

SNUAC Asia Square Brown Bag Seminar Series, Fall 2019

Linguistic Adaptation and Identity (Re)construction among North Korean Refugees in South Korea

Dr. Mi Yung Park

This talk will examine linguistic adaptation and identity (re)construction among North Korean refugees in South Korea. One of the biggest obstacles for their integration into South Korean society is communicating in what is ostensibly a ‘shared language’. Although the southern and northern varieties of Korean are mutually intelligible, there are noticeable differences. Moreover, North Korean accents are stigmatized in South Korea because of the political tension between the two countries. These language-related challenges faced by the refugees are under-researched. Given this unique context, I will look at how North Korean refugees adjust to the new linguistic environment, construct their language ideologies, and build a sense of belonging in the host society. In particular, by reporting on the lived experiences of North Korean refugees, I will highlight how they have become critical agents who understand issues of inequality and re-construct their identities as valuable assets for a future, reunified Korea. The findings of this study reveal the role of language ideologies in the processes of identity construction and prompt researchers to further investigate the multiplicity and fluidity of identity in order to better understand the lives of under-represented populations.

Mi Yung Park (Ph.D., University of Hawai‘i at Mānoa) is Senior Lecturer in Asian Studies, School of Cultures, Languages and Linguistics, at the University of Auckland (Auckland, New Zealand). She is currently based in Seoul National University Asia Center (SNUAC) as a visiting scholar. Her research interests include sociolinguistics, language and identity, and migration and multilingualism. She has been investigating the relationship between language learning and identity construction among marriage-migrant women and their multi-ethnic children in South Korea. She has published her work in such journals as *International Journal of Bilingual Education and Bilingualism*, *Language and Education*, *Language and Intercultural Communication*, *Journal of Pragmatics*, *Classroom Discourse*, and *The Korean Language in America*.

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Date & Time: November 12 (Tues) 2019, 12:00-13:00

Place: Room 406, SNUAC (Bldg#101)