Linh for instance pointed out the deeper meaning of her work is to bestow self-confidence upon other immigrant women:

저는 일 하는거 보다...결혼이주여성들한테 내가 도와줄 수 있다면 그게 더 큰역할이라고 생각해서 저만 자신 있으면 안 되고 그거는 안 된다고 생각했기 때문에 자신[감]은 엄마들한테 나눠 줘야 된다고

I thought it would be a bigger role if I could help marriage immigrant women, rather than bilingual coaching, so I think that I shouldn't be the only one who's confident and I shouldn't do that, so I have to give this confidence to the marriage immigrant women.

Similarly, Xiang genuinely wished for more diversified job options for other immigrant women, reflecting on her own sense of self-fulfillment with which her bilingual coaching job equipped her:

한국의 여러 분야의 우리 다문화 결혼이민여성 조금 받아들일 수 있는 직업이 생겼으면 좋겠어요. 일 통해서 자신감도 생겼잖아요. 자기 수입이 있어서 이 자신감이 다문화 자녀한테 영향이 줘요...우리 다문화 자녀도 나중에 당당하게 대한민국 일꾼으로서 조금 당당하게 살았으면 좋겠어요.

I wish there were more jobs that embrace our marriage immigrant women. I was able to build confidence through work. This confidence that they would get through making money can affect their children... I wish our children from immigrant mothers can have a more legitimate status and be confident as Korean citizens.

This quote is a vivid example of *critical hope* (Duncan-Andrade, 2009) in which the coaches undertake materialist help, sacrifice to share pain, and audaciously stand in solidarity with people like them.

In all, working as a bilingual coach in a government-sponsored institution like a Family Center deepened their awareness of structural inequality and asymmetrical socioeconomic and power relations between Korean workers and immigrant women. Illuminated by their personal work experiences, they

expanded their understanding of larger social inequity and systemic limitations imposed on immigrant women in terms of wage, promotion, job opportunities, access to resources, and workload. They further envisioned a more equitable future for not only immigrant women but also their children and articulated their suggestions and new alternatives. Therefore, the coaches show that their subaltern knowledges, which emerges from navigating various spaces and ideas in the middle of borderland and power dynamics, holds promise for repositioning themselves and other immigrant women as valuable members of the society.

Implications and Conclusion

Our study showed how six bilingual coaches identified various inequalities and raised critical consciousness related to language issues and conditions of female marriage migrants while challenging oppressive raciolinguistic ideologies. The bilingual coaches understood what it is like being in the margins and legitimized ethnolinguistically minoritized women's trivialized knowledge and lived experiences. They scaffolded power for themselves and other immigrant women through privileging their unique resources, embracing comprehensive roles and positions, and negotiating tensions and multiple funds of knowledge (Moll et al., 1992). Then, they started to enact participatory pedagogy to encourage mothers' local knowledge to be shared and promoted to valuable resources. The findings suggest how the coaches, originally from Global South contexts such as Southeastern Asian countries, enacted locally constructed and subaltern knowledge in their host country (Galván, 2014). Further, while questioning dominant Korean-centric patriarchal ways and promoting equitable opportunities for immigrant women and their children, the bilingual coaches show that they envisioned and instilled critical hope for social transformation (Duncan-Andrade, 2009).

Bilingual coaches' practices urge us to revisit professional development for bilingual coaches and support programs for ethnolinguistically minoritized women in South Korea. Training for bilingual coaches should be informed by local community knowledge of practicing coaches. Rather than blindly adopting theories and principles of bilingual education used in other countries, the contents of the coaching program should be differentiated for teaching socially stigmatized Southeast Asian languages in the South Korean context where different forms of raciolinguistic ideologies exist (Lew & Choi, 2022a; Lew & Choi, 2023; Flores & Rosa, 2015). Given that an official platform to share local bilingual coaches' knowledge and experiences with others does not currently exist, coaches spend a lot of time and energy to create materials for new and returning participants. Collectively produced knowledge, experiences, and strategies that are shared can form "community-based pedagogies" (Espinoza et al., 2021, p. 5), from which others can draw upon in planning their lessons. Given that border thinking goes beyond acknowledging two borders, realities, and knowledge to promoting social transformation as an extension of critical pedagogy for liberation, legitimizing community-based knowledges and experiences has the potential to empower ethnolinguistically minoritized women and "open up new avenues of agency" (Cervantes-Soon & Carrillo, 2016, p. 284).

In sum, this study's findings suggest that the bilingual coaching program in South Korea can be a stepping stone to reframe our perception of ethnolinguistically minoritized women as "creators, thinkers, and knowers" (Cervantes-Soon & Carrillo, 2016, p. 286). We are hopeful that in years to come, we will have more bilingual coaches who not only hope but also enact to emancipate other minoritized populations at the forefront of their work.

Despite methodological limitations of lacking focus group interviews in each language group and more varied data sources, the novel contribution of the findings of the current study to both practice and the knowledge base is the utility of border thinking to build a community and support minoritized women in South Korea, the implications of which may extend globally. The current study contributed

to the existing scholarship through the investigation of an under-represented group's border thinking in an under-researched context, the bilingual coaches, who are Southeastern Asian immigrants in South Korea. Our study reveals how border thinking played out in a unique way and in a specific context. While now South Korea views minoritized women in terms of the country's multicultural policies and human "capital" for the country's economic good, the coaches used this opportunity to construct border thinking to build a community and support minoritized people like them and turn this program to their people's social good. This study also has implications for the minoritized in other countries since immigrant policies and language ideologies in many different parts of the world still impose different forms of oppression on the transnational population and multilingual use. Future research should continue to examine various forms of border thinking and decolonizing endeavors.

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