

Creativity and Self-Presentation on SNS:
An Analysis of Japanese Young Adults' Online Language Practices from ELF and
Translingual Perspectives

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List of abbreviation

CMC	Computer-Mediated Communication
EFL	English as a Foreign Language
ELF	English as a Lingua Franca
ELT	English Language Teaching
EMI	English Medium Instruction
ESL	English as a Second Language
ENL	English as a Native Language
MEXT	The Japanese Ministry of Education, Culture, Sports, Science and Technology
MIC	The Ministry of Internal Affairs and Communications
SNS	Social Network Sites
TGU	Tokyo Global University
TOEFL	Test of English as a Foreign Language
TOEIC	Test of English for International Communication
VOICE	The Vienna Oxford International Corpus of English
WE	World Englishes
WrELFA	Written English as a Lingua Franca in Academic Settings

Chapter 1

Introduction

1.1. Background of the study

Social media has become a common aspect of contemporary life. The ubiquity of online use is integrated into the daily lives of a large population worldwide, especially the younger demographic, including those in Japan. Today, 93.2 percent of Japanese population in their twenties use social network sites, SNS (Ministry of Internal Affairs and Communication, MIC, 2022a). In the amidst of globalization, “people bring different cultural, social, language ideologies and practices to their everyday interactions” (Otsuji, 2015, p.101), and SNS serves vital spaces where such interactions unfold. Online communication has expanded textual and visual cultures, granting many the opportunity for authorship to publish their contents through various SNS, facilitating multiple-party interactions (see Adsit, 2015; Amato & Flesher, 2015). For approximately 75 percent of internet users who do not use English as their first languages (Statista, 2021), English is occasionally chosen as a means of reaching internationally scoped audiences (Vettorel, 2014). Consequently, English serves as a lingua franca (hereafter ELF) on the internet, let

alone various linguistic and semiotic resources (Baker & Sangiamchit, 2019; Sangiamchit, 2018; Vettorel, 2014). Many SNS users communicate in English with each other without physical proximity, in the semi-public space, where potentially hundreds of audiences gather as “followers”.

My thesis, therefore, results from my growing concern regarding how Japanese young individuals use English and the significance they attach to the language, particularly within the context of written communication in an online semi-public sphere. The fundamental principle that underpins this research aligns with a social constructivist perspective on linguistic creativity and identity construction on SNS. It emphasizes that these aspects are not inherent traits of texts or individuals but are instead constructed through relationships with others, their surrounding environments, and social norms.

The foundation of this research aims to contribute to various interdisciplinary research areas of sociolinguistics and applied linguistics, including ELF and translanguaging, creativity and identity construction, and computer-mediated communication (CMC)¹. It primarily contributes to some insights into aspects, including how ideologies and peer dynamics influence identities of Japanese young individuals

¹ The term electronically-mediated communication (EMC) coined by Baron (2008) also appears in academic discourse, as the mediums of people’s online communications are no longer limited to computers but others, including mobile phones, smartphones and tablets (see Baron, 2008; Jenkins, 2015; Sangiamchit, 2018). Nevertheless, CMC is used in major discourse including the latest version of Routledge Handbook of Language and Digital Communication (2016/2020). CMC there refers to *computer* not only as a medium per se but also as an emphasis on communication through computerized-system including social media. In this respect, I opt for using the term CMC in the present thesis.

when using English, how text-mediated and semi-public SNS influences creativity and self-presentation in ELF communication, and how SNS becomes a reflective medium that mirrors ideologies and values associated with English.

Firstly, the contribution of this study lies in its focus on the everyday online discourse among young Japanese individuals through the lenses of ELF and translanguaging. By exploring SNS, where the identities as English users/learners are intertwined, the study reveals how young adults are bounded by the roles of English in an online discourse and the domestic society. English is increasingly used in, what Mortensen (2013) terms, “*a lingua franca language scenario*” (p. 36, emphasis original), where “at least one of the speakers will be multilingual and the language scenario will include at least two and often more languages” (p. 37; see Chapter 2 for details). It is important to note that online ELF communication involves translanguaging repertoires employed by various participants, showcasing linguistic actions transcending the semiotic boundaries (Garcia & Li, 2014; Li, 2011; Chapter 2 for details). These participants not only introduce various linguistic patterns and modes but also, bring their linguistic experiences, communicative environments, beliefs, and ideologies into a lingua franca encounter (Li, 2011; see also Canagarajah, 2013b, 2018a, 2018b; 2020). On SNS, users from diverse backgrounds engage in innovative linguistic practices, irrespective of their

command of the language. These practices are the medium through which meaning making and self-expression are realized. In this context, SNS communication is achieved by the use of “realistic English” among a variety of speakers, rather than “real English” linked with native speakers² (Seidlhofer, 2003).

However, despite the reality of ELF communication in everyday digital discourse, a deeply ingrained perception of native speakerism persists in English language teaching (ELT) in Japan (see Iino & Murata, 2016; Konakahara & Tsuchiya, 2020; Konakahara et al., 2019; Murata, 2020; Murata et al., 2017, 2018). Students are often constrained with English prescriptivism, being highly conscious of the correctness of their own and their peers’ English (see Iino & Murata, 2016; Murata et al., 2017, 2018). In addition, English in Japan continues to hold its status as a vital asset for career paths (Sugimoto, 2021; see also Kubota, 2016, 2019; Watts, 2011). Consequently, English competence is generally a requirement for Japanese undergraduates (Iino, 2018), and overseas experiences, such as study abroad programs, are perceived as a symbolic power of learning the language outside classrooms (Iino, 2021). In all respects, English in Japan has been taught and considered as a foreign language (EFL), which has a single correct form and is considered

² The term native-speaker refers to speakers “who learned the language as their first language in their early childhood and developed intuitive competence in it” (Nogami, 2020, p. 160). It is important to bear in mind that the distinction of native and non-native itself promotes language standardization and linguistic homogeneity as well as dichotomization between the “idealized *self* of ‘native speakers’ and the problematic *other* of ‘non-native speakers’ (Konakahara & Tsuchiya, 2020, emphasis original).

a special asset to be earned. Japanese young adults enter transnational online sphere while having these experiences in specific English educational contexts and ingrained social values and ideologies associated with English. SNS is a space where their identities as users and learners intricately intersect, as it is a mundane and daily realm without the physical presence of authority figures, such as teachers who enforce prescriptive grammar rules. In this vein, SNS becomes a captivating space for exploring Japanese young adults' participation in ELF communication. It is a space where they are bounded by two discourses of English – using ELF while retaining EFL identity.

Secondly, the present research contributes to the understanding of two major keywords on SNS: creativity and self-presentation. Georgakopoulou and Spilioti (2016/2020) suggest that SNS is a central arena for creativity and identity construction through the use of language. SNS has drastically influenced our linguistic practices due to two fundamental factors: the written mode and the presence of multiple audiences (further discussed in the following section). The present research aims to bridge the knowledge gap regarding written creativity in ELF communication and aims to explore how young Japanese people cultivate creativity on SNS. Additionally, the study sheds light into the investigation of the users' self-presentation. It is worthy to note that what individuals share on the online platforms only represents what they *choose to share*. SNS

users refine and present themselves as digital beings worthwhile to share in public (Marwick & boyd, 2014). This consciousness arises from the awareness that their online content is watched by others (Trottier, 2016). In their discussion of online identity construction, Barton and Lee (2013, p. 68) point out that SNS users present “not just about *who [they] are*, but also *who [they] want to be to others*, and *how others see [them]*” (emphasis original). Darvin (2020) emphasizes that the presence of different types of audiences affect how users perceive themselves, leading them to perform multiple identities on a single platform. The present project operates on the premise that SNS is a space for self-presentation, rooted in the social constructivist idea of identities being constructed with the presence of interactants (Goffman, 1959; see also Davis & Harré, 1990). Acknowledging the multimodal nature of SNS, Vásquez (2022, p. 68) still agrees that “words, language, and discourse continue to serve as key resources in the presentation of self” in an online sphere. SNS users negotiate their language practices depending on “whom they affiliate themselves with and whom they want to please and what they want to talk about” (Kramsch, 2016, p. 181). Therefore, as distinctively described by boyd (2006, np), SNS is a space where individuals “write oneself into being”. Given the complexity and struggles faced by Japanese young people in navigating their identities as

English users/learners, it is of important inquiry to investigate how they articulate their identities as English users and learners in the digital realm.

The final contribution of this study is related to methodology employed in CMC research, including data source and analytical approaches. Ilbury (2022) has witnessed a major shift in young adults' SNS popular usage from textually dense platforms such as Facebook and Twitter³ to multimodal driven ones including Instagram, the focal data source of the present thesis. While multimodality in ELF communication has been discussed by several scholars (Konakahara, 2023; Matumoto, 2019), the continuous attention is necessary, especially considering the acceleration of visually driven online channels. Despite its popularity among Japanese young people, Instagram has received insufficient attention as a data source in prior research (Kurosawa & Taguchi, 2020). This oversight can be attributed to the necessity of insider-perspectives of researchers in CMC research (Lee, 2017; 2020), which led previous researchers investigating multilingualism in CMC to find Facebook more feasible and accustomed (see research conducted by Androutsopoulos, 2015; Baker & Sangiamchit, 2019; Lee, 2017; Tagg & Seargeant, 2016/2020). However, the demand and participatory culture of SNS vary across each platform and generation. Studying a site that is common among research participants may

³ Twitter has been rebranded and the name of the platform has been replaced with X in July, 2023.

offer a more accurate representation of popular discourse among specific generations. The popularity of Instagram was evident when my Japanese undergraduate students exchanged contacts on the first day of class. Even before sharing their LINE⁴ accounts, they asked each other, *insuta koukan shiyo?* ‘Do you want to exchange Instagram?’. Their ice break interactions indicate how SNS like Instagram is closely tied to the friendship construction of Japanese young adults (see also Kurosawa & Taguchi, 2020; Sakai, 2019). It also signifies how the culture of “sharing” – where individuals narrate the minutiae of their lives including what they eat, where they go, with whom they are, and what they think and feel – penetrates young people’s private spheres (see Agger, 2012; Page, 2012). This sharing culture is reflected in the recent Japanese term, *insuta-bae* ‘Instagramable’, which signifies objects and events worth sharing online hence worth experiencing in real-life, often involving showing off their idealized versions of themselves. Consequently, the boundaries between their online and offline lives have become nebulous (Dovcin, 2020; Dovchin et al., 2018; Tagg & Seargeant, 2016/2020). Their experiences outside the online sphere significantly influence what they share and the language in which they write. This leads to the significance in an online ethnographic approach, not only relying on on-

⁴ LINE is the most used texting application in Japan (Ministry of Internal Affairs and Communications, 2022b). There are SNS which launched and spread regionally, such as LINE in Japan, Kakao Talk in South Korea, Wechat and Weibo in China.

screen data but also incorporates the voices of SNS users behind the screen. This multifaceted perspective enhances our understanding of the social meaning attached to the online users' linguistic practices and how values and norms from their offline lives influence their online experiences. While still underexplored, this ethnographic view into Japanese young people's SNS communication is significant to delve into the role of English in their everyday lives.

1.2. How SNS has changed our communication

SNS is the most prominent and typical platform of social media. The rise of Web 2.0⁵, characterized by active and collaborative social interactions among users, has advanced the growth of social media (Andoroutsopoulos, 2013; Herring, 2013; Heyd, 2016/2020; O'Reilly, 2005). Unlike mass media, social media fosters internet-mediated social environments that facilitate the dissemination of information, which allow public involvement through various platforms such as discussion forums, Wikipedia, e-commerce websites, blogs, and SNS. In this sense, social media can be viewed as an umbrella term encompassing different online channels, with SNS specifically referring to membership-based platforms that enable user-generated communication and active

⁵ Web 2.0 is a concept developed by Tim O'Reilly and Media Live International, which refers to the internet based participatory services, which allow public to create and share contents (O'Reilly, 2005).

participations (see Beer, 2008; Jones et al., 2021). Since the first SNS was launched in 1997⁶ (boyd & Ellison, 2007), the past thirty years saw rapid expansion of SNS as seen in launches of YouTube in 2005, Facebook⁷ and Twitter in 2006, WhatsApp in 2009, Instagram in 2010, and Tiktok in 2016. Along with Facebook, Twitter and You Tube, Instagram is one of the most popular SNS across the world. According to Ellison and boyd (2013), SNS can be commonly defined by three key features; “*uniquely identifiable profiles* that consists of user-supplied content”, “*publicly articulate connections* that can be viewed” and “*streams of user-generated content* provided by their connections on the site” (p. 158, emphasis original). These three elements represent the fundamental affordances typically found on SNS.

SNS has changed our communication in two significant ways compared to face-to-face spoken communication, through communicative modes and audience roles. Firstly, SNS communication is mostly visually driven. With the exception of audio-based platforms, such as Podcasts and Clubhouse, SNS primarily takes place in written mode, mediated through typed texts, along with pictures, videos and audios. This written mode distinguishes itself from spoken interaction due to the absence of spatiotemporal contexts

⁶ The first SNS, SixDegrees.com, was launched in 1997. The SNS allowed users to “create profiles, list their Friends”, “surf the Friend lists”, and “send message” to other users. The service closed in 2000 due to unsuccessful business to maintain the service.

⁷ Facebook was first launched among only Harvard university students in 2004 and re-launched for everyone in public in 2006 (boyd & Ellison, 2007)

between writers and readers (Widdowson, 2004). Unlike oral conversation, it is rare “for the composition and the reading of a written text to occur simultaneously at the same time” (Cameron & Panovic, 2014, p. 22; see also Widdowson, 2004). The unique spatiotemporal gap is particularly evident on SNS, where content can be accessed from anywhere and at any time worldwide. Compared to speakers, writers are less spontaneous and have time to “shape [...] thoughts into words, frame those words to sentences and texts which are appropriate for [...] intended audience” (Cremin & Myhill, 2012, p. 10). SNS users have the opportunity to draft and edit their contents before publishing them (Baron, 2008). This reflexive nature affords SNS users to carefully craft their message, which are easily preserved and spreadable on the internet.

Audiences on SNS are the second key feature. SNS serves as a space where users connect with hundreds of “networked audiences” (Androutsopoulos, 2015), consisting of individuals from various stages of their lives, each with different degrees of “shared histories, experiences, and linguistic repertoire” (p. 190). The convergence of multiple networked audiences gathering in the same online space is a defining characteristic of SNS, leading to diverse social and communicative relationships constructed (see Chapter 3). In such a context, SNS users engage in “audience design” (Bell, 1984; Tagg & Seargeant, 2014; see also Chapter 3 for details) to tailor their online posts, considering

which specific individuals, among their numerous followers, the content is meant for. The presence of multiple networked audiences fosters “online sociability that host social practices of self-presentation and reflexive construction of identity” (Androutsopoulos, 2015, p. 188). The multiplicity of audiences online inevitably complicates the perception of online identity as a singular concept (Marwick & boyd, 2011).

In sum, SNS communication differs significantly from the communication often investigated in ELF research, due to its reliance on written modes and the presence of a large and diverse audience. The dynamics of these networked audiences underscore their impact on their linguistic creativity and the presentation and construction of online identities. These features form the foundation for the objective of this research.

1.3. Objective of the thesis

Just as other SNS users in the other parts of the world, Japanese youth interacts with diverse networked audiences. With increased mobility and connectivity across borders, it has become common for Japanese young individuals to establish online friendships with individuals from different countries (see Takahashi, 2014). Consequently, on Instagram profiles, they share their posts in English with networked audiences ranging from international to local, each with distinct linguistic backgrounds, values, and expectations

regarding the use of English. Drawing on social semiotic perspective (Halliday, 1978), therefore, the use of English and meaning making on SNS is considered not static but socially constructed through the divergent online space where various users gather.

As highlighted in Section 1.1., the use of English on SNS is entangled with various sociolinguistic norms and ideological perspectives prevalent in the locale of Japan. It is these entanglement of English in everyday discourse shaped by and constructed through ideologies that this research project explores. Particularly, the focus is on the sociolinguistic practices of young SNS users in Japan whose viewpoints have so far received limited attention. The present qualitative research (see Chapter 4) aims to explore how Japanese young adults on SNS use English as a lingua franca (ELF) as a creative means, in the process of translingual practices, and how their identities as users/learners and members of a transnational community influence their self-presentation online. The project is guided by the following questions:

Q1. What roles does the translingual repertoire play for the Japanese participants in SNS communication?

Q2. In what creative ways do the Japanese participants use the translingual repertoire?

Q3. How does the presence of imagined audiences influence the Japanese participants’

creativity and self-presentation?

Q4. How do linguistic ideologies and social norms influence the Japanese participants' self-presentation as English speakers on SNS?

By addressing the questions, the current study aims to investigate participants' linguistic practices and their complex representation of identities on the online space.

Vásquez (2022) claims the importance of qualitative perspective when investigating online users' discursive manner. Particularly, Lee (2017) highlights the significance of qualitative methodology in providing in-depth insights into SNS users in relation to their "practices, ideologies, metadiscourse, and issues related to identities" (p. 121). To delve into these aspects, an ethnographic approach, Netnography (Kozinets, 2002, 2015a, 2015b; see also Chapter 4) is employed in this study. The approach not only observes SNS users' online practices but also values conversations between researchers and SNS users. In contrast to previous online ethnographic studies which examined primarily on-screen data and technological affordances, Netnography places emphasis on "the details and context of human stories and human understandings, of people using technologies" (Kozinets, 2015, p. 4). Baker and Sangiamchit's (2019) ethnographic research on online ELF communication address their limitation of insufficient inclusion of online users'

voices. Considering this limitation, the present research values the voices of SNS users themselves, both as writers and readers, to deepen our understanding of how they use their linguistic resources and the underlying beliefs and ideologies. By incorporating onscreen data and users' perspectives, this research project aims to describe a richer understanding of Japanese young adults' online practices. This research seeks to shed light on the use of their translingual repertoires, their identity construction, and sociolinguistic factors that shape the way English is exploited and perceived in the online environment. Ultimately, the research aims to provide valuable insights into the sociolinguistic landscape of English in the everyday digital sphere from the perspective of Japanese young people.

1.4. Chapter overviews

This thesis consists of eight chapters, outlined as follows. The present chapter, Chapter 1, introduces the current situation of English in a globalized and digitized world, discussing how SNS has impacted our communication. It outlines the potential contributions of this research concerning everyday English use among Japanese young SNS users, leading to the research questions.

Chapter 2 aims to provide an overview of the understanding of English as a lingua

franca (ELF), translingualism, and English ideologies in Japan. It discusses ELF and translingualism, which theoretically underpin this research. The chapter describes ELF communication while also reviewing translingualism as a principle that scaffolds the understanding of communicative resources and participants' identities. It also analyzes English in Japan, discussing critical ideologies associated with English.

Chapter 3 explores creativity and self-presentation on SNS. It investigates how SNS, with its nature of multi-party communication, influences linguistic creativity and the identity construction. Bridging with the theoretical understanding of ELF and translingualism, the chapter considers one's creativity and identity as socially constructed practices in relation to potential audiences, communicative environments, ideologies, and values.

Chapter 4 introduces the methodological approach and research context. It explains the data source, research location, and the participants. The chapter addresses the rationales for applying an online ethnographic perspective, providing details on data collection, including online observation, interviews, and a questionnaire. The approach to data analysis is also clarified in this chapter. Reflexibility and ethical considerations, including researcher's roles in this research, are also presented.

Chapter 5 presents the analysis focusing on the participants' online posts. By mainly

applying an etic view to the English use on SNS, this chapter explores how participants exploit their translingual repertoires as a creative medium of ELF communication on SNS. By providing ample examples of Instagram posts, the chapter explores the way various semiotic resources are merged and exploited for communicative and self-expressive purposes.

Chapter 6 presents the analysis of the interview narratives from an extensive period of investigation into focal participants. It values participants' voices and applies an emic perspective to understand how the nature of SNS being written-mode and semi-public influences and shape the construction of their complex identities as English users/learners.

Chapter 7 discusses the research findings in depth by bridging the analysis of on-screen data and narrative-focused data. The discussion reveals several significant points relevant to the research objective, visiting key terms of the present research such as creativity, self-presentation, and English ideologies on SNS.

Chapter 8 consists of a summary and conclusion for the thesis. It firstly revisits research questions and provides answers to the questions. Then, research limitations are indicated. Moreover, research contributions are discussed, leading to the discussion on future research.

Chapter 2

ELF, translingualism, and young adults in Japan

2.1. Introduction

The internet gave rise to communication among its worldwide users, often choosing English as a shared lingua franca. ELF research has continuously evolved in response to the expanding global communication landscape. Through a substantial body of research, ELF communication has been described as dynamic, complex, adaptive, and creative in interaction that transcends national boundaries (see Baker, 2015, 2017, 2018; Cogo, 2009, 2012, 2018, 2021; Jenkins, 2007, 2015b, 2018; Larsen-Freeman, 2018; Pitzl, 2012, 2016, 2018a, 2018b; Seidlhofer, 2011, 2018; Seidlhofer & Widdowson, 2017; Widdowson, 2015b, 2017, 2019; see Section 2.2). Additionally, SNS communication always involves the integration of participants' use of multiple languages and modalities, which can be discussed from a translingual perspective (Canagarajah, 2013b, 2018a, 2018b; Garcia & Li, 2014; Li, 2011; 2018; 2020; see Section 2.2.2). SNS provides a rich communicative context where inquiries into ELF and translingual research converge, as it involves participants' creative language practices transcending linguistic, modal, and geographical

boundaries.

The present chapter reviews the crucial elements underpinning this research. It first delves into the guiding principles of this thesis, ELF and translanguaging (2.2). Then, it examines English ideologies and social norms surrounding youth in Japan (2.3), followed by an overall summary of this chapter (2.4).

2.2. Introducing ELF and translanguaging

This section discusses the major frameworks that underpin this research, ELF and translanguaging, in order to understand SNS communication and its participants. It begins by defining ELF communication in this research (2.2.1). Then, by drawing on translanguaging, it outlines the approach this study takes to understand one's resources and identities (2.2.2). Furthermore, it examines the theoretical intersections and divergences between ELF and translanguaging to establish the position of this research (2.2.3). Finally, it reviews existing research in written communication within these fields and discusses what aspects remains underexplored (2.2.4).

2.2.1. Defining ELF communication in this study

The present research conceptualizes ELF communication as involving English as a

contact language, accompanied by a range of linguistic and non-linguistic resources, used in “*a lingua franca language scenario*” (Mortensen, 2013, p. 36, emphasis original). A lingua franca scenario refers to a communicative context where “at least one of the speakers will be multilingual and the language scenario will include at least two and often more languages” (Mortensen, 2013, p. 37). ELF communication often includes participants who share languages other than English (Cogo, 2018; Jenkins, 2015b, 2018) and those who use English as first languages (Jenkins, 2015a).

It is significant to clarify that ELF is not considered a distinct linguistic variety. ELF researchers have shifted their focus from identifying language characteristics to investigating practices and attitudes (see 2.2.3). Most notably, ELF is defined as “*any use of English among speakers of different first languages whom English is the communicative medium of choice, and often the only option*” (Seidlhofer, 2011, p. 7, emphasis original). Building upon Seidlhofer’s (2011) classic definition, Mortensen’s (2013) description emphasizes the communicative context over the language itself. This shift in emphasis resolves some issues found in earlier studies that examined linguistic strategies and features, which could potentially mislead one to perceive ELF as a bounded entity⁸. Mortensen (2013) emphasizes the non-reification of ELF and instead considers

⁸ Mortensen (2013) points out studies investigating features such as “the (-s) variables” and strategies such as let-it-pass strategies seem to reify ELF as a language system.

speakers' use of English *as it is* (Matsumoto, 2019, p. 567, emphasis original), without categorizing it as non-native speaker English. In accord with these perspectives, this research views ELF communication as a communicative context without categorizing the participants' linguistic forms as non-native speakers.

The perspective adopted in this study to explore ELF communication on SNS is influenced by translingualism. Translingualism views individuals' language practices as encompassing a transcendent use of linguistic and non-linguistic resources, contextual cues, ideologies, and communicative relations, all of which shape communication (Canagarajah, 2013b, 2018a, 2018b, 2020; Garcia & Li, 2014; Li, 2011, 2014, 2016, 2018; Pennycook, 2007, 2020). While ELF communication inherently involves more than a single code and source, stemmed from communicative participants' diverse linguacultural backgrounds (see Murata, 2020; Seidlhofer & Widdowson, 2019), some scholars have called for substantial emphasis on resources beyond English (see Jenkins, 2015b). In light of this, the present study considers ELF communication "a highly heterogeneous empirical phenomenon" (Mortensen, 2013, p. 37) that involves speakers' translingual repertoires encompassing diverse semiotic resources and environments. Further discussion of translingual repertoires is developed in the following.

2.2.2. Understanding resources and identities – drawing from translingualism

The present research regards ELF communication involving speakers' translingual repertoires, which are integrated with not only linguistic resources, but also non-linguistic resources situated within certain spatiotemporal contexts (Canagarajah, 2018a 2018b; Pennycook, 2020; Pennycook & Otsuji, 2015). Primarily drawing from translingual perspective, this study views communication not only as an interaction among individuals' semiotic resources but also as an integration of these resources within the environmental affordances (see Canagarajah, 2018a, 2018b). This section delves into how this study conceptualizes languages (2.2.2.1) and the communicative space (2.2.2.2). It presents the social constructivist approach to understand communicative participants' identities (2.2.2.3) and subsequently discusses power dynamics that operates in the construction of identities (2.2.2.4).

2.2.2.1. Epistemological expansion of language

Translingualism has expanded our understanding of language in the process of monolingual orientations foregrounding various linguistic and semiotic resources. More ELF researchers have adopted this standpoint, emphasizing the significance of languages other than English (see Cogo, 2022; Jenkins, 2015; Pitzl, 2018) and multimodality

(Konakahara, 2015, 2023; Matsumoto, 2019) in ELF communication.

Li (2020) contends that translanguaging challenges persistent biases in linguistic studies, particularly monolingual bias and lingual bias. Monolingual bias traditionally views language activity from a “one-language-at-a-time” perspective, regarding one language (often the speaker’s first language) as the “host” language and others as “guests” (Li, 2020, p. 240). In contrast, a translanguaging perspective sees communicative practices as transcending geographically demarcated named language categories (Garcia & Li, 2014; Li, 2018, 2020; see also Canagarajah, 2018b). While Li (2023) acknowledges the necessity to differentiate named languages in the analytical process, he highlights that the critical point is understanding the mutual interaction of languages in one’s communicative action and how s/he makes sense of it. It is important to note that translanguaging practices manifest in both textual products and processes. Canagarajah (2020) highlights that a translanguaging writing does not always entail overt “code-mesh” (p. 6). Similarly, Li (2018) argues that speakers draw upon their resources, even when they appear to be in “monolingual mode” (p. 18). This aligns with the concept of “overt” and “covert” multilingualism as explained by Cogo (2018, p. 358), where the former “clearly show[s] the use of two or more languages in discourse” while the latter involves “cross-linguistic or cross-cultural influences in the speakers’ repertoires” and do not linguistically appear

in discourse (see also Cogo, 2021). For instance, a covert translingual practice involves a Japanese student using Japanese in the planning and drafting stages of academic writing, which nonetheless appears in English in the final version (Velasco & García, 2014). Therefore, from a translingual perspective, even seemingly monolingual texts encompass writers' cognitive and social processes that include their available linguistic resources, including local dialects.

Translingualism also challenges the lingua bias (Li, 2020) by emphasizing the significance of other semiotic resources. Garcia and Li (2014) argue that multimodalities play a crucial role in communication. Multimodality is particularly essential in the study of CMC (see Chapter 3 Section 3.2.2.2 for further discussion), as linguistic codes are not the mere resource for meaning making. Photographs on any SNS are essential for encapsulating personal narratives (Kress & Leeuwen, 2006; Murray, 2013). In addition, emojis complement, or, at times, replace linguistic codes (Giannoulis & Wilde, 2020; Siever, 2020). Jenkins (2018) also touches on emojis in ELF communication, highlighting their roles in conveying emotions without necessarily using English or any language as a lingua franca. SNS incorporates resources that can be enjoyed visually, thereby extending the resources associated with face-to-face oral interactions (Tagg, 2016). In essence, the translingual perspective expands epistemological understanding of language by

considering that “all meaning making modes” shape communication (Li & Garcia, 2014, p. 29).

2.2.2.2. Communicative space

The contextual dependency of communication is a topic explored by both ELF and translingual scholars. Widdowson (2004) defines “text,” as linguistic units consisted of grammatical structures (see also Widdowson, 1975). When text is correlated with participants and contextual clues, “discourse” is realized (Widdowson, 1975, p. 33). Therefore, meaning only emerges when the text is integrated with the intentions and interpretations of communicative participants within a given context (Widdowson, 1978, 2004).

Additionally, Canagarajah (2018a, 2018b) challenges the idea of treating the environmental influences as secondary to language practices. This is especially relevant on SNS, where audiences with different social backgrounds converge in one space. Canagarajah (2018a) distinguishes between a communicative place, a geographical category, and a communicative space, a socially constructed interactional scene, which aligns with Widdowson’s (2015b) discussion of community and communication. According to Canagarajah (2018a), a space considers:

“all the affordances and constraints in the setting (that is, diverse semiotic resources, social networks, and material conditions) as equally shaping the activity.” (p. 35)

Therefore, the concept of communicative space extends beyond the physical realm of communication. Which is to say, that language is not a self-standing system and is shaped by ecological environment surrounding given communication (Canagarajah, 2013b). To adapt this remark to CMC settings, a communicative space on SNS is shaped by all available linguistic and non-linguistic resources, the social relationships built through online and offline lives, and technical affordances.

Furthermore, Li (2011) explains that regardless of the languages used in a final product, a translingual text creates:

“a social space for the multilingual language user by bringing together different dimensions of their personal history, experience and environment, their attitude, belief and ideology, their cognitive and physical capacity into one coordinated and meaningful performance, and making it into a lived experience” (p. 2113)

Therefore, a communicative space is also shaped by one's attitudes, belief, and ideologies. Drawing on this post-structural account, this study considers ELF communication on SNS as an "assemblage of semiotic resources, artifacts, and environmental affordances in specific settings to facilitate communicative success" (Canagarajah, 2018a, p. 36; see also Pennycook & Otsuji, 2015). Each SNS post is shaped by an individual's semiotic resources, linguistic experiences, communicative environments, values, and ideologies.

2.2.2.3. Socially constructed identities

Norton (2013, p. 4) defines identity "as the way a person understands his or her relationship to the world [and] how that relation is constructed across time and space".

The present research takes this position of identities on SNS as socially constructed, shaped by individuals and society. This perspective accords with the concept of identities in ELF communication, which are negotiable and something that participants "do" (Baker, 2017, p. 131).

Darvin and Norton (2023, p. 29), by discussing the notion of "investment", emphasize that research into language learning and use should primarily be sociological focusing on "how histories, lived experiences and social practices shape language learning". Darvin and Norton (2015) propose that one's investment in language is situated

at the intersection of *ideology*, *capital*, and *identities*. Ideology plays a significant role because linguistic practices, from individual language preferences to the establishment of language policies, are inscribed by language ideologies. Thus, “any examination of linguistic exchanges is inevitably an extrapolation of ideological forces at work” (Darvin & Norton, 2015, p. 43). Ideologies “are seen as structuring people’s understanding of their social realities and as justifying or interpreting their actions” (Tagg & Seargeant, 2021, p. 2). Furthermore, one’s investment in language is shaped by their capital. Darvin and Norton (2015) point out that linguistic resources are tied to one’s cultural, social, and economic capitals (Bourdieu, 1991, 2014), which would be symbolized when they are recognized by others. Moreover, Darvin and Norton (2015) highlight that investment is closely linked to identities, which are shaped by ideologies and power discourse. According to them, identities are linked to “act[ing] in ways that correspond with a prevailing ideology” (p. 46).

Norton (2013) as well as Darvin and Norton (2015, 2023) frame identities as a “site of struggles”, where speakers hold multiple orientations of identities depending on the social contexts of language practices. In all, as Norton (2013) puts it, by investing in language:

“[speakers] are not only exchanging information with target language speakers, but they are constantly organizing and reorganizing a sense of who they are and how they relate to the social world.” (p. 50)

Identities are constructed through different life stages, influenced by factors such as living and working situations, educational backgrounds, and socioeconomic status. The relationships between an individual’s identities as users/learners and language practices are not always straightforward but often complex (Baker, 2015, 2017; De Fina, 2020; Katayama, 2022; Larsan-Freeman, 2018).

Drawing on the notion of investment, it is understood that one’s identities on SNS can be shaped by social, political, and economic power dispositions (Darvin & Norton, 2015). In addition, SNS is a space where microstructures of power are observable (see also Darvin, 2020), and consequently, identities are situated in power dynamics.

2.2.2.4. Power relations in written communication

It is crucial to recognize that participants in ELF communication are not always autonomous agents in exploiting resources. Hynninen and Solin (2018) discuss the significance of norms in ELF communication, which delineate the expected and accepted

linguistic standards. While linguistic norms in ELF communication is negotiable, many other contexts, such as testing scenes, demand adherence to conventional English norms (Hynninen & Solin, 2018; Kimura & Canagarajah, 2018). Therefore, Canagarajah (2013b) states that speakers in the global contexts are not “easy, free, or egalitarian” (p. 29). Consequently, Hynninen and Solin (2018) highlight that ELF researchers must not solely focus on individual creativity but also acknowledge the presence of power dynamics and ideologies that operates.

In written discourse, gatekeepers such as, reviewers, and teachers “have the power to impose linguistic norms and conventions and to determine conditions of [textual] entry” (Darvin & Norton, 2023, p. 32). For example, Jenkins’s (2014) study highlighted a case where a Thai student expressed frustration at tutors’ excessive emphasis on non-conventional grammar usage than contents, describing it “unfair” (p. 182). In such cases, the capabilities of individuals are disregarded, leading to the fragility of authorship due to continuous revisions imposed by gatekeepers (Turner, 2018).

The realm of SNS provides a markedly different landscapes from the formal setting with respect to the presence of gatekeepers. Adsit (2015) characterizes SNS as a space fostering “universal authorship” allowing “nearly everyone [to] publis[h] work read by at least 100 people” (p. 105). SNS users are entirely responsible for crafting, editing, and

publishing their own contents (Danesi, 2016; Page, 2012, 2020). Thus, SNS offers authorship accessibility to individuals irrespective of their English backgrounds, allowing instant publication through smartphones (see Mauranen, 2020). Mauranen (2013) indicates that the absence of traditional language enforcers of prescriptive grammar in online contexts has led to the hybridization of writing genres, evident in “non-standard” use of English. While traditional power relations such as those between non-native and native speakers or students and teachers appear absent in the online contexts, oversimplifying the dynamics on SNS could lead to a narrowly conceived idea, as it fails to take into account the emergent peer power relations. Relevant to this, online surveillance culture on SNS will be further discussed in the following chapter (see Chapter 3 Section 3.4). Thus, it is important to acknowledge that SNS is also a space characterized by power discourse.

In light of this, the present study refrains from a sole focus on the speaker autonomy in identity construction. Instead, it emphasizes how speakers are situated concerning the presence of others online. In other words, this research posits that speakers on SNS not only autonomously “do” identities (Baker, 2017, p. 131) but also, they do identities because others expect them to do so. This perspective is also discussed by Kimura and Canagarajah (2018), who cite Jordan (2015). Jordan (2015) cautions against “human-

centric empirical claims” (p. 372) in communication studies, highlighting comprehensive understanding of the ecological conditions shaping communication. He asserts the necessity to consider “not only what a speaker is doing with language but also what language is doing to the speaker” (Jordan, 2015, p. 373). Therefore, in accord with Canagarajah’s (2018a) critique of the idea that human linguistic activity is merely “orchestrated by the human mind” (p. 39), this study considers ecological conditions, encompassing power dynamics such as ideology and peer relations, shaping linguistic practices.

2.2.3. Convergence and divergence between ELF and translingualism

Before proceeding to the further discussion about SNS communication, this section takes a moment to address the intersection and divergence between ELF and translingualism. Concerning the understanding of English in the global context, these paradigms share certain theoretical underpinnings while retaining remaining differences. The convergence of these two fields can be explained by the exploration of the fluidity of global communication and the reconceptualization of English in the globalized world, while the divergence lies in the focus of theoretical discourses when discussing English.

Both ELF and translingualism have explored dynamic communication transcending

bounded communities. Building on World Englishes (WE) perspective⁹ (Kachru, 1992), which investigates language practices according to communities, ELF research has investigated communication that does not involve geographically definable practices (Baker, 2018; Cogo, 2012; Ishikawa & Jenkins, 2019; Widdowson, 2015b). While earlier ELF research primarily described linguistic features found in ELF communication¹⁰, it is now a common ground among ELF scholars that they have shifted their focus towards exploring pragmatics and deepening the theoretical and ideological understanding of English (see Baird & Baird, 2018; Baker, 2015, 2017, 2018; Cogo & House, 2018; Jenkins, 2015, 2018; Jenkins et al., 2011; Kohn, 2018; Larsen-Freeman, 2018; McBride & Ishikawa, 2019; Murray, 2012; Ortega, 2018; Seidlhofer, 2011; Widdowson, 2015b, 2021b). ELF research has shown that language normativity in communication is not pre-given but emergent (Hynninen & Solin, 2018; Jenkins et al., 2011; Jenkins, 2015; Larsen-Freeman, 2018; Mortensen, 2018; Pietikäinen, 2018; Pitzl, 2018; Seidlhofer & Widdowson, 2017). The border-crossing nature of communication has also been the

⁹ Kachruvian circles (1992) label English as Native Language (ENL) countries as an inner circle and English as a Second Language (ESL) countries as an outer circle, and English as a Foreign Language (EFL) countries as an expanding circle.

¹⁰ What Jenkins (2015) calls the ELF1 phase is represented by investigating linguistic forms that are particular in ELF communication. Large-scale ELF corpus such as ELF corpora (Jenkins, 2000) for pronunciation, VOICE (Vienna-Oxford International Corpus of English) by Seidlhofer (2001) for lexico-grammatical features, and ELFA Corpus (ELF in Academic settings) by Mauranen (2003) for data collected from higher education became an outstanding contribution to the era of ELF1. While these investigations contributed for a great success and development of ELF research, it is also safer to beware that linguistic model is often part of “a selective, purpose-oriented representation of aspects of a complex reality” (Schneider, 2017, p. 2) because, in reality, English use is notably divergent depending on participants in each communication.

central topic of translingualism, which points out that global communication is geographically unlocatable, where linguistic and cultural resources are woven into (Canagarajah, 2013b, 2018a, 2018b; Garcia & Li, 2014; Li, 2011, 2020; Pennycook, 2007). Although this study does not dismiss the WE paradigm, as it acknowledges Japan's status as an English as a foreign language (EFL) country has shaped domestic language ideologies and norms (see Section 2.4 in this chapter), the interest of this research lies in how individuals participate in border-crossing communication.

Another intersection between the two paradigms is the reconceptualization of English in global communication. Both ELF and translingualism have claimed the pluricentricity of English, as contemporary English communication involves participants from various linguistic, cultural, and social backgrounds (Widdowson, 1994; see also Canagarajah, 2006; 2013a, 2013c; Li, 2020; Seidlhofer, 2007; Seidlhofer & Widdowson, 2017). ELF research has emphasized that participants in ELF communication show not only linguistic “competence” but also “capability” (Widdowson, 2015a; see also Seidlhofer & Widdowson, 2017). Competence is defined by conformity with the conventionalized standard English and native speaker norms (see Murata, 1993; Seidlhofer & Widdowson, 2017; Widdowson, 2015a). In contrast, capability involves the creative adaptation and exploitation of English as a “virtual language” (Widdowson,

1997), the potential of language resources for meaning making, to negotiate meaning in each interaction with interlocutors from different linguacultural backgrounds (Seidlhofer & Widdowson, 2017; Widdowson, 2003; 2015a, 2015b, 2017). Accordingly, ELF researchers have pointed out that participants in ELF communication may not conform to prescribed competence, but their interactions are defined by capability, the meaning making process in a given context. In a similar approach, Canagarajah (2013b) states that translingual competence is defined not by grammar competence but by performative competence, which is “the ability to align semiotic resources with social and environmental affordances” (p. 32). English in translingual communication is considered innovative, not destructive to “monolingual” English communication (Dovchin, 2021). The arguments by ELF and translingualism share the decentralization of English in the globalized world.

While some convergences exist, distinctions remain between ELF and translingualism. ELF research has analytically observed communicative phenomenon and participants’ socialization in English communication, whereas translingualism has valued the socioeconomic and political discourse surrounding English. The divergence in theoretical focus of English has occasionally sparked discussions at different discourse levels when addressing English communication in the global sphere. This research

contends that these distinctions result in a complex debate about “users” when these paradigms discuss English.

ELF scholars initiated by Widdowson (1994) has criticized the traditional notion of English being exclusively owned by native speakers, claiming that non-native speakers also hold “ownership”. Accordingly, Seidlhofer (2005, 2021) argues that “E” in ELF communication belongs to anyone outside the conventional speech community. Furthermore, Jenkins (2000) also critically challenges the framing of non-native speakers as aliens to the Kachruvian Inner Circle community. ELF researchers have claimed that non-native speakers are not deficient “learners” but legitimate “users”.

Some scholars within translanguaging critique the global ownership perspective that ELF research holds, arguing that much ELF literature lacks extensive discussion beyond ELF communication. Such extensive discussion includes relationships between communication and political, historical, and economic power structures in the globalized world. O’Regan (2014) describes ELF paradigm, in its emphasis on users who accomplish communication through exploitation of own English resources, as an “idealist” perspective (p. 533). He argues that much ELF literature neglects the perception of English learners embedded in the world structure, “who do not achieve the status of users because of the system of economic, gendered and racial inequalities” (O’Regan, 2014, p.

548; see also Diniz De Figueiredo & Martinez, 2021). Likewise, Pennycook (2020) considers ELF “utopian” (Pennycook, 2020, p. 232), discussing that English in globalization is not equal but “entanglement” (p. 222) in relation with political economy, class, and racial issues.

Furthermore, from the translingual perspective, ELF research has occasionally faced critique for its exclusive focus on the English language. Scholars adopting a translingual perspective have suggested the immanent paradox of ELF research. Which is to say that by ELF researchers focusing on English communication, they have made English tangible, or in a term by O’Regan (2014), a *thing-in-itself* (see also Sewell, 2013). They have argued that by reifying English communication in this globalized world, ELF researchers have potentially affirmed the language in its own right, thereby entitling ownership to conventional English speakers. Estival and Pennycook (in press, np) encapsulates this concern, stating that ELF research, by naming the communicative medium as English, it leads native speakers to “assume they should have natural speaking rights”.

The standpoint of translingualism is agreeable, as it is crucial to acknowledge that communication in globalization is intricately related to numerous elements. These include not only language, specifically English, but also other languages, modes, socioeconomic

structures, political landscapes, historical factors, power dynamics and more. Nonetheless, this research admits that it needs to scoop up one aspect of whole dimensions of a reality as a starting point of empirical analysis and a lens through which discussion is developed, which, for this research, is ELF communication. ELF communication is not imaginative but a real-life phenomenon that can be seen here and there in today's world. Moreover, it seems not practically viable to avoid mentioning English and recognizing the concrete existence of English today. ELF research, by focusing on English, has attempted to expose issues inherited in the common discourse of what English is. Thus, this research considers discussions surrounding "English", including English communication and English education, essential dialogues that demand attention and confrontation.

ELF research, supported by substantial empirical data (as noted by Kimura & Canagarajah, 2018), has explored linguistic communication and the voices of its participants on-the-scene. Translingualism has accentuated the discussion of the relations between English and social structures associated with colonialism (Canagarajah, 2023), capitalism (O'Reagan, 2014), and neoliberalism (Kubota, 2016; 2019), shaping the current global landscape of English. Drawing on discussions raised by these paradigms, when discussing "users", two discourses emerge. In one discourse, participants in each communicative context are "users", as they utilize their resources for communicative

effect in a given interaction. The other discourse questions whether participants, regardless of their linguistic backgrounds, are considered “users” having the authority over the global dominant English. Consequently, “users” in these discourses hold meaning in different discourse structures and hence must be treated carefully. The position of the present research believes that these discourses are not in conflict but are mutually complementary (see Chapter 7 and 8 for further discussion).

As this research explores both linguistic hybridity on SNS and the ideological landscapes surrounding SNS communication, it attempts to explore both sociological and linguistic dimensions of “users”. Based on these discussions, this research regards the primary analytical focus as ELF communication, the firsthand linguistic phenomena necessitating examination. Translingualism maintains its status in this study as a guiding principle to understand individuals’ repertoires, which are inclusive and situated in existing power discourse in global contexts.

2.2.4. ELF and translingualism and written communication research

While the growth of the internet has led some contemporary ELF scholars to explore written language online (see studies by Baker & Sangiamchit, 2019; Bjørge, 2007; Luzón, 2016; Poppi, 2012; Sangiamchit, 2018; Vetroel, 2014), the focus of ELF

research has predominantly centered around verbal face-to-face interaction. However, the importance of written communication in the digital age cannot be overstated. This section first reviews the development of written communication research in the domains of ELF and translanguaging (2.2.4.1). It then delves into the aspects of SNS communication that remain underexplored from the perspectives of both ELF and translanguaging (2.2.4.2).

2.2.4.1. Research development of written communication research

As one of the limitations of ELF research, Jenkins (2011, 2018) has pointed out that ELF research has predominantly concentrated on spoken interactions (see also Mauranen, 2016; Murata, 2020). Kimura and Canagarajah (2018) also note the lack of literary studies in ELF research, comparing to research on translanguaging practices that has emphasized written language. Contrary to “translanguaging,” a concept developed by Garcia and Li (2014) primarily dealing with spoken interaction, “translanguaging practices” discussed by Canagarajah (2013b) have centered on written communication.

This seemingly delayed attention given to written ELF communication can be attributed to a conventional perception of written language as context-independent, conservative, impersonal, and norm-preserving (see critiques by Horner, 2018; Lillis & Mckinny, 2013). This perspective, which is associated with language standardization,

may explain the inclination towards spoken ELF research, which seeks to uncover communicative practices and processes rather than merely scrutinizing language forms.

Björkman (2022, 2023) argues that ELF, being essentially a contact language, is primarily applicable to spoken communication where clear language contacts exist between speakers. Björkman (2023) discusses that the reflective nature of written language, which allows writers to “take-it-back” their output before it reaches language contacts, makes written ELF communication less the characteristic of ELF as a contact language. While this perspective is well-founded, it should be noted that written language is a language contact between writers and potential readers (see Widdowson, 1975). Moreover, it is important to recognize that the reflective nature of written texts, such as the selection of appropriate words and the process of editing for the better, is where communicative participants engage in meta-discourse (Turner, 2018). In my opinion, this meta-discourse reflects their underlying ideologies and social values, transforming ELF from a mere instrumental tool for communication into the medium that carries sociolinguistic significance.

The conventional stance on written language as norm-preserving and contextually detached has been challenged by ELF and translingual scholars who have articulated writers/readers’ negotiation of meaning and their exhibition of heterogeneity in written

English (see Canagarajah, 2006, 2013a, 2013c; Dontcheva & Povolna, 2014; Horner et al., 2011a, 2011b; Horner, 2018; Kuteeva, 2017; Lillis & Curry, 2010; Mauranen, 2013; 2017, McIntosh et al., 2017; Turner, 2017, 2018; Valasco & Garcia, 2014; Verzella & Tommaso, 2014). These studies have endorsed the idea of literacy as social practices (Blommaert, 2013a; Gee, 1989) in which the negotiation of writers' (and readers') language resources, ideologies, social factors, and cultural expression are embedded. Horner (2018, p. 419) explains that by investigating process and practices, written ELF research can transcend "textualist" bias, which exclusively focuses on correct or incorrect usages attributed to so-called non-native speakers.

Earlier than ELF research, Canagarajah (2006, 2011) has proposed the concept of "code-meshing", encouraging students to employ strategies to mix local linguistic varieties with Standard Written English to amplify the voices of minority students in academic writings (see also Horner, et al., 2011b for similar discussions). Similarly, Velasco and Garcia (2014) have challenged monolingualism in composition and urged students to engage in translanguaging during the various stages of academic writing, from planning to drafting and final production. Mauranen (2015) has notably advanced the study of written ELF in academic contexts by establishing a corpus known as WrELFA (Written English as a Lingua Franca in Academic Settings), collected linguistic data from

academic writings including research articles. Although this corpus-based research seemingly represents written ELF as static textual end-products and equate ELF users solely with non-native speakers, it has nonetheless marked a significant breakthrough in the field.

Other research has embraced a more socially constructivist approach to the study of written ELF communication, placing a premium on examining multiple voices in written language. For example, Mauranen (2013) and Kuteeva (2016) investigated researchers' science blogs, examining the emergence of a unique academic writing genre that fused features from both written and spoken modes, containing informal registers and spontaneous interactions with readers. Further studies conducted by Lillis and Curry (2010) and Turner (2017) captured the diverse stakeholders including writers, teachers, and reviewers to discuss ownerships of English in academic contexts. Some other studies have explored low-stake ELF writings, specifically, creative writings (Tanaka, 2019, 2021, 2022, and in press), elucidating students' resourceful identities that emerged from self-expressive written activities.

The rise of SNS has redirected the focus of researchers investigating ELF and translanguaging in written discourse beyond the confines of academic contexts. This shift is further discussed in the following.

2.2.4.2. Research gaps in SNS research in the field of ELF and translingualism

More recently, ELF and translingual researchers have investigated SNS communication, revealing the linguistic, cultural, and modal dynamism in online discourse. However, there remain certain underexplored perspectives in both ELF and translingual research on SNS communication, particularly regarding the lack of strong emphasis on how semi-public nature have changed people's communication and identity formation. By reviewing existing research, this section discusses the new insights that this research brings.

The first bias that needs to be addressed is the perception that ELF communication involves accommodative and interactive exchanges. Since much of ELF research has concentrated on accommodative and collaborative interactions, SNS research on ELF communication has primarily investigated written interactions with direct interlocutors. ELF researchers have investigated various online communicative realms, including business and academic emails (Bjørge, 2007; Poppi, 2012), blogs (Luzón, 2016; Vettorel, 2014), and SNS (Baker & Sangiamchit, 2019; see also Baker & Ishikawa, 2021; Sangiamchit, 2017). For instances, Vettorel (2014) investigated blogging in lingua franca contexts among European young adults and identified grammatical variations, such as the

omission of plural “s”. Similarly, Luzón (2016) found that linguistic norms in blogs were negotiated between writers and commentors, highlighting the role of strategies like “let-it-pass” in written communication, where readers prioritized content over accuracy to build solidarities and identities within the travelers’ community.

Sangiamchit (2016) and Baker and Sangiamchit (2019) particularly investigated Facebook exchanges. They examined a range of Facebook exchanges, including those among Thai, Indian and Columbian young adults (Sangiamchit, 2018) and the exchanges between Thai and Greek, Thai and Chinese, and Thai and Iranian (Baker & Sangiamchit, 2019). Baker and Sangiamchit (2019) discovered that these interactions mixed language use, cultural references, and youth identities. For instance, an exchange between Thai and a Greek Facebook user included references to American and Filipino music, Thai slang, let alone the use of English. Baker and Sangiamchit (2019) concluded that adopting a transcultural perspective contributed to understanding how SNS users negotiate language norms, where cultural, linguistic, modal boundaries “move through and across, rather than in-between, cultural and linguistic boundaries” (p. 472). These studies have shed light on the fluidity of online communication, as interlocutors adapt their resources for mutual understanding and identity construction.

However, dialogic exchanges represent only a portion of the communicative

contexts on SNS. What significantly distinguishes SNS communication from traditional forms is the presence of diverse and often unspecified audiences. In semi-public discourse, communication may not be co-constructed in real-time interactions. Unlike synchronous conversations, SNS users anticipate their audiences. Exploring the semi-public nature of SNS communication can overcome the bias in ELF research that tends to emphasize interactivity and collaboration.

Another unexplored perspective is the decentralization of speakers in digital interactions. Translingual perspectives have tended to investigate how SNS contents reflect the identity constructions of content producers. For instance, Dovchin (2019) examined a SNS user who integrated the use of Mongolian and English into their online identities as both a native Mongolian speaker and an English learner. Additionally, Sultana et al. (2015) analyzed Facebook exchanges among young adults in Bangladesh and Mongolia. Their participants not only mixed linguistic resources but also borrowed genres from popular cultures, such as American television series and Korean hip-hop. Sultana et al. (2015, p. 105) referred to these practices as “bending and blending” of languages or transglossic language practices, which were associated with “forms of pleasure and desire” (Pennycook, 2007, p. 42, as cited in Sultana et al., 2015).

While the translingual approach has investigated interaction beyond direct

exchanges on SNS, it has generally overlooked identity construction in relation to the one-to-many communicative dynamics. This perspective tends to position content sharers as central figures in a digital-mediated interaction, rather than as part of the dynamic follower relationships on SNS. The centralization of users in digital communication can result in a limited understanding of the ecological environments and power relations that surround them. Distinguishing itself from the previous research, the present research explores identity construction in relation to unspecified audiences.

The final perspective offered by this research is the consideration of SNS as a medium that reflects ideologies, rather than merely being a subject for linguistic analysis. Dovchin et al. (2016) suggest that studying linguistic hybridity and fluidity serve as a starting point, not an endpoint, for analyzing the sociological dimension of translingual communication on SNS. Their study investigated SNS communication with broader perspectives on the social conditions surrounding SNS posts, addressing issues including unequal access to English. They examined how young adults in urban Mongolia and rural Bangladesh used English on SNS differently due to different access to education and international pop culture, which consequently, affected their access to English and other language resources. Additionally, Li et al. (2020) investigated Hong Kong-based Facebook page called Kongish Daily, which shares local news features by blending

Romanized Cantonese, Cantonese in Chinese character, English, emojis and other visuals. They found that these translingual posts represented the identities of youth during a time of sociopolitical change, including the Umbrella Movement.

There is still a limited number of research that considers SNS as a lens through which to view sociolinguistic realities, just as the studies listed above, in comparison to studies that view SNS as a subject of linguistic analysis. Further research on situating SNS communication within a wider sociolinguistic landscape would contribute to our understating of English used in transnational online discourse and the associated ideologies. To understand ideologies that surround SNS communication, the last section discusses English in Japan.

2.3. English and young adults in Japan

Even though SNS communication transcends physical location, its users are “always writing from a particular location, which may have significant repercussions for how digitally mediated interaction chains and discourse emerge” (Kytölä, 2016/2020, p. 375). In line with this, considering “the geo-political and body-political location” (Grosfoguel, 2007, p. 213) provides comprehensive understanding of research context. This section, thus, focuses on the ideologies and social values associated with English

pervasive in Japanese young people's lives. It first discusses the social status of English (2.3.1), native speakerism and the perceived EFL identity (2.3.2), and the prescriptivism in English (2.3.3).

2.3.1. Social status of English

Japan has witnessed rapid increase in international residents and tourists, reaching its highest recorded number in 2019¹¹ (MEXT, 2021). This demographic diversity has prompted some researchers to examine multilingualism especially in everyday sceneries. Such studies include research on linguistic landscapes in Tokyo which often encompass Japanese, English, Korean, and Chinese (Backhaus, 2007; 2010; 2019), cultural consumption of Korean drama and music (Maher, 2010), and translingual conversation in English, Japanese, and Magherb¹² French (Otsuji, 2019; see also 2016).

Some researchers argue that English is considered “foreign” in Japan (Seargeant, 2011). Blommaert (2010, 2013b) highlights that language has not only linguistic but also emblematic role which signals associative social meaning. Many researchers highlight an emblematic value of English spread in the Japanese society (see Blommaert, 2011;

¹¹ The number (of especially tourists) decreased after 2019 due to the pandemic (MEXT 2021).

¹² Magherb is an area encompassing the northern part of Arica including countries and areas of Algeria, Libya, Mauritania, Morocco, Tunisia, Sahrwai Arab Democratic Republic, Spain (Ceuta and Mellia). Otsuji's study (2016) observed conversation one of whose participants had Algeria and Moroccan trace.

Dougill, 1987, 2008; Kubota, 2019; Seargeant, 2011). Kubota (2019) argues that there is a “perceived value of English as a chic, attractive and western” object, indicating the local language ideologies of valuing symbolic status of English (p. 116, paraphrasing Watts, 2011). Dougill (1987) also points out that English is perceived to be “smart, sophisticated and modern” (p. 1) in Japan, and the belief leads the language to be used for decorative purposes, embellishing designs and names of products despite the deviant English usages. Seargeant (2011) provided some examples concerning the perceptions of Japanese locals towards English landscapes, including company names. In his study, English signs were perceived by consumers not linguistically but emblematically, which were there “just for an image” (p. 200) and for “marketing gimmick” (p. 201).

On the political and economic side, attention to English is salient in the Japanese society amidst the globalization, as the language is perceived as the “means of status attainment” for career paths (Sugimoto, 2021, p. 160). Accordingly, the English language has prominent currency within the popular pedagogical discourse in Japan. This is seen in, for instance, the Japanese Ministry of Education, Culture, Sports, Science and Technology (MEXT) highlighting internationalization of undergraduate degrees, stressing the number of universities which offer English-medium instruction (EMI) courses (MEXT, 2019). The issues around the aggressive demand of ELT in Japan are

raised by ELF scholars, particularly concerning the growing assumption of English ability being the human capital in the neoliberal society (Kubota, 2016; 2019) and the dominance of native-speakerism (Iino & Murata, 2016; Iino, 2019; Murata, 2020; Murata & Iino, 2018; see further in the next section).

Kubota (2011) provides critical reflection on English instrumentalism in Japan, which fosters the idea of human capital within a free-market economy. Holborow (2015), in her discussion on language and neoliberalism, explores how linguistic skills, particularly English, are considered to add value in the current labor market. She discusses how the neoliberal market structure frames university students as “employable graduate[s]” (p. 111) and their language skills directly influence their ability to thrive in their chosen career paths (see also Kubota, 2011; see also 2016; 2019).

Consequently, most of Japanese undergraduates, as future job applicants, are expected to build English competence that is measurable based on commercially available English tests such as TOEIC and TOEFL (see Iino, 2019; Kubota, 2011; 2016, 2019). Despite the questionable correlation of one’s English proficiency by itself and his/her economic prosperity (Terasawa, 2017), acquiring English competence has been considered to be one of tickets for elite career paths (see Yoshino, 2021). In this regard, English in the Japanese society is perceived as a value of “a symbol of modernity and for

the promotion of an international sensibility” (Sergeant, 2011, p. 187).

2.3.2. Native speakerism and EFL identity

Kubota (2016, p. 70) points out that English has been linked to aspiration for “Western or American culture and Inner Circle varieties of English, which are regarded as *cool* objects of desire” (emphasis original). The belief that “‘English’ is what is believed to be English of ‘native speakers’” (Konakahara & Tsuchiya, 2020, p. 9) is prominent in Japanese ELT contexts. Native-speakerism, which sets “English-speaking West” as an ideal objective of the language learning (Holliday, 2006, p. 385), prevails in Japanese ELT. In Japan, native speakerism is often accepted uncritically (Iino, 2020) and the powerful discourse of “Anglophone realm dominating global knowledge production” (Horner, 2018, p. 414) is prevalent. There is a strong belief that English should be “improved” and “polished” only considering speakers of Standard American or British English (see Turner, 2018).

Some people hold “*akogare* – longing or yearning” towards native speakers of English (Kubota, 2019, p. 114, italics original; see also Piller & Takahashi, 2014). For many people in Japan, *akogare* for English and predominantly Western culture remains, which has been constructed through their encounters with social and commercial

discourses of English (Piller & Takahashi, 2006; see also Saki, 2014). To this end, the goal of English learning is considered “to acquire its ‘native’- like or near- ‘native’ proficiency” (Yano, 2020, p. 314). In a study conducted by Konakahara et. al (2019), Japanese undergraduate participants evaluated their instructors’ English based on native speaker norms. They tended to regard native speakers’ English positively, while reacting negatively to class conducted in English spoken by Japanese instructors. Additionally, in Konakahara’s (2020) investigation, students described their own non-native English poor. Their learner identities arise when they are compared to native speakers (see Seidlhofer & Widdowson, 2020). Konakahara’s (2020) studies suggest that there is a constructed demarcation among students between “an imagined, problematic *generalized Other* to the unproblematic *Self* of the ‘native speaker’” (Holliday, 2006, p. 2, emphasis original). In this sense, for many students, English is long perceived as a “foreign” language that is alienated from them, fostering their identities as EFL learners.

Furthermore, native speakerism is observed in students’ voices in study abroad research. For instance, Kimura (2019) investigated the narrative of a Japanese student, who described studying abroad in Thailand as “a trap” (p. 78) due to the limited opportunities to interact with native speakers to improve his English. As a result, the student in Kimura’s study (2019) eventually lost his investment in English learning/use

and socializing with friends in the local area. Similarly, Iino (2021) addressed a case in which a student chose a rural state university in the U.S. over a national university in Malaysia due to his “admiration toward native speakers and the white-dominant society”¹³ (p. 276, translated by the present author). Iino (2021) further recalled some other cases of his undergraduate students whose parents did not allow them to study abroad outside inner circle countries. This shows that native-speaker ideology lies not only the students themselves but also their stakeholders who fund their English learning (see also Llurda, 2018). These studies disclosed underlining notion of native speakerism that stimulates students’ monolithic idea of prestigiously learning English in a “real” country where the local population speaks the target language (Iino, 2021; see also Kimura, 2019).

There seems to be Japanese students’ self-categorizations according to their overseas backgrounds (Iino & Murata, 2016). For instances, returnee students are labelled as *kikoku*, who have lived overseas, regardless of inner, outer or expanding circle countries, due to their parents’ job assignments (Iino & Murata, 2016, p. 114). Those who

¹³ The original interview excerpt in Japanese (Iino 2021: 276) is the following. The underlined part is especially where I quoted in this section. 「学内選考でマラヤ大学とアメリカの XX 州立大学と両方合格したが、アメリカを選択した。マレーシアのトップ大学ではなく、アメリカの地方の州立大学を選んだのは、今思うとネイティブ・スピーカー、白人社会へのあこがれがあったと思う」 “I passed internal screening process and accepted by both the University of Malaya and XX State University in the U.S., and I chose the U.S. Looking back, I think my decision to choose a regional university in the United States instead of a top university in Malaysia derived from admiration toward native speakers and the white-dominant society”

went to international schools in Japan are called *intaa*. And students “who have almost no experience of living abroad” falls into the category termed *jun-Japa* (Iino & Murata, 2016, p. 113-114). With *jun* referring to “authentic”, *jun-Japa* students regard themselves as someone who “were raised and educated solely in Japan” (p. 114). In Iino and Murata’s (2016) investigation, *jun-Japa* students of an EMI course underwent an inferiority complex against native speakers and *kikoku* students who had near-native proficiencies. The students’ emic categorizations entail the prevailing belief among students that having native or near native English proficiency, along with overseas experiences, would make them somewhat better.

Iino and Murata (2016) observed *jun-Japa* students’ perception toward power differences between themselves and native speakers. For instance, some students shared their study abroad experiences and stated that “there was power difference between [her] and other (Australian) students”, who looked down on her English (p. 123). Iino and Murata’s (2016) study illustrated the perceived power differences emerged between native and non-native speakers. Some other studies, such as Katayama (2015), suggest that power dominance exists not only between native and non-native speakers but also among non-native speakers themselves. Katayama (2015) investigated the same group of Japanese students, who performed different varieties of English pronunciation across two

different classes in an EFL program. In a pronunciation class taught by non-native instructor, the students exhibited Americanized English pronunciation, influenced by the prevailing power of native-speaker's English in the class. In contrast, in a discussion class instructed by a native speaker, they performed Japanese accented English attributed to the internalized power dynamics constructed among their peers, where possible teasing (or Katayama described it as “unkind surprise”) occurred if someone spoke “good” English (p. 129). Drawing on Foucauldian discourse of power relationships among peers (Foucault, 1977, 1980), Katayama (2015, p. 121) claims that power is internalized in individuals even without the influence by authority figure (e.g., instructor), and students speak and act according to the peer power dynamics not to stand out in the classroom. Importantly, in any discourse, there might be emerging power; power relations can occur between native and non-native speakers and among non-native speakers.

2.3.3. Prescriptivism in English

For Japanese EFL learners, “correctness” holds significance in language learning. Murata (2016) points out that preparation for competitive university entrance examinations, which are heavily based on standard English¹⁴, is a major factor that drives

¹⁴ Seidlhofer (2011, p. 42) defines Standard English ideology as “the claim that a national standard language should be valid not only within a particular country but globally”.

students towards adherence to correctness. The emphasis on exam preparations leads many Japanese high school students to believe “sticking to English textbooks [...] as the most appropriate way of learning English” (Canagarajah & Dovchin, 2019, p. 137). This idea is persistent even after university entrance and life afterwards when they prepare for earning higher scores in commercial tests for business purposes (see 3.4.1). Kubota (2016, p. 71) points out that Japanese society has focused on the “practical dimension of language skills that are to be objectively measured by standardized test”, and “linguistic skills and knowledge tend to become an object of learning” rather than a medium of communication. In this way, students consistently learn English in environments where there is an emphasis on finding a single correct answer to questions. Thus, there is an excessive emphasis on accuracy and adherence to norms, which escalates essentialism in English, as if the language is a “monolingual unifier” (Turner, 2018, p. 103). As a result, students are geared towards to prescriptivism in English (see D’Angelo, 2019), considering any English usage that is non-native as mistakes, despite the scholarly recognition of native speaker English as an “illusion” (Seidlhofer, 2018, p. 86). They build monolithic view towards English regardless of the fact that language normativity depends on contexts. In the end, students become hesitant to speak in English, as they are afraid of making mistakes in front of classmates (Murata, 2016).

A number of ELF scholars in Japan have claimed that students' limited exposure to ELF communication is one of contributions to their adherence to the grammatical accuracy (Konakahara, 2020; Konakahara et al., 2019; Murata et al., 2017, 2018; Saito, 2019; see also D'Angelo, 2018). These scholars have argued that students are not adequately informed about "natural languages, which are by their nature non-uniform and variable" (Seidlhofer, 2018, p. 86). To address this issue, some researchers have taken an approach of providing their students with exposure to ELF interactions, for instance, inviting international students to their classes (Konakahara et al., 2019; Murata et al., 2017, 2018; Murata, 2021). By experiencing ELF communication, Japanese students in Murata's study (2021) addressed that they felt emancipated from the orientation to correct usage-based English practices¹⁵. In addition, Dovchin (2020; see also Canagarajah & Dovchin, 2019) used SNS to expose Japanese undergraduates to real-life English. By reading Facebook posts and comments, students realized that "real-people", as opposed to textbook authors, "twist, mix, and bend the standardized form of English" (Canagarajah & Dovchin 2019, p. 139).

The situation in Japanese ELT contexts remains complicated. While instructors are

¹⁵ Konakahara et al. (2019) and Konakahara (2019) suggest that adding to exposure to ELF communication, lectures to inform and reflectively discuss global spread of English as a lingua franca is necessary for students to deepen understanding of diversity in English.

encouraged to nurture “global human resources” capable of thriving in international English communication with tolerance for diverse English use, the reality is that English proficiency is often measured by test performance, which tends to emphasize a singular, correct answer (see Suzuki, 2020). This creates a tension between the goals of promoting communicative capability and embracing linguistic diversity and the pressure to focus on competence, conforming to conventional linguistic norms.

2.4. Summary

The present chapter has explored the dynamic nature of ELF and translanguaging in the digital sphere, where geographical boundaries are transcended, language normativity is situated, and identity construction is negotiated. It has been discussed that an individual’s linguistic repertoire is spatial, consisting of different named languages, semiotic resources, communicative environment, ideologies, and attitudes that are not separable but complementary, shaping one’s communicative activity and identities. In this respect, understanding a Japanese young adult’s linguistic practices on SNS goes beyond understanding personal preference and choice. Their investment in English is influenced by sociolinguistic ideologies and discourse of power, such as social status of English, native speakerism and prescriptivism in English.

Japanese SNS users have connections with diverse online friends or “followers”

with varying degrees of shared histories and language experiences. When using English online, they encounter both the role of English as a communicative lingua franca in everyday global digital discourse and English as an asset to be competent and correct. As a result, their linguistic practices and identity construction become more complex and multi-faceted, which will be now further discussed.

Chapter 3

Creativity and Self-Presentation on SNS

3.1. Introduction

SNS has evolved drastically not only in terms of the number of its worldwide users but also the forms of user participation as well as modes and stylistics it involves as media outlets. Earlier SNS was more profile-centric whose purpose was for users to share self-descriptive information such as age, locations, interests, and profile photographs (boyd & Ellison, 2007). SNS has now become more media-centric in which users share texts, videos and photos as a “portrait of an individual as an expression of action” (Ellison & boyd, 2013, p. 155). Therefore, SNS users sharing their lives through texts and images are regarded as not simply displaying random compilation of everyday activities but rather, *creatively crafted presentation of identity*.

These two concepts, creativity and self-presentation, serve as the main concerns of this chapter. This chapter begins by establishing a working definition of creativity for the purpose of this research (3.2). Then, it addresses the notion of self-presentation, discussing how the construction of one’s language identities are mediated and shaped by

the presence of potential “imagined” audiences (3.3). Lastly, it discusses culture of online surveillance on SNS (3.4), followed by overall summary of creativity and self-presentation on SNS (3.5).

3.2. Creativity and SNS

Carter (2004) emphasizes that “linguistic creativity is not simply a property of exceptional people but an exceptional property of all people” (p. 13). Linguistic creativity is everywhere in an everyday online discourse. The present section elaborates creativity, a key term to address young people’s discursive practices on SNS. It first discusses the working definition of creativity in the current research (3.2.1) and then explores creativity particularly in relation to the new digital medium (3.2.2).

3.2.1. Creativity as a social practice

“Creativity” is a versatile term. There is Creativity with an upper case “C”, which refers to creation of historical artifacts in high culture, and there is also creativity with a lower case “c”, which involves everyday acts of creativity that emerge within communication with others (see Jones, 2016/2020). In a similar vein, Boden (2004) distinguishes historical creativity, referring to the uppercase Creativity, and personal

creativity, the lowercase creativity. The focal point of the present research is closely associated with the latter, the lower-case and personal creativity. To further discuss creativity, this section addresses pragmatic and poetic creativity considering the purpose of creative practices (3.2.1.1). It also explores the idea of socially constructed creativity (3.2.1.2).

3.2.1.1. Pragmatic creativity and poetic creativity – Widdowson (2017)

Creativity can manifest in various facets of everyday written communication. However, even within written discourse, writing emails to someone and writing poems on one's own seem to involve different kinds of purposes for creative action. On this aspect, Widdowson (2017) discusses “pragmatic creativity” and “poetic creativity” (see also Widdowson, 2021a). He suggests that these two creativities involve different purposes and appear in different parts of our lives. Pragmatic creativity, as he defines it, “is a common feature of all language use”, which is employed to “sustain the usual purposes of communication in the contexts of everyday life” (p. 75). It is the capacity to “reactively and adaptively” create linguistic conditions for successful communication (p. 77). In this sense, pragmatic creativity does not necessarily appear intrinsically innovative in grammar, for instance, having exceptional metaphors and artistic usage. Rather, its

purpose is to build communicative relationships with interlocutors (see also Jones, 2016/2020). Pope (2005) also states that linguistic creativity is a process which writers/speakers draw from existing linguistic items to create and facilitate communication. In this sense, what matters in creative practices are not only non-usual linguistic forms but also one's original idea and response in interactions, which is why seemingly mundane communication is also considered "pragmatically creative".

On the other hand, poetic creativity, according to Widdowson (2017) involves "individual works of verbal art" (p. 78). Poetically creative language involves "unusual" ways of using language (p. 74). In this way, it is not necessarily related to interactive conversation but associated more with artistic tastes of using visual and verbal resources. Similarly, Deumert and Kerswill (2014) discuss that poetic language involves playful manipulation of the "shape and meaning of words" to achieve visual representations (see also Deumert, 2014). Additionally, Carter's (1996) description of non-literary and literary writings suggests that the former allow writers to supply overt information to readers while the latter generally makes readers infer the meaning more. In lieu of these concepts, the present research understands that less-literary and literary writings differ in degree of which creativity is forged; less-literary writings involve pragmatic creativity, sustaining practical and informative communication with readers, while literary language is derived

from poetic creativity to pursue artistic expression. In a simplest manner, this study considers pragmatic creativity is realized for the purpose of interaction with others and poetic creativity is realized for the purpose of self-expression.

Previous studies have generally distinguished these two creativities and considered being poetic and artistic is only what professionals engage in, as implied in the uppercase and historical creativity (see Nelson, 2016). Widdowson (2017) also states that ELF communication predominantly relies on pragmatic creativity. According to Widdowson (2017), ELF communication *does not* involve:

imagined counter-realities at a remove from the contexts of everyday life that are poetically created by verbal artists to represent their individual vision, but [involves] the *actual immediate realities* of here and now in a globalized world in which every day is involved and implicated – the realities of international business and diplomacy [...] (p. 77, emphasis added)

In his account, pragmatic creativity and poetic creativity reside in two distinct realms, making it difficult to discern poetic creativity within the *actual immediate realities*. However, ELF communication on SNS differs from high-stake communicative situations

involving professionals in fields such as business and diplomacy, as identified by Widdowson (2017; see also Seidlhofer, 2021). SNS provides a space for its users to articulate their visions, emotions, and thoughts in their own unique words. While it may not constitute the actual immediate realities for business professionals, it certainly does for young adults or individuals who might be considered “non-elites” (Thurlow, 2012).

Furthermore, pragmatic creativity, driven by the objective of achieving successful communication with interlocutors through reactive linguistic adaptation, presupposes the presence of direct and immediate audiences. However, SNS users frequently employ English and other resources not merely for direct interactions with target individuals. Rather, they reach a broader range of untargeted audiences, simply expressing their unique voices. It is worth contemplating how creativity operates on SNS, where individuals beyond the domains of the professional spheres have the opportunity to communicate with a diverse range of audiences.

3.2.1.2. Discourse and creativity – Socially constructed creativity

Jones (2016/2020) highlights that discourse analysis is intersections of analysis of linguistic products, process of interactions, and relationship between language and social as well as ideological dimensions (see also Jones, 2012). For discourse analysts, it is

crucial to consider language use as situated within social and contextual factors (Jones, 2012; 2016; Widdowson, 1975; 2008; 2017; 2019). Discourse analytical approach considers creativity not as locating “in language itself” (Jones, 2016, p. 67) or as “an innate human attribute” (Nelson, 2016, p. 172) but as social actions. It focuses on not only creativity in formal linguistic features but also how language is used in relation with social contexts, ideologies, and power dynamics to create identities.

It is also important to note that, in ELF communication, an attempt to locate creativity only within texts or linguistic forms can lead a researcher to a tricky place. Since creativity involves normativity to transcend (Kharkhurin, 2014), if creativity in ELF communication is defined solely in terms of its forms rather than practices, it would imply that defining the form as a deviance from the conventional norms, associated with native-speaker and monolingual English practices. Consequently, it causes misconception that ELF equals only non-native speakers’ English and assumes that ELF is linguistically identifiable. To avoid the misconception, unless speakers themselves express their deliberate intention to transcend the linguistic norms, as a form of, for instance, resistance to norms and advocacy of local identities (Kirkpatrick, 2019), a researcher cannot equalize creativity in English only with non-conformity to Standard English. In this regard, this research views participants’ language practices, not merely products, as

creative for any purposes such as being communicative (pragmatic) and self-expressive (poetic). To this end, it is necessary for a researcher to explore the contexts and voices to investigate how creativity reside not in forms but also in individuals.

Furthermore, social constructivist viewpoint on creativity examines how creativity is perceived within a group in a specific communicative context. Jones (2016, p. 6) states that it is crucial to consider creativity in relation to “social orders [...] and relationships of power.” Whether creativity is accepted within a specific communicative context is often ideological. Nelson (2016, p. 172) discusses that creativity is situated in “norms, values, and conventions”, and whether creativity is appreciated or simply experienced as a violation of existing norms are related to positions of power. Thus, it is important to consider language use and its “uptake” (Blommaert, 2010; see also section 3.3.3.3); that is, how certain language use is evaluated differently depending on varying social and cultural contexts as well as group of people.

Within the discourse of English, Widdowson (2019) suggests that there are power relations between native and non-native speakers. When literary language produced by native speakers have poetic deviation, the expression is automatically considered the result of the writer’s creative intention (see also Widdowson, 2003). This is because these writers are viewed as having an authority to know the “proper English” to deviate from

(Widdowson, 2019, p. 4). In contrast, linguistic innovations made by non-native English speakers are experienced as errors or non-standard, based on their recognition as secondary speakers of English (Widdowson, 2003, 2019; see also Kachru, 1985).

In a context of SNS, written languages are produced by more grassroot ways, involving those non-professional and non-elite users, just as young people on SNS. Deumert and Kerswill (2014) posit that creativity on SNS is related to power dynamics that is lateral and mutual among the users (see Section 3.4). That is, creativity is determined not merely by “the *intention* of the writer, or by the *attitude* of the reader, or by the *form* of the text (orderly or disorderly), but by the relative position of the writer/reader” (Deumert & Kerswill, 2014, p. 66, emphasis original). Thus, creativity on SNS is shaped by various cues such as whether the communicative context is considered proper for certain creative practices or how a speaker is considered appropriate to act creatively (see Deumert & Kerswill, 2014). Linguistic creativity on SNS, whether pragmatic or poetic, is considered encompassing one’ linguistic resources as a reflection of social relationships and ideologies.

3.2.2. Creativity through the rise of SNS

This section first addresses creativity and English on SNS (3.2.2.1). It then

discusses multimodality in online creative practices (3.2.2.2).

3.2.2.1. Creativity and English

Kachru (1985) was among the earliest contributors to the discussion on bilingual creativity (see also Kachru, 1995). He contended that linguistic practices of bilingual speakers should not be viewed as deviant but rather as creative. He emphasized that creativity entails the selection of multiple linguistic resources to use them as verbal strategies for establishing social relationships with others.

Building on Kachru's (1985) opinion on creativity within the WE paradigm (see also Bolton, 2010), pertained to linguistics specific to a locale or communal discourse, Widdowson (2019) discussed the concept of creativity in ELF paradigm, observing communicative context (see also 3.2.1.1). Pitzl (2016, 2018) investigated the creative use of idioms in spoken ELF communication. Her research revealed that speakers creatively negotiated shared multilingual resources and introduced idioms from their first language into ELF communication. In discussion of creativity in ELF communication, previous research has often described how participants in ELF communication applied "norm-transcending" (Pitzl, 2018) expression from native speaker communication while still achieving successful communication (see Widdowson, 2017).

SNS illustrates the significant rise of English diversity and semiotic heterogeneity involving creativity who intertwine their diverse resources, modes, styles, and genres to create their own English expressions (Dovchin, 2020; see also Kuteeva, 2016). Creative English practices on SNS tell a specific story and that of author behind the script who are being sometimes humorous, sarcastic, ludic, or poetic (Li & Hua, 2019; Deumart, 2014). Playful language practices are ways through which people show their views of world in response to societal and personal experiences.

Creativity is observed in, for instance, language choices (Barton & Lee, 2013; Lee, 2014; Lee, 2017; Tagg & Seargeant, 2014), grammar (Dovchin, 2020a, 2020b), orthography (Deumart, 2014; Nishimura, 2016/2020 for Japanese online conversation), sound (Li & Hua, 2019), rhymes (Deumart, 2014), as well as register and styles (Leppänen, et al., 2009).

SNS provides a space where “playful creativity is encouraged and the norms of the monolithic [language] standard are relaxed” (Deumart, 2014, p. 33). SNS breaks conventional language practices. Crystal (2001) states that language on CMC transcends the standard written English norms (see also Crystal, 2008). Popular language use on CMC, which Crystal (2001) calls Netspeak, blurs the clear distinction between spoken and written modes. It often incorporates visual and verbal elements, such as, phonetic-

oriented abbreviations, orthographic innovations, and initialism such as “u” (you), “txt” (text), “b4” (before), and “lol” (see Barton & Lee, 2013; Crystal, 2008; Dailey-O’Cain, 2017; Nishimura, 2016/2020). These language practices serve not only convenience and adaptation to the word count limitations of SNS, but also represent the identities of the internet users (see Thurlow, 2012). Thurlow (2012) also discusses how young people engage in creative language practices, including the online linguistic features listed above. He criticizes that while popular society including mass media characterizes language on CMC as “bizarre” and “periphery” practiced by young people, such descriptions is “nonsensical and ideological” because it is rooted to young adults’ membership identities (p. 186). With the technical affordance that allow users to play with language, creativity become salient in diverse dimension on SNS, even including other modalities as well.

3.2.2.2. Multimodal creativity online

Kress and Van Leeuwen (2021) emphasize that visual communication is embedded in everyday life, and SNS has amplified this phenomenon, with photographs and emojis significantly reshaping the landscape of written communication beyond traditional linguistic codes. Within the context of SNS, especially on photo-sharing site such as Instagram, visual images hold significant importance (see also Section 3.3.1.2). SNS

users do not solely post photographs of special occasions such as holidays and birthdays. As Murray (2013, p. 165) states, their photographs serve as “display and collection of one’s discovery and framing of the small and mundane”, including everyday items such as food, clothing, sky, and even trees. Before posting their photographs, SNS users often dedicate time to editing their images, employing filters, adjusting colors, and cropping them (Martel et al., 2020; see also Kress & Van Leeuwen, 1996/2021). In this way, photographs on SNS showcase personal tastes and aesthetics (Murray, 2013; see also López-Chao & Lopez-Pena, 2020). Photo-sharing SNS including Instagram provides users with a space to not only be informative but also artistic. For example, Li and Hua (2019) examined illustrations with Chinese catchphrases on Chinese SNS, in which users playfully edit parts of Chinese characters by mixing English alphabets in visual images.

Another distinctive multimodal feature on SNS is the use of emojis. Emojis play a crucial role in “the expression of emotion, conveying stances, and negotiating interpersonal alignments” (Logi & Zappavigna, 2021, p. 2). Within online conversations, emojis generally serve a pragmatic function, enhancing communication through humor and tone modification (Logi & Zappavigna, 2021). Emojis construct one’s semiotic repertoire on SNS, facilitating more efficient expressions. Further, elements of composition such as spacing are also considered to render producer’s message (Jones et

al., 2021). Multimodal features, including photographs and emojis cannot be separated from linguistic codes when considering creativity on SNS. Many examples of creative practices of English on the global internet discourse represent these linguistic practices.

As a future research of creativity, Jones (2016) emphasizes investigation of creativity on SNS, by examining language online in relation to “the new kinds of social practices and social identities” (p. 73). Creativity, therefore, is also intertwined with identity construction, which is now a focal point.

3.3. Self-presentation and SNS

This section discusses self-presentation, another essential term to consider young adults’ discursive practices on Instagram. Self-presentation on SNS, as Subrahmanyam and Šmahel (2011) summarize it, is the transference of thoughts, ideas, visions, emotions, and different aspects of “who I am” (p. 62) into visual representations including texts and images.

To discuss self-presentation, this section emphasizes the role of self and their audiences on SNS. It first delves into principles of self as performance (3.3.1) and addresses the presence of audiences on SNS especially discussing the framework of audience design (3.3.2). Then, it discusses self-presentation and audience design seen in

discursive practices on SNS (3.3.3).

3.3.1. Self as performance

As Graham (2020) puts it, SNS is a space for “a stage performance where one individual performs” (p. 310). The idea underlying identities on SNS is that they are not prescribed but constructed through social discourse. This section first visits key principles to discuss self-presentation on SNS (3.3.1.1) and particularly explains how Instagram serves as a space for self-presentation (3.3.1.2)

3.3.1.1. Socially constructed self – Goffman (1959) and Davis & Harré (1990)

Self-presentation on SNS draws back to the notion of self as performance, famously discussed in the work of Goffman (1959). Goffman equates self-presentation with theater performances where individuals as performers act as characters of social groupings they are assigned to, such as age, sex, and class. In his word, self “does not derive from its possessor, but from the whole scene of his action” (Goffman, 1959, p. 252). Thus, identities are considered not one’s organic attribute but constructed through social encounters and the presence of interactants. This social constructivist idea of self is most commonly valued today to describe social media being (see Lee, 2014) and also English

speaker being (see Baker, 2015, 2017; Darvin & Norton, 2015, 2023; Norton, 2013, as discussed in Chapter 2). Furthermore, the medium through which one's utterances are conveyed, or what Goffman (1981) referred to as the "animator", also plays a significant part of the construction of a speaker's identity. In spoken conversation, the animator is primarily the person themselves. However, in the case of SNS, the animator, smartphones or more specifically the online site, becomes where individuals produce their contents. This highlights the importance of considering the communicative medium when analyzing identity construction on SNS.

The socially constructed self becomes even more fluid and situational on SNS. Social roles in text messaging and emailing tend to be relatively stable, with communicative participants adopting their roles in accordance with their message receivers. For instance, one may assume the social role of a daughter when text messaging with their mother, or one may take on the role of a student when emailing a professor. However, on SNS, such social roles are veiled and less clearly defined due to the presence of multiple audiences, who have varying social relationships with the content producer. As a result, identities on SNS are subject to variation across different discursive practices and communicative relationships (Davis & Harré, 1990). Davis & Harré (1990) discusses that one's identity is not only socially fixed but also located in existing or ongoing

interaction. Tagg (2016) summarizes,

“we constantly position and reposition ourselves and each other within any interaction, in line with broader narratives and frameworks of understanding, and drawing on our beliefs about ourselves, past experiences, knowledge of conventions and rules, and ideas about interlocutors beliefs and expectations” (p. 223)

According to this remark, self-presentation requires positioning of self in relation to expectations, values, and norms of others in society. This is in line with what Baumeister (1982) speaks about the idea of self-presentation. Baumeister (1982) points out that self-presentation derives from the motives to “construct one’s public self” into an ideal one and to “present oneself ‘favorably’ according to the audience’s values” (p. 3). He also highlights that in order to achieve successful self-presentation and create ideal and favorable public image, individuals tend to conform to social norms shared by their audiences. Transgression from these expectations can pose risks to the construction of the positive public image. Consequently, just as creativity, self-presentation is not freewheeling but rather networked, and is a socially constructed practice. This holds true

in the context of self-presentation in online ELF communication, which necessitates discussions on the social norms and values surrounding the use of English (see Chapter 2). Self-presentation aims to portray a favorable public self, which is particularly salient in a visual-driven platform, Instagram.

3.3.1.2. Self-presentation and Instagram

SNS users develop patterns and behaviors acquiring the platform's affordances and limitations. This highlights the idea of "cultures-of-use" (Thorne, 2016), which emphasizes not only how people use technologies but also how technologies shape its users' behaviors. Drawing on this idea, this section emphasizes that Instagram, being a visually driven platform, heightens users' consciousness in presenting idealized selves, compared to other online sites.

In Ilibury's (2022) study, Instagram users considered that the platform provided authentic experiences compared to text-based platforms because sharing photographs were more transparent and less anonymous than sharing textually dense contents. However, this transparency has raised Instagram users' awareness of exposing a significant part of their lives, leading to the increased consciousness about self-presentation and the decision on which dimensions of selves they choose to display to

their followers. As a result, the users often strive to present “good” and “quality” parts of their lives in order to gain self-efficacy and approval from their audiences (Fan et al., 2019). Furthermore, the technical affordance, “likes”, reinforces the users’ emphasis on self-presentation, seeking greater number of likes which means more approval (Swani, & Labrecque, 2020). Being a photo-sharing platform, Instagram encourages its users to pay attention to visual appearance and aesthetics, which stimulates a strong affiliation with how others perceive them. In some cases, this can lead to lack of credibility in presenting pictures. For instance, Djafarova and Trofimenko (2019) investigated that “instafamous” micro-celebrities, who used filters and other techniques to enhance their photographs before sharing them with their followers (see also Frier, 2020). Compared to other platforms, Instagram is considered a space for presenting idealized and good portion of selves.

In sum, due to its nature as a photograph-based platform, Instagram has a high capacity for individuals to seek approval and creates perceived pressures from followers to present idealized images of selves. Self on Instagram, therefore, can be considered to be performed “for the benefit of other people” (Goffman, 1959, p. 17). Therefore, the online contents and pictures are produced with the strong intention of being seen by others (Barton & Lee, 2013; Marwick & boyd, 2014). In this manner, Instagram users’ self-

presentation is strongly influenced by the presence of audiences.

3.3.2. Audience design

One of the prominent features of SNS, which differs from other CMC such as emails and text messaging is the fact that “the audiences are multiple and largely unforeseeable” (Georgakopoulou & Spilioti, 2016/2020, p. 9). In this nature, SNS users are expected to engage in intricate establishment of communicative relationships with their potential readers. This section first discusses SNS and context collapse (3.3.2.1) before moving on to the concept of audience design (3.3.2.2).

3.3.2.1. SNS and context collapse

Writers considering readers is not a novel phenomenon. Traditionally, when individuals write, whether it is a personal letter or academic articles, they presume their potential reader(s) in their minds, anticipate reactions, and adjust their writings accordingly (Bhatia, 1993). What complicates SNS, however, is that there are multiple “networked audiences” (Androutsopoulos, 2015) – from different life stages located in different physical spaces, who have different interests, relationships, linguistic backgrounds, and values – all come together in one space. For example, a young

Instagram user may have 500 followers, including her/his family members, colleagues, local schoolmates and international friends living overseas whom s/he met during an exchange program. Despite their background gaps, all 500 followers would potentially be able to access her/his online updates. SNS usually allows its users to select the privacy setting of their accounts. If a user set their account in private, his/her followers are only those they grant the access to his/her contents, and thus, chances are that s/he is already a friend with or know his/her followers from offline lives. In contrast, if a user opted for setting their account in public, s/he may have followers who scarcely share personal histories but are connected through, for instance, common interests (see Schwämmlein & Wodzicki, 2012).

The phenomenon in which multiple networked audiences gather in one space is described as “context collapse” (Marwick & boyd, 2011). The collapsed communicative and social contexts require users to adjust themselves with shared values and collective behaviors (Darvin, 2020). SNS users are required to engage in “complex negotiations needed to vary identity presentation, manage impressions, and save face” (Marwick & boyd, 2011, p. 123). In a similar vein, Graham (2016/2020) claims that SNS users;

“cannot be sure exactly who will read [their] post[s] and may have difficulty in

identifying and then possibly modifying any relationship that exists – and this will change the strategies [they] employ in establishing [their] identities and alignment with [their] interlocutors.” (p. 309)

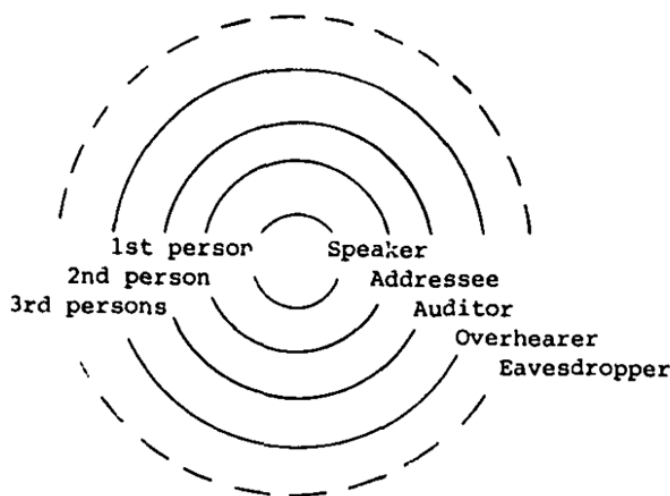
The presence of unforeseeable audiences and the necessity of strategic alignment with interlocutors are also found in mass media. However, the difference is that SNS users work on self-presentation in front of their personally connected individuals such as friends, families, colleagues, and acquaintances. Out of hundreds of their followers from different personal relationships, SNS users carefully frame their discourse according to the presence of “imagined audience” (boyd, 2008). The strategic “audience design” is the crucial aspect of SNS communication and is worthy of further explanation.

3.3.2.2. Audience design and SNS – Bell (1984) and Tagg and Seargeant (2014)

Bell (1984) proposed a framework for audience design. He highlighted that a speaker’s linguistic styles are responsive and shaped by their potential audiences, including direct addressees and other communicative participants. Parallel with the participation framework proposed by Goffman (1981), Bell (1984) clarified the participation roles of audiences in relation to the speaker. According to Bell’s framework,

there are four audience roles in relation to the speaker: *the addressee*, who is directly addressed; *auditors*, who are “present but not directly addressed”; *overhearers*, “whom the speaker knows to be there, but who are not ratified”; *eavesdropper*, whose presence is unknown but may hear the speaker by chance (Bell, 1984, p. 159). He introduced that these four roles can be depicted concentrically, with addressee being the closest and the eavesdropper being the furthest from the speaker, as illustrated in the figure below.

Figure 3.1 Bell (1984)’s audience design framework (Bell, 1984, p. 159)



Bell (1984) argued that the influence of each audience member on a speaker’s style design is determined by the distance between the speaker and the audience role. In this regard, the addressee has the most significant, while the eavesdropper has the least influence on

a speaker's language practices, leading Bell to describe audience design as "elegantly simple" (p. 159).

Building on Bell's (1984) notion of audience design, Tagg and Seargeant (2014) proposed a framework of audience design specifically suited for SNS. They introduced four main audience roles on SNS, each of which corresponds to the Bell's audience roles. At the center of their model is the *Poster* ("speaker" in Bell's model), representing mainly the person who updates online posts. The four main audience roles are: *Addressee(s)*, *Active Friends*, *Wider Friends*, and *The internet as a whole* (Tagg & Seargeant, 2014, p. 172). Each role is defined as follows (Tagg & Seargeant, 2016/2020, p. 346):

Addressee(s) ([...] those to whom an update or comment is explicitly addressed);

Active Friends (the people who someone typically interacts with [...] and those not directly addressed but whose participation is ratified [by the Poster]);

Wider Friends (the wider circle of social acquaintances [...] those whose presence is known but for whom a post is not intended);

Internet as a whole ([...] those whose presence can in some circumstances become suddenly known [...] – seen in numerous cases on social media

where ostensibly private messages are picked up on by the authorities or news media).

Tagg and Seargeant (2014) were particularly interested in how multilingual SNS users' audience design shaped their language choices. By investigating Facebook, they found that multilingual users switched between codes to expand or specify their intended audiences (Tagg, 2016).

In their study focusing on Facebook (see also Tagg, 2015; Tagg & Seargeant, 2016/2020), one of their participants mixed French phrases with English sentences to target her French-English speaking friend, the primary addressee. Furthermore, one participant discussed their favorite movies in English to reach their active friends, who have different linguistic backgrounds but have the shared interests. Additionally, participants in Tagg and Seargeant (2014) switched from English to local languages to discuss personal businesses with specific addressees and some active friends, but effectively excluding their wider friends, who did not read their local languages. Additionally, hashtags were used as a means of connecting with the Internet as a whole, allowing their participants to reach broader audiences beyond their follower lists (see also Blommaert, 2019).

Tagg and Seargeant (2014) highlighted that on SNS, “various audience roles [...] simultaneously shape language choice and other stylistic features” (Tagg & Seargeant, 2014, p. 180; see also Seargeant et al., 2012; Seargeant & Tagg, 2021 Tagg & Seargeant, 2016/2020). They have emphasized the complexity of audience design on SNS where there are unforeseen readers. As such, audience design and language choices are deeply related to the construction of translocal identities among online users.

Nevertheless, Tagg and Seargeant (2014) seem to have partially inherited Bell’s (1984) idea of concentric distance between a speaker and the audience roles (Figure 3.1). Their findings indicated that addressees and active friends were the inner circle members of friends, who were primarily targeted by a poster’s online posts, while wider friends represented the external group of friends, who received less attention or purposefully excluded. In this sense, it appears that the relationships between a poster’s language practice and his/her audiences were reduced to rather straightforward networks although they emphasized the complexity of audience design on SNS. Poster’s language practices aligned with their imagined readers’ language; if a poster used English, it was for English-speaking friends and if it was French, it was for French-speaking friends. Jakobson (1960) discussed that one’s utterance has several functions; it can be informative (referential function), it can address someone (conative function), and it can establish social

connections (phatic function). The result by Tagg and Seargeant's (2014) study is derived from these functions of online utterances. Their result possibly attributed to their investigation primarily focusing on analyzing online language data. Although their data was occasionally supplemented by interviews, their study rather discussed the immediate local context of online exchanges.

To gain a deeper understanding of the lives of people who use SNS, it may require a broader perspective to not only understand the language online and its referential, conative, and phatic roles but also its "indexical" meaning. Pierce (1998) discussed indexes, referring to relationships between the sign and what it points to (as cited in Plowright, 2016). Building on the concept, "indexicality" refers to how one's linguistic usage is "pointing to" ideas beyond a particular interaction but within a social context (Jones et al., 2021; see Drummond & Schleeef, 2020). In other words, indexicality refers to how language, including words, structures, and dialects, is associated not only with referential meaning but also with social meaning (Bucholtz & Hall, 2005; Och, 1992; Tagg, 2015). Bucholtz and Hall (2005) discuss that indexicality is associated with language and speakers' identities within ideological structures, including their beliefs and values. Therefore, indexicality values language in relation to social elements such as "who is uttering, what, where, to whom" (Drummond & Schleeef, 2020, p. 56) and means

how identities are formed through languages (Bucholtz & Hall, 2005).

Furthermore, one's language is perceived and valued differently across different culture and society, which Blommaert (2013a) discusses with the notion of "uptake" (see also Blommaert, 2010). Blommaert (2013a, p. 448) discusses that "people write and read texts very much from within the frames of perception they ideologically attach to specific formats of text; changes within such frames prompt large-scale reordering of the features that index the frames". In Blommaert's sense, the same writing, or more specifically, the same English writing, can be perceived differently when it shifts from people to people, time to time, and space to space (see also Widdowson 2004 for the difference between text and discourse). Therefore, discourses can "shift their value, meaning, and function as they travel across borders" (Darvin & Norton, 2015, p. 39). In this way, language and identities are tightly related and written language is considered to be social practices constructed through ideological thoughts of writers and readers (Blommaert, 2013a).

3.3.3. Language and self-presentation

SNS foregrounds "language in performing identity, where the typed words on screen [...] become primary resources for identity work" (Page, 2014, p. 46). In this way, language and self-presentation are tightly connected. This section discusses self-

presentation and using various codes (3.3.3.1), as well as using English (3.3.3.2).

3.3.3.1. Code choices

Self-presentation manifests in various aspects of one's SNS account, such as choosing usernames (Lee, 2014; Subrahmanyam & Šmahel, 2011), indicating the preferred pronouns on the profile pages (Barton & Lee, 2013), and not to mention, using multimodal resources such as visuals and audios (see 3.2.2.2). This section discusses how language choices contribute to the development of self-presentation. Especially, given that multilingual users are dominant population on SNS (Danet & Hering, 2007), the choice of codes, including local languages and global lingua franca, plays an essential role in online identity construction.

For the internet users, employing local languages is important in self-presentation in a “translocal” online community, where “interplay of the local and global” are seen (Kytölä, 2016/2020). SNS users draw upon their language repertoire at their disposals as a means of identity construction among online friends. For instance, Androutsopoulos (2015) analyzed Facebook exchanges among teenagers attending a Greek secondary school in Germany. In one dialogue among three participants, one user switched from Greek, a group-language, to German to express dissent to what her friend said earlier,

illocutionary distancing herself from the friend. Elordui and Aiestran (2022) studied Basque young adults seeking authentic self-presentation on Instagram. Their participants used standard Basque (Batua) in their posts shared with a wider range of audiences to show more public self, while they preferred to write in local Basque dialects in private chats to display a casual and localized self. Furthermore, Canagarajah and Dovchin (2019) investigated the language preferences of Mongolian Kazakhs youth on Facebook, who usually struggled being a language minority as Kazakh speakers and thus coping with the majority of Mongolian friends at schools. The Mongolian Kazakhs participants considered Facebook a “safe house” (p. 142), which was away from their social struggles at schools, and enjoyed using Kazah among other Kazah-speaking friends to index their ethnic identities as a form of “resistance” to their offline minority selves.

While these studies primarily examined self-presentation targeting specific addresses and among in-group active friends (see Tagg & Seargeant, 2014; see also 3.3.2.2), other studies, including Darvin (2022), explored language choice and self-presentation addressing completely unknown audiences. Darvin (2022) studied TikTok (video-sharing app) users in Hong Kong whose public audiences had no contextual information about the users’ profiles, including geographical locations. These users maintained their identities as Hong Kong residents through multimodal means, such as

speaking Cantonese, inserting Chinese characters with English translation, and capturing videos of local subways with captions, “sounds of Hong Kong”.

These studies have demonstrated how SNS users’ translingual practices are interconnected with identity construction. For many SNS users, using local languages serves both to transmit messages to potential audiences and to showcase their localized selves in front of their SNS followers. In these previous studies, the languages the participants chose online was the languages they used in offline lives, suggesting that their online language choices can be viewed as an extension of their everyday offline language practices. By contrast, for some “monolingual” (in a generally perceived way) Japanese young adults, using languages other than Japanese on SNS may be less mundane. The perception of oneself as primarily monolingual speaker, associating with a single named language, Japanese, is prevalent among Japanese individuals (Katayama, 2022). Such individuals may not consider themselves engaging in non-Japanese practices in their offline lives. In such a case, their use of languages other than Japanese on SNS may be regarded as a departure from their offline language practices and carry additional significance in terms of self-presentation.

3.3.3.2. Using English

For many SNS users, using English also relates to identity construction. While SNS users' choice of English as a means of self-presentation has been less explicitly emphasized, some researchers have addressed this topic. For instance, Lee (2014) investigated the online language practices and self-presentation of Hong Kong Facebook users. In her study, one participant, an English major university student, hesitated to use English on Facebook, stating that "*people* may judge me if I make mistakes" (p. 101, emphasis added). Lee (2014) concluded that his hesitation stemmed from the domestic public who is generally judgmental of overall decline in local young adults' English proficiency, which has become a social problem. Lee (2014) did not directly inquire her participant's reference to *people*, whether it was people in public or people online, but investigating the student's grass-root thoughts regarding his online followers may have shed light on his investment in using English on SNS. Yet, Lee's (2014) study highlighted the importance of understanding self-presentation and using English online within the larger context of social problems.

Furthermore, in Canagarajah and Dovchin's (2019) study, Mongolian Kazakhs youth often opted for using English on Facebook as a means of empowerment to show their English proficiency to their Mongolian peers and to insist that they were capable

enough to compete in global market in terms of linguistic competence. Similarly, Nabilla and Wahyundi (2021) investigated glocal identities and language use of Indonesian EFL learners. One of their interview respondents discussed that using English on SNS is “branding” and “plus point” for local young adults because it positions them as quality individuals (p. 6). The young adults in Nabilla and Wahyundi’s (2021) study appeared to be aware of the potential uptake of using English online within the social relationships among Indonesian young people. Consequently, her use of English had an indexical meaning to show her identity as a proficient English user. Both Canagarajah and Dovchin’s (2019) and Nabilla and Wahyundi’s (2021) studies indicated the hegemony of English in a globalized world and the perception of English as a valuable asset to compete with. Considering that Japan has been long engaged in discussions of globalization and accentuation of English education (see Chapter 2), exploring online English practices of Japanese young people, although not extensively investigated, provide insights into how the influence of English ideology penetrates in everyday online discourse.

3.4. SNS and power discourse among peers

This chapter concludes its discussion addressing the phenomenon of online surveillance and the emerging power among peers on SNS. Online surveillance is closely

linked to self-presentation on SNS. To discuss online surveillance, Trottier (2016) drew upon Foucault's (1977) discussion on panopticon, a nineteenth century prison model in which prisoners were made to watch each other's behavior under the invisible presence of guards in a central watchtower. Consequently, there was a shift in power dynamics from guard-to-inmates to inmates-to-inmates (Foucault, 1977; see also Chapter 3 for Katayama (2015) who applied this concept into a classroom discourse). Trottier (2016) suggests that this shift in power dynamics is mirrored in the self-scrutiny that occurs in contemporary online sphere. Personal data on SNS is subject not only to a state or corporate scrutiny but also to what is known as "lateral surveillance" (Andrejevic, 2007; see also Bruno, 2012), where family members, friends, and coworkers monitor each other's activities.

Trottier (2016, p. 1) emphasizes the issue of "exposure and visibility" on SNS, which creates "conflicting desire for privacy and publicity". He discusses that online surveillance could operate in various fields, including institutional (e.g., universities) and markets (e.g., brand managers), who utilize social media for publicity and business strategies while being attentive of the public repetition of their online contents.

Furthermore, interpersonal surveillance among family members, friends, and colleagues are also prevalent. The studies by Marwick and boyd (2011) and Trottier

(2016) provide examples of how SNS users engage in self-censorship and carefully select the contents they share. Twitter users in Marwick and boyd's (2011) study self-censored their online contents and refrained from tweeting personal topics, such as family problems or complaints about work, to manage impression with potential readers and avoid any troubles caused by their online practices. These Twitter users became sensitive about their "nightmare readers" (p. 125), e.g., parents, or bosses, whose presence had influence and intervened their choice of topic in their online discourse (Marwick & boyd, 2011). Similarly, in Trottier's (2016) study, a university student managed his contents on Facebook, anticipating that his father, who was also on the site, would see his online posts. Sometimes, the participants even deleted their online posts to avoid potential scrutiny.

While these examples highlighted surveillance among interpersonal yet hierarchical relationships, such as between workers and bosses or children and parents, there is also peer-to-peer surveillance. Trottier (2016) found that some respondents expressed concern about their contents being watched by their friends, and they refrained from sharing personal information when they started taking responsible roles at school. In this regard, as Trottier and Lyon (2011) emphasize, tailoring online contents is not only a user-initiated activity but also influenced by controls beyond them.

Moreover, online surveillance occurs mutually. Individuals not only feel watched

by others but also, they watch others. For example, many respondents in Lee and Sin's (2016) questionnaire to examine motivation behind using Instagram answered that they generally opened Instagram on their phones to see others' photographs because they felt that they needed to keep track of what others were doing. Additionally, another participant in Trottier's (2016) study expressed his stress from observing his ex-girlfriend's life on Facebook. Steeves (2012) discussed that online surveillance among peers contributes to young adults' identity construction. Through the act of watching and being watched, young people shape social values, seek in-group unity, and conform to social expectations (Steeves, 2012; see also Livingstone, 2008).

As Trottier (2016, p. 65) puts it, online surveillance is not individual incidents but "lived condition" which is pervasive in online spheres. It would be valuable to explore how self-presentation as language users is influenced by online surveillance.

3.5. Summary

This chapter has examined two fundamental concepts underlying the use of SNS: creativity and self-presentation. The chapter has highlighted that while previous research discussed everyday communicative discourse primarily involving pragmatic creativity, it is meaningful to investigate how SNS communication has changed the way participants

in ELF communication become creative. Creativity is considered a social practice that involves not only the immediate contexts but also is influenced by wider sociolinguistic realities, including ideologies, shared values, and power dynamics.

Additionally, this chapter has discussed self-presentation, which involves individuals positioning themselves in relation to other speakers and behaved according to social values and others' expectations. What complicates creativity and self-presentation on SNS is its context-collapsed nature of the site, where numerous networked audiences with diverse backgrounds converge. SNS users design audiences, and their language practices have indexical meaning, creating social meaning through their language use. Thus, the central concern of creativity and self-presentation on SNS goes beyond language itself but the focus on the dynamic interactions involving ecological environments including semiotic resources, individual relationships, and social backgrounds.

The fundamental principle of the present thesis is to not only explore innovative ELF communication observed onscreen but also to understand participants' underlying ideas that inform their linguistic practices. This perspective necessitates investigating participants' SNS practices from an ethnographic perspective to explore both online posts and users' online and offline lives.

Chapter 4

Research contexts and methodology

4.1. Introduction

This chapter describes the research design and methodological approach of the present research project. Firstly, this chapter addresses the research contexts including data source and participants (4.2). Then, it introduces the research design and rationales for research methodology including data collection and analytical approach (4.3). Finally, the chapter addresses reflexivity and ethical consideration (4.4). The chapter then summarizes the relation between data collection and analytical approach (4.5).

4.2. Research context

This section discusses research contexts beginning with the introduction of data source, Instagram (4.2.1). Preceded by the explanation of the main research location (4.2.2), it introduces participants in this study (4.2.3).

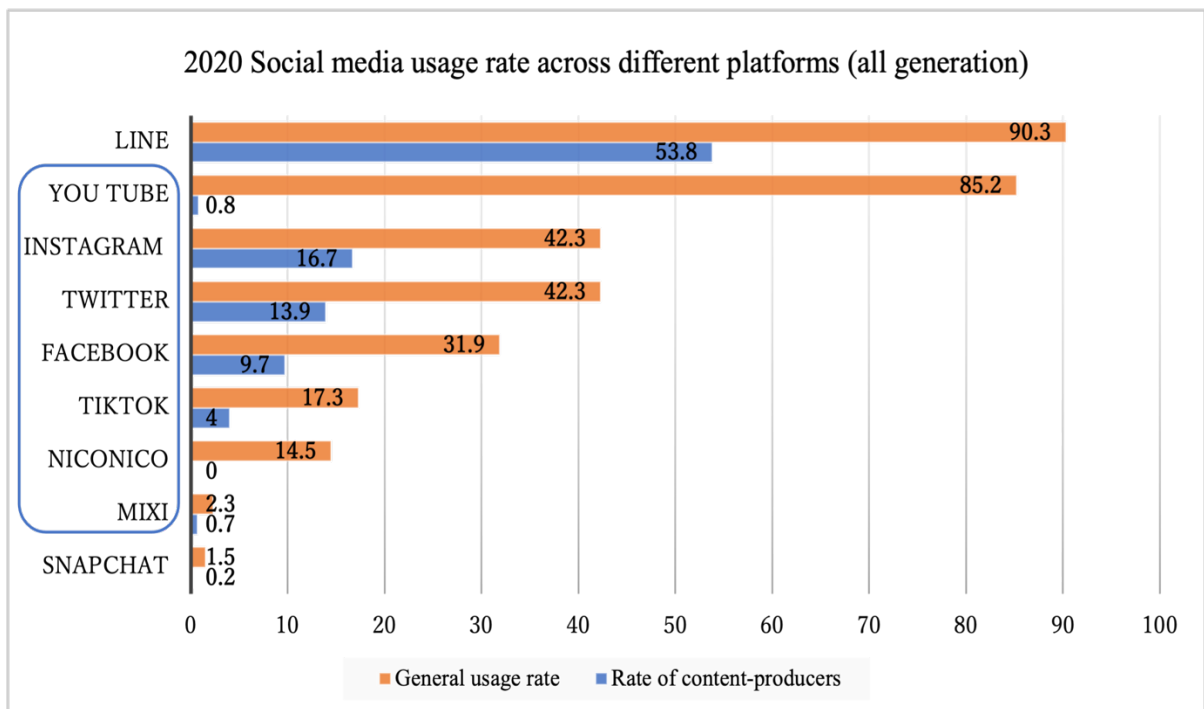
4.2.1. Data source

The social network site, Instagram, was selected as a data source for its popularity and multimodal nature. This research pins down one kind of SNS to focus on, as the communicative purposes and user participation is not universal across all types of SNS (Graham, 2020). Some SNS such as Messenger and LINE in Japan are intended more for a communication followed by immediate responses and subsequent interactions from interlocutors. While others, including Instagram and Facebook, are used by individuals to show their lives, experiences, interests, and thoughts, rather than to instantly chat with others. The latter types of SNS is the context of the present research.

Instagram is one of the most favored sites in Japan, along with LINE, You Tube, and Twitter (Ministry of Internal Affairs and Communication or MIC, 2021), as seen in Figure 4.1. The platforms circled in blue are the ones whose purpose is to share their contents in open spaces instead of chatting with a closed community. The orange bars capture the general usage rate of platforms, and the blue bars particularly refer to the percentage of users who actively write or update posts instead of simply netsurfing. Accordingly, it reveals that Instagram users actively produce contents (16.7%) more than Twitter (13.9%), Facebook (9.7%) and YouTube (0.8%) and other site users (MIC, 2021). The percentage marks the highest among the open platforms. In this respect, Instagram

was chosen due to its popularity and its semi-public nature, which allows its users to produce contents in an extended community instead of target recipients.

Figure 4.1 Social media usage rate retrieved from Ministry of Internal Affairs and Communication (MIC) (2021, p. 69) [Translated and reorganized by the present author]

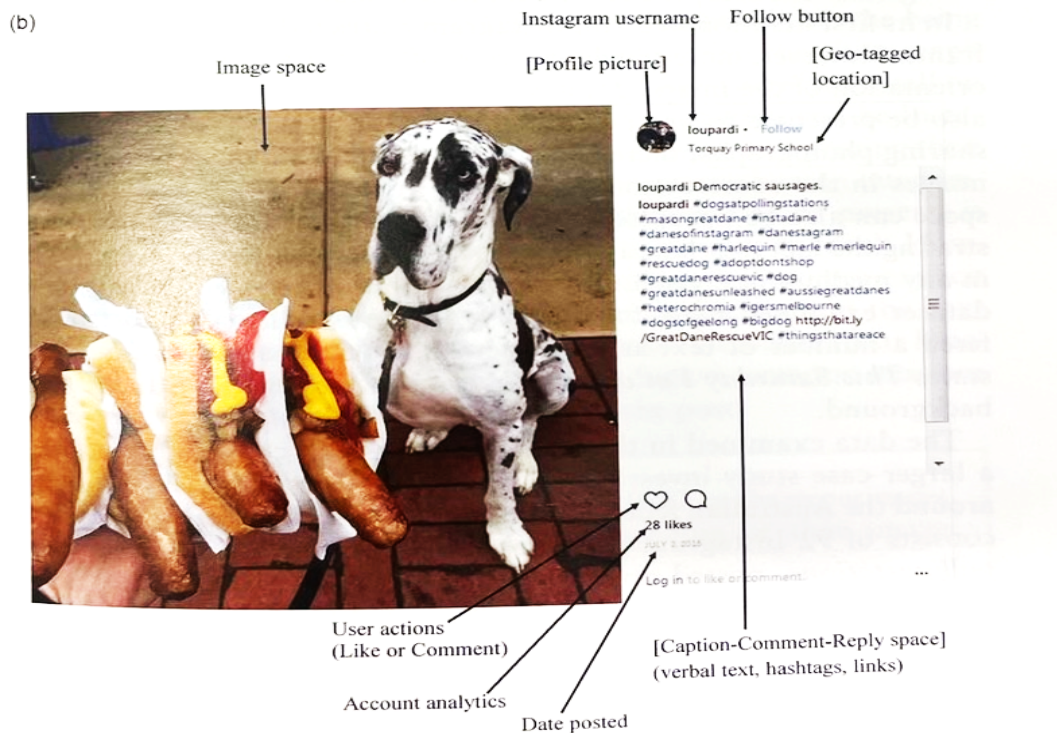


In addition, multimodal features of Instagram should be emphasized, as visual images play an important role in self-expression on the site (Frier, 2021; Jeweit, 2020; Lee & Sin, 2017; Page, 2022; see also Chapter 3). With written communication becoming multimodal especially through the development of SNS, Instagram represents the

communicative trend, which makes itself a meaningful research site.

For data collection, I compiled participants' *posts*, which Instagram users write about "individual expressions of activities, ideas and beliefs on any topics related to their interests" (Sangiamchit, 2018, p. 348). Figure 4.2 (adopted from Caple, 2020, p.159) is an example of an Instagram post. It captures a photograph, texts next to the photograph called a caption, and comment space, to which my analysis paid attention.

Figure 4.2 Example of an Instagram post with a caption, likes, comments (Caple, 2020, p.159)



When Instagram users are connected on the platform and become “followers” to each other, they are able to view posts updated by each other. They have a choice as to whether their profile is kept in private or public (boyd & Hargittai, 2010; Marwick & boyd, 2014). In the private setting, often selected by the present participants, follower relationships are granted upon a follower request and acceptance of the request. In the public setting, autonomous audiences including those who are unknown to a user can visit his/her posts. Followers’ posts are updated on *feed*¹⁶, the main page where all¹⁷ followers’ posts gather, and the latest updates come to the top of the feed.

In addition to posts, Instagram users also have access to *story*, a semi-live streaming function that presents the users’ contents for only 24 hours, and *direct message (DM)*, a private message service. These functions were excluded from the present research due to feasibility. Unlike stories, posts remain permanently in users’ profile pages unless they delete their posts. Before publishing posts, users can save drafts if they prefer to continue editing their contents. With this nature, Instagram users choose the story function to share spontaneous contents that can automatically disappear within a day, whereas they enjoy the post function to keep memorable and aesthetic contents they

¹⁶ Nomenclature for the place for updates differs depending on SNS, for instance, “News feed” for Facebook, “Timeline” for Twitter and TickTok.

¹⁷ Although never officially stated, SNS including Instagram and Facebook are said to have an algorithm that ensures only posts by close followers and actively engage with the users come up on feed (Instalab, 2021).

want to save permanently (see Brunner & Diemer, 2022). The durability of posts ensured feasibility to visit them constantly for the research purpose. In addition, users' followers can react to their posts through likes and comments to show their interests (see Matsui, 2020; Nakayama, 2018). Unlike text-messaging, Instagram users do not necessarily expect receiving immediate responses and subsequent interactions after they share their posts.

4.2.2. Research location

The primary research location was a private university in Tokyo, which I call in this thesis, Tokyo Global University (TGU). TGU is one of the largest and most well-respected universities in Japan, with a diverse student population. This allowed me to recruit participants with international backgrounds who use English comfortably and those with experiences and skills developed mainly in Japan.

4.2.3. Participants

In total, 16 participants joined the present investigation of which 6 individuals were focal participants. The focal participants were selected due to their active participation in the first interview and were in contacts with me for an extensive period. To purposefully

sample individuals who represented the core interests of the study (Creswell & Poth, 2018), research participants were selected from those who used Instagram and were in their 20's. The age group was set, as people in this generation account for a major percentage of SNS users (MIC, 2022b)¹⁸.

Most participants were recruited at TGU. At TGU, the participants were enrolled either in the departments of English education or the liberal arts studies. These departments are highly regarded whose students generally have higher English proficiencies compared to the average university students in Japan. Of particular note is the department of liberal arts, which offers EMI courses with more than half of whose enrollments are international students. Several participants were non-university students who now work in varying fields from performing arts to academic institutions. Without my intention, they also had overseas foreign experiences.

To deliver participant information sheets, I visited courses conducted in these two schools at TGU, which were instructed by my supervisors as well as other professors whom I had known from both schools. Then, I delivered each student a note that contains a QR code to access the participant information sheet to recruit anyone interested in

¹⁸ According to Ministry of Internal Affairs and Communication (MIC), people in their 10's and 20's use social media for the most prolonged hours in a day compared to other generations; while the former use social media for 120 minutes and the latter use it for 118 minutes in a day, the duration of social media usage in other age groups is shorter, as such 75 minutes for people in 30's and 51 minutes for those in 40's.

participating in my research (see Section 4.4 for further description of ethical consideration). I also used my SNS accounts, Facebook and Instagram, to recruit participants who were not undergraduates. The convenience sampling (Creswell & Poth, 2018) not only enhanced my access to the participants but also increased the transparency of my background, who shared the same affiliation with the participants and could contact easily.

The participants were all Japanese speakers. They regarded Japanese or both Japanese and English the most comfortable languages, except for one who considered his first language to be Chinese. Their English backgrounds varied; some were returnees, some had short or long-term study abroad experiences, and others had English skills developed mainly in Japan. Many were familiar with languages other than Japanese and English through, for instance, undergraduate foreign language courses. Chapter 5 presents the overall summary of findings from the questionnaire results on participants' backgrounds and Instagram practices, and Chapter 5 and Chapter 6 further describe their language backgrounds individually in the analysis.

The participants had quite a number of Instagram followers. Some of them set their accounts in private while others set them in public. They were all frequent Instagram users both as content producers who updated their posts to share their everyday lives and as

viewers who netsurfed the lives of their friends and celebrities. Thus, at times they wrote, and at other times, they read the posts, which made them both the addressors and addressees of contents on the platform.

4.3. Methodology

This section discusses methodology applied in the present research. The main conceptual framework underlying the present project is interpretivism, which views participants' "subjective meaning of experiences" which are "varied and multiple, leading the researcher to look for the complexity of views rather than narrow the meanings into a few categories or idea" (Creswell & Poth, 2018, p. 24). In lieu of this view, the present research applied a descriptive approach to investigate in-depth understanding of participants' perception toward language and communicative relationships on SNS. What follows reviews the existing methodologies applied in digital communication research, also touching on the rationale for the methodology for the present research (4.3.1). Then, the section lays out the present research design including multiple techniques of data collection employed (4.3.2) and approach to analysis (4.3.3).

4.3.1. Reviewing existing methodologies

The past 20 years saw the growth of CMC research methodology, shifting its focus gradually from product-based to practice-based. The methodological and conceptual development markedly parallels with that of ELF research whose focus has developed from product to practice oriented (see Chapter 2; see also Jenkins, 2018).

During the early years, the period Androutsopoulos (2008) calls the “first wave” of online discourse research, online log data or “screen-based” data (Androutsopoulos, 2013) was the primary concern. That is, researchers were interested in linguistic patterns that were particular in online discourse such as emails (Baron, 2000), text messaging (Crystal, 2008), blogs and discussion forums (Herring, 2004b, 2019). By investigating screen-based data, the early strand of digital communication research focused on describing “language of CMC” (Herring, 1996) and the universality of how English had changed with technology. The second wave of digital communication research began considering users’ voices (see Angouri, 2020). Androutsopoulos (2013) notes that in this period, screen-based data was still prioritized over “user-based” data, which can be obtained from contacts with online users. In addition, Bolander (2022) reviews that research in this period clearly separated online and offline linguistic practices, considering online languages and identities were different and periphery from that of

offline discourse. This approach is unpreferable nowadays since online/offline distinctions are blurred, as peoples' everyday lives considerably take place online, and their linguistic practices in both contexts often crossover (see Dovhin et al., 2018). These two waves mainly relied on researchers' views and interpretation of online language practices.

In response to the first and second waves, Androutsopoulos (2008) introduced discourse centered online ethnography (DCOE) as a third and the latest wave. He points out that what distinguishes the third wave from the earlier strands is that it goes beyond screen-based data and values online users' practices embedded in their language use (Androutsopoulos, 2008). Accordingly, online systematic observation of language practices in this wave is followed by direct contact with users through interviews (Androutsopoulos, 2008, 2013, 2015; see also Barton & Lee, 2013; Lee, 2017, 2020, 2022; Seargeant et al., 2012). The studies in the third waves, using synonymous such as online ethnography (Androutsopoulos, 2008), digital ethnography (Varis, 2016/2020; see also Underberg & Zorn, 2013), virtual ethnography (Hine, 2000) and Netnography (Kozinets, 2002, 2015; see also Barton & Lee, 2013), engaged in the social media users to “unpack what is happening beneath the screen” (Duggan, 2017, p.8).

At the same time, there was a shift from the “monomodal and monolingualistic

research on primarily English-speaking texts” towards studies on “the combination of multiple modes (mainly image and text) and multiple languages” (Spillioti, 2018, p. 312). By using such an approach, for example, Leppänen et al. (2009) investigated translocal identities through Finnish and English use in social media. Androutsopoulos (2015) investigated Greek, German and English use, and Lee (2017) examined Cantonese and English use, of Facebook users. Dovchin et al. (2018) investigated youth culture among Mongolian and English speakers on Facebook. The digital communication research has been scarcely located in the Japanese context, although the society faces increasing opportunities to use English (see Murata, 2020).

Against the backdrop of the third wave, the present research considers users’ voices through interviews as an important contribution to the analysis of languages online in understanding creative language practices and self-presentation. The methodological approach in my research is in accord with post-structuralist view (Jameson, 1991) of ELF and translanguaging. Accordingly, my online observation was primarily interested in social reasons behind communicative fluidity rather than the universality of online linguistic forms. Additionally, online observation followed by interviews was considered best suited for the current project, which considers current diverse English use on SNS and its users’ complex identities constructed through relationships with other users.

4.3.2. Netnography

As discussed already, CMC researchers of translingual practices have suggested the importance of investigating both products and practices (Dovchin, 2018, 2020; Dovchin et al., 2018; Lee, 2017, 2020, 2022; Li, 2011, 2020). Accordingly, I applied Netnography (Kozinets, 2002, 2015a, 2015b), whose emphasis is on human stories through the trace of internet activities. Kozinets (2015a, 2015b) emphasized that unlike other online ethnographic perspectives, which may oftentimes solely rely on online observations, Netnography values people behind the online practices. It values not only researchers' etic views but also users' emic perspectives on how they make sense of their language activities (see also Page et al., 2014). Varis (2020, p. 59) points out that online communication is "shaped not only by immediately observable online context, but also by the offline context in which the digital activity [takes] place". Therefore, Netnography not only explores online users' linguistic practices in unobtrusive and naturalistic manner but also, or rather, values conversation between researchers and them (Kozinets, 2015a, 2015b). Therefore, the present project believes the direct contact with producers of language activity deepens the understanding of how languages are adapted and exploited and adds an in-depth understanding of ELF communication on Instagram.

Androutsopoulos (2008, p.7) explains that online ethnographers should make “flexible case-by-case decisions [...] tailored to the specific condition of each project”. As such, the approach to online observation and interviews was adapted to fit into the present research context. In my Netnography, a set of online observations and 1-to-3-time interviews were conducted for each participant. This set was continuously conducted every time a new participant was recruited during the research period since July 2021 when the online observation of the very first participant started.

4.3.2.1. Online observation

The observation of the participants’ Instagram posts was the very first stage of the present research. The objective of observing the participants’ Instagram posts was to investigate their creative deployment of linguistic resources to share their lives as young adults in a transnational and semi-public discourse.

Simply put, online observation is to watch linguistic practices online and collect screen-based data. Screen-based data, as Bolander (2022, p. 239) puts it, is a “localized analysis of the discursive events unfolding on a screen”. As such, the online observation facilitated an etic perspective for interpretation and understanding of the young adults’ linguistic practices on the platform (Page et al., 2014). Data collection started as soon as

Instagram connection was formed. Each participant was observed for four months depending on how frequently they updated their posts. As for 6 focal participants, I was in contact with them for approximately 12 months. Since participants were continuously recruited over the research period, observation lasted for nearly two years from July 2021 to April 2023.

The length of observation was decided based on two reasons. One is to observe participants' linguistic practices persistently (Androutsopoulos, 2008), and another is to maintain their ability to recall their interpretation of each language practice. The extended observation period prevented the participants from being overly conscious of the researcher's presence and feeling obliged to update posts frequently (see Tagg & Spilioti, 2022, p. 104 for ethics on the sense of obligation to share posts with a researcher). In fact, some of the current participants mentioned that they forgot being investigated, which allowed me to observe their natural and daily use of Instagram. In addition, the given time frame was suitable for them to develop meta-linguistic discussion on their online language practices by recalling the contexts when they published their posts. Thus, the average four-month length for each participant was considered appropriate for the present research. During the observation period, I remained as a "silent participant-observer" (Baker & Sangiamchit, 2019), such that the participants knew that I was one of their

Instagram followers who were able to view their posts, but I never directly interacted with them through commenting or liking. Dicks, et al. (2005, p. 32) values researchers' reflexivity, as it is impossible to describe "social world that is completely independent from the observer". In line with this, I acknowledge my interests and background influenced my engagement with the data source (see 4.4.1 for reflexivity).

For ease of analysis, I screenshotted the participants' Instagram posts during observation. Kreis (2022) suggests that it is useful for qualitative researchers who compile a smaller data set to manually retrieve SNS posts using screenshots instead of third-party software that analyzes online scripts. The screenshots of the participants' posts allowed me to "capture the original format of the post" with photographs, texts, emojis and hashtags, which could be lost when data are retrieved using software or application (Kreis, 2022, p. 80). I first imported the screenshots into the software Nvivo and created files according to the participants' pseudo names (see Section 4.3.3 for approach to analysis). I also printed the screenshots for the ease of detailed analysis.

While observing their language practices, questions emerged. The emerging inquiries varied from the ones which were localized in their specific language usage on the Instagram posts, such as "Why do the English and Japanese sentences read different although they explain the same photograph?" or "What would s/he mean by this English

metaphoric expression?”, to the ones that asked the participants’ ideological opinions, including “how much would they care about English purity when they write on Instagram?”. I took notes of such questions during the observation period (see Thompson, 2022) and modified the jotted questions for interviews to avoid leading questions.

4.3.2.2. Interview

After and during the analysis of online observation, semi-structured oral interviews were conducted with each participant. Interviews aimed to explore the process of creating online posts and their voices as English users/learners and members of the SNS community. Obtaining the participants’ meta-discourse on their language usage fostered an in-depth and holistic understanding of their language practices and self-presentation on SNS. Interviews added emic views into interpretation of language online (Page et al., 2014).

Interviews were conducted through Zoom due to the Covid-19 situation. Even when the pandemic was mitigated, I continued applying Zoom for most of the interviews for participants’ conveniences especially for those who left Japan after the investigation started. Each semi-structured interview lasted for approximately 60 minutes in Japanese and occasionally English. For focal participants, I conducted the second, third, and

sometimes the fourth rounds of interviews, which were mainly conducted unstructured. The interviews were audio recorded upon permission from the participants. Gestures and facial expressions lost in audio-recording were noted, when necessary, as Dicks et al. (2005) recommended.

In an interview, I asked questions regarding participants' linguistic practices both from micro and macro perspectives in that some questions directly related to language usage in their posts and others were more general set of questions regarding their thoughts on daily language use online (see Appendix 3). As to the former type of questions, I used the form of focused interviewing in which I reviewed their Instagram posts together with the interviewees on the spot and had them discuss focusing on their posts (Page et al., 2014). Bolander (2022, p. 239) states that conversation with participants can reveal "how" and "why" behind their language practices.

As for the general types of questions, Dovchin (2020, p. 28) points out that interviews investigate participants' "inner views, voices, identifications and claims" in terms of their online language practices. In this regard, I also brought broader discussions related to their followers, their thoughts on using English on the site, their linguistic experiences, and a comparison between attitudes toward using English online every day and in educational contexts. Even if interviewees struggled recalling details of their posts,

their post-interpretation of their language was accepted, as it reflected how they preferred their language use to be understood by the researcher and thus it was considered true to them (see Murthy, 2008; Tannen, 1984).

As Brennen (2017) recommends, the topics of discussion in the interviews expanded according to points and keywords raised by the participants. For instance, they often discussed online language practices from not only content producers' but also audience viewpoints including how they thought about their followers' English practices. They also talked about a wide range of topics including their extracurricular activities, part-time jobs, their friendships, romantic relationships, and relationships with their parents. Thus, as Meyerhoff et al. (2015) suggest, I frequently asked the participants for further elaboration and explanation when they offered such unique perspectives.

Elwood and Marton (2000) recommend that a researcher considers power relations between an interviewer and participants, as variables such as interview locations and the interviewer's profile may influence the interviews. In this respect, conducting interviews through Zoom instead of my office or classrooms reduced my power role as a researcher and encouraged them to understand that study focused on language practices outside the academic discourse. I avoided closed questions, vague questions, and leading questions and provided them with ample speaking turns (Meyerhoff et al., 2015). While they were

speaking, I engaged in backchanneling and responding to create a non-threatening environment (Dörnyei, 2007). Using my profile as a student in their generation, I occasionally volunteered my experience to show interest and sympathy (see Meyerhoff et al., 2015). My engagement seemingly mitigated power relationships with the participants, as seen in some participants who were prone to avoiding Japanese honorific forms during interview, which are often used between seniors and juniors or people in distanced relationships. Reflexivity and the researcher's role are further elaborated in Section 4.4.1.

4.3.2.3. Online Questionnaire

The participants were asked to answer a questionnaire on their linguistic and social media backgrounds using Google Form (see Appendix 2). The online questionnaire consisted of multiple-choice and open-ended questions. The questionnaire was kept meaningful but simple to lessen demands on the respondents after a pilot was conducted to ensure the comprehensibility of the questions (Cohen et al., 2018).

The first section of the questionnaire asked about the participants' Instagram practices such as the languages they use on Instagram, the ratio of followers who speak different first languages from theirs, their followers' language, and what kind of images

they usually post. These questions were expected to understand to whom they use English and other languages on the researched site and to capture the communicative purpose.

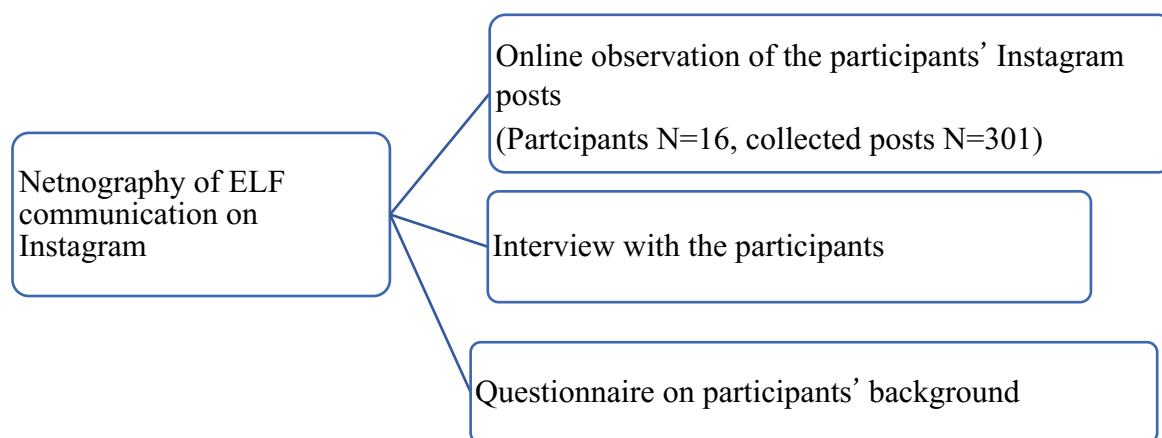
The second section gathered the linguistic backgrounds of the respondents; their perceived first languages, their backgrounds regarding the English language including whether they mainly went through English education in Japan and have overseas experience, in what country or region they studied/lived, their scores of the official English proficiency tests, and personal information including name, affiliation, grade, student number and faculty. These questions intended to understand their exposure to English or other languages and if a certain level of command of English influenced the use of English for online expressions. Personal information was collected for administrative purposes.

Multiple technics of data collection including online observation, interviews and questionnaires were employed. Lee (2022, p.152) notes that “neither texts nor practices should be the sole starting point of the analysis.” Therefore, I visited each data item interchangeably rather than analyzing them in a sequence. Applying multiple data collection allowed me to add layered background to the linguistic data by exploring intratextual forms and contextual information. Additionally, combining multiple data built a deep documentation of the researchers’ and participants’ accounts, which are

valued in qualitative study (Page et al., 2014). My interpretation of their Instagram posts were complemented by participants' interpretation through interviews, also partially worked as a member-checking process (Cohen et al., 2018). I also constantly shared my analysis with my supervisors and fellow researchers.

For ease of understanding, Figure 4.3. shows a summary of the data collection process and the number of participants.

Figure 4.3 Data collection process



In all, the online observation allowed me to build the researcher's view, and interviews and questionnaire enabled me to grasp the participants' points of view to understand ELF communication on Instagram. In this light, the present research added holistic and multi-layered perspectives to the texts in the SNS platform.

4.3.3. Approach to analysis

This section elaborates on the analytical approaches to data obtained from each phase. The section first introduces the analytical approach, transtextual analysis (Pennycook, 2007) (4.3.3.1). Then, it discusses details about the analysis of Instagram posts (4.3.3.2) and of interviews and questionnaires (4.3.3.3).

4.3.3.1. Transtextual analysis

As an analytical framework, the present research applied a transtextual perspective (Pennycook, 2007). The framework is based on the understanding that “texts have meaning not in themselves but only when used” (Pennycook, 2007, p. 53; see also Widdowson, 1975, 2008). Therefore, the analytical approach holistically investigates texts in relation to contexts, producers’ intentions, ideological background, and other modalities as well. To summarize analytical approach taken by Pennycook (2007) and Dovchin et al. (2018), various insights should be included to analyze texts on SNS, which encompasses:

pretextual history, sociohistorical association of the text;

contextual relation, the physical location and participants;

subtextual meaning, ideologies, cultural frames, and the relation of power;

intertextual echoes, references to other voices and texts (including modalities); and

posttextual meaning, young adults' interpretation of their language practices

(Pennycook, 2017, p. 35; Dovchin et al., 2018, p. 35)

This approach thus looks at linguistic practices on Instagram on multiple levels. The approach emphasizes holistic perspectives to understand ELF communication on Instagram in relation to Japanese young individuals' linguistic experiences and the background stories of their posts (pretextual histories and contextual relations), the ideologies and power relations surrounding English (subtextual meaning), resources that they draw on to create English posts and also other modalities (intertextual echoes), and their interpretation and voices reflecting their own linguistic practices on Instagram (posttextual meaning).

From this point of view, it is impossible to investigate the present participants' linguistic and other modal practices separately or their Instagram posts and interviews separately. Therefore, in my analysis, the participants' linguistic and other semiotic resources are discussed together. In addition, their interview excerpts are always

integrated into the analysis of Instagram posts and vice versa.

4.3.3.2. Analysis of Instagram posts

To give a broader perspective to the 301 online posts collected, I first quantified the distribution of languages. Lee and Barton (2011) also quantified language distribution and stated that it could reveal overall trends of language use on the researched SNS platform.

After I imported screenshots into the Nvivo software, I manually coded the screenshots according to the languages used in their posts, for instances, whether the posts were monolingual Japanese or English or multilingual (see Chapter 5 for further description). After that, I also categorized their posts according to the communicative purposes of their posts, for instances, whether the post was to narrate events or provide information (see Chapter 5 for further description). In so doing, the quantification examined how the participants' expressions differed across languages. While I acknowledge that linguistic resources from a translingual perspective are mutually interconnected for meaning making rather than being separated from one another (Li, 2022), I draw on Lee's (2022, p. 141) account that "labeling individual languages is still a meaningful practice" because language boundaries are still socially accepted to

“describe people’s cultural knowledge related to the language they use online”. In this regard, quantification of language distribution was used not to separate the participants’ available linguistic resources but to explore their capability of using various languages and how various named languages complement each other.

Moreover, the analysis included some creative plays such as metaphors and other artistic strategies using English, Japanese and other languages. Additionally, Netspeak (Crystal, 2008) or styles unique to CMC were taken into consideration. Brennen (2017) states that studying writing should consider “the relationship between a text [and] its author or producer” (p. 216). Thus, I consider the creative language use online well-articulated when combining them with the participants’ accounts on their intention.

According to a transtextual analysis (Pennycook, 2007), multimodality is essential, as linguistic codes are not the only meaning-making resources (Jewitt, 2020). Multimodal approaches to discourse analysis are concerned with how instances of such multimodal sources work together in a given discourse (Page et al., 2014). Thus, emojis and pictures were also an integrated part of the narrative that encapsulates one’s story and renders producers’ message. Cameron and Panović (2014) also state that written language in public, such as posters, can be also decoded mutually with other modes. Thus, multimodal features were considered to be the participants’ important means of expressing themselves.

4.3.3.3. Analysis of the interview and questionnaire

After conducting the interviews, I transcribed the audio data. Creswell and Poth (2017) suggest that analysis of interviews generally takes three strategies, which are 1) reading and taking notes of the transcription that leads to coding, 2) describing and classifying codes and themes, and 3) developing and assessing interpretation.

Following these steps, I first scanned the transcripts and highlighted points discussed in the transcription. Secondly, by using NVivo, I manually categorized the transcripts at a discourse level according to discussion themes. The categorization was mainly “derived inductively from the data analyzed” (Dörnyei, 2007, p. 245) and I generally labelled in in-vivo or thematic codes. Lastly, the coded data was proceeded to interpretive work.

Creswell and Poth (2017) state that interpretation involves a combination of both social theories and socially constructed personal views. In this regard, I also interpreted the data deductively by reviewing works of literature while also understanding their opinions as an insider-user of SNS. I constantly shared my analysis and interpretation with my supervisors and peers. Despite this, with postmodern perspectives and consideration of complex SNS culture, I regard my analysis and interpretation ungeneralizable (see Creswell & Poth, 2017; Dörnyei, 2007) and never neutral (Pihlaja,

2022).

Data from the online questionnaire were converted to graphs. The primary aim of using the online questionnaire data was to complement the information of the participants' daily use of SNS and their linguistic backgrounds to co-relate their discussion during the interview.

4.4. Reflexibility and ethical consideration

This section discusses reflexibility and the researcher's role in multilingual CMC research (4.4.1). Then, the second section explains the ethical consideration of the present research (4.4.2).

4.4.1. Reflexibility and insider-perspectives in multilingual CMC research

This section topicalizes reflexivity and the researcher's role in this study by briefly introducing my background. Lee (2017) necessitates considering researchers' reflexivity, as CMC research is constructed through relationships between researchers and researched. Miyahara (2021) suggests that the relationship between a researcher, researched, and research site builds the multifaceted nature of qualitative research. Likewise, Brennen (2017) states that reflexivity helps a researcher to understand how his/her social, personal

and cultural backgrounds influence his/her interpretation of data. I consider my profile as a 1) student in the participants' age group, 2) ELF user and 3) active social media user relevant factors.

First, being in their generation, in 20's, I could share the certain context of youth culture with them mostly regarding language practices in and their relationships with SNS. For instance, I could engage in their discussion on so-called "buzz words" or recent words in Japanese and English in SNS discourse. Some of them also shared private business with me such as how they used SNS to fill their loneliness when they were broken-hearted. In addition, since I was also a student, just like my participants, power relationship between researcher and participants (Dörnyei, 2007) was mitigated. Tagg and Spilioti (2022) suggest that CMC research requires a sense of trust between researchers and participants. Considering this, my age fostered a smooth establishment of rapport with the participants.

Secondly, I received English education primarily in Japan and studied abroad before and use English with my international colleagues and friends. This allowed me to share similar English experiences with most of my participants. While sharing linguacultural background with participants can be a limitation, it was a necessary limitation to gain insider perspectives of the participants (Baker & Sangiamchit, 2019). In fact, Lee (2017,

2022) stresses that it could enhance data collection in multilingual CMC research¹⁹ when a researcher speaks the first language of participants. My background contributed to the understanding of English usage among the participants.

Lastly, I am an active Instagram user who posts contents myself. Lee (2017, p. 130) points out that CMC researchers need to actively engage in the research site to gain an “insider-perspective” and “familiarize[e] oneself with available linguistic resources” (see also Barton & Lee, 2012; 2013; Lee, 2022). Being an active Instagram user helped me to further delve into the participants’ linguistic practices, including language styles and the roles of photographs and hashtags.

The researcher’s role in CMC research does not remain solely as an observer but also as a user and insider who contributes to the discourse among certain social groups and cultures. By engaging in reflexivity, I have disclosed my understanding of the values and experiences brought into my study.

4.4.2. Ethical considerations

Ethical considerations are crucial in CMC research as it compiles data involving

¹⁹ While knowing about the native/first language of participants and using English can facilitate data collection and analysis to a certain extent, Lee (2017) further notes that simply speaking the participants’ language and English does not necessarily enhance researchers’ understanding of data, as Internet language is in nature different from daily language practices. In this regard, it is important for CMC researchers to have an insider perspective and become familiar with online language practices.

the personal lives of research participants (see Androutsopoulous, 2008; Georgakopoulou & Spilioti, 2016; Tagg & Spilioti, 2022; Varis, 2016). The research proposal, participant information sheet, questionnaires, and research process were screened and ethically accepted by Academic Research Ethics Review Committee at Waseda University (see Appendix 5). This section further discusses ethical considerations, especially regarding the participant recruitment and confidentiality of the participants' information.

Participation in the present research was informed consent (Tagg & Spilioti, 2022). Upon recruitment, I distributed a paper with QR codes linked to participant information with a consent form in a Google Form (see Appendix 1). I also verbally explained the research objectives, procedure, and privacy policy. I ensured the participants that participation was voluntary, had no relation to their academic career, and could be withdrawn at any point. By signing the consent form online, on the spot or after a while, they indicated their agreement with participation. When they signed up to participate in the study, they were asked to inform me of their Instagram accounts.

For the online observation, I used my newly created Instagram account only for research purposes and never used it privately. I ensured them that posts that could identify personal information such as their faces, names, and addresses were excluded from the research analysis. I also assured them if they found specific posts too personal to be

analyzed, they would be able to request me anytime to remove those from the investigation. They were able to contact me at any time via either email or Instagram.

All the personal data from the Instagram posts, questionnaire, and interviews remained confidential and only used for research purposes. Any identifiable information including Instagram ID and their names were either anonymized or replaced by pseudo names. The data was stored electronically in a password-protected hard disk drive.

4.5. Summary

The present chapter has presented research contexts and research design. In exploring the youths' creative capacity to use translingual repertoire for self-presentation on SNS, the research design integrated two forms of data: screen-based data collected through online observation of the young adults' Instagram posts; and user-based data obtained from retrospective interviews. These two data were considered not separated but intertwined with each other.

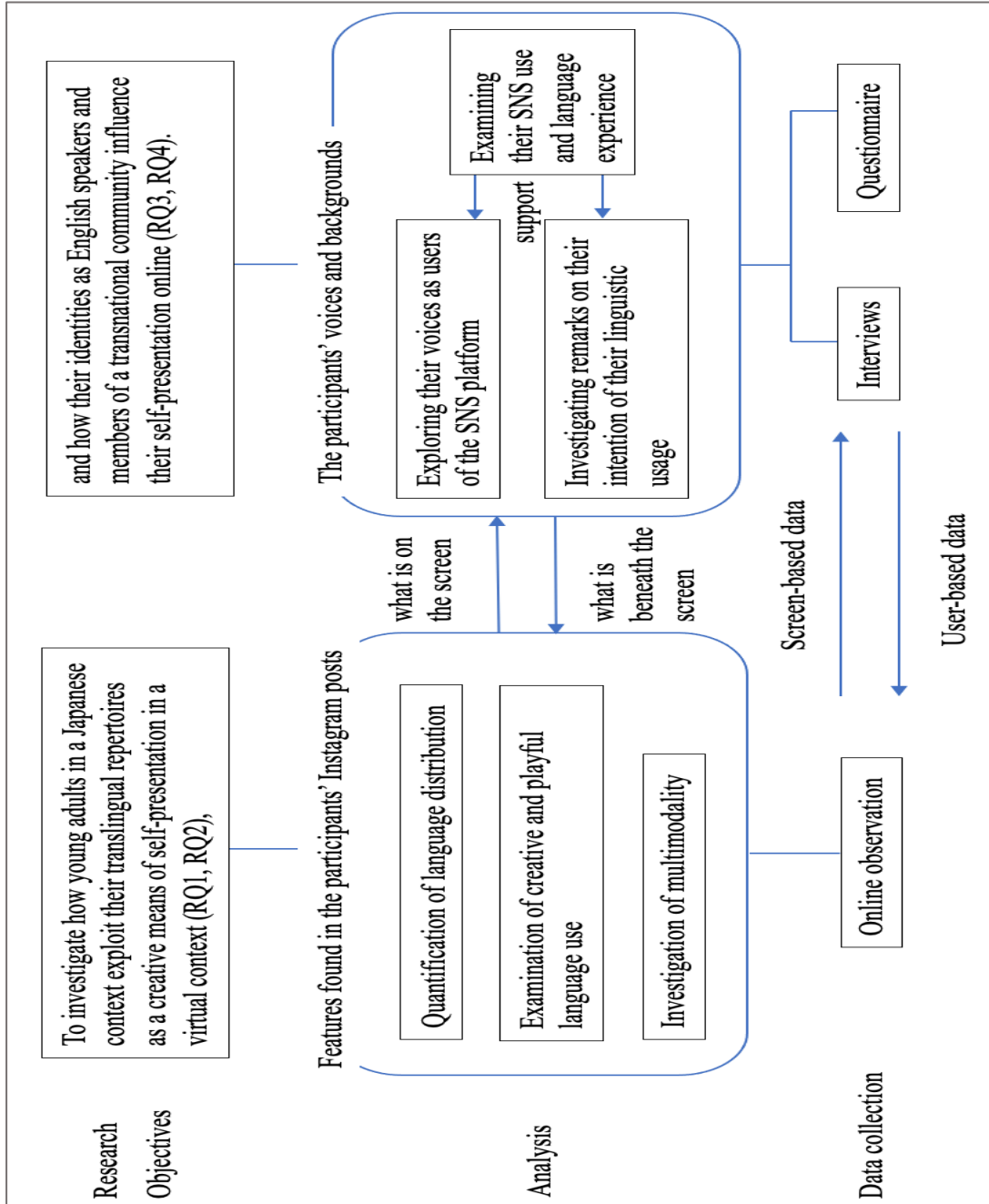
This chapter has also introduced approaches to analysis. A transtextual analysis (Pennycook, 2007) fostered holistic understanding of the participants' language practices. Instagram posts were investigated through quantification of the language distribution, examination of creative and playful language use, and investigation of multimodality. The

analysis addressed the research questions to seek the role of their translingual repertoire on SNS and in what ways they were used (see Research Questions 1 and 2 in the Introduction Chapter).

In addition, analysis of interviews further delved into the participants' language practices on SNS. Thus, the interviews worked not only as a support of the linguistic analysis, but also an exploration of their claims on their presence as a digital being, ideological claims regarding English language and their identification as English users/learners on SNS (see Research Questions 3 and 4 in the Introduction Chapter). Furthermore, their linguistic backgrounds obtained from the questionnaires assisted their opinions. The relations between the research objectives, data collection, and analysis are summarized in the figure 4.4.

The research design added multi-layered contexts, which the transtextual framework values, to the understanding of the Japanese participants' creative exploitation of their linguistic resources and their identity construction when presenting self on SNS. The following chapters present findings from investigation into the participants' language practices on Instagram.

Figure 4.4 Relations between objectives, analysis and data collections



Chapter 5

Everyday pragmatic and poetic creativity:

Exploring ELF and translingualism online

5.1. Introduction

The present chapter explores how English, without excluding other linguistic and semiotic resources, serves its role for the present Japanese young people's everyday communication and self-expression in the border-crossing online ELF context. By analyzing the *on-screen* data gathered from Instagram observation, this chapter brings an etic perspective to understanding the participants' construction of communicative relationships and presentation of poetic selves. By exploring creativity in the online ELF context, I draw on Widdowson's terms (2017, 2021a; see also Chapter 3) of *pragmatic creativity* to refer to its realization in mutual communication and *poetic creativity* to discuss its manifestation in self-expression (see Chapter 3).

Firstly, this chapter reports the questionnaire survey to understand the participants' backgrounds and their Instagram communities, which is followed by the analysis of their code choices for each post to scaffold the rest of the chapter (5.2). Then, it discusses how

the participants exploited pragmatic creativity to facilitate communicative connections with their online friends (5.3). Furthermore, it explores their poetic creativity to use their repertoire as an artistic means of self-expression (5.4). Lastly, this chapter examines creativity and those who consider themselves having comparatively lower English proficiencies (5.5). Drawing on a transtextual perspective (Pennycook, 2007; see also Chapter 4), my analysis explores language practices on Instagram by taking into consideration of the participants' pretextual histories (experience before text production), contextual relations (communicative participants and location), intertextual echoes (relation with other resources), subtextual meanings (social discourse and ideologies behind language practices) and post-textual interpretations (their interpretation of their own language practices).

The names and usernames of the participants presented in the images are replaced with pseudonyms. For the ease of readability, participants' caption from their Instagram posts are extracted underneath each image. My English translation of Instagram posts and interviews excerpts are provided. Emojis in the extracts as well as running text may appear differently from those in the images (screenshots) due to variations in coding systems in Apple and Microsoft files. Occasionally, emojis in running texts are described verbally in brackets, as they are garbled in Microsoft Word system.

5.2. Overview of language practices on Instagram

As a foundation of the analysis in this chapter, this section reports the questionnaire results on the participants' backgrounds (5.2.1) and on the linguistic backgrounds of their Instagram (5.2.2). It then discusses the code choices by examining which (named) languages are used in each of the young adults' post (5.2.3). This section employs the term "multilingual²⁰", as I quantify their posts through the demarcation of the named languages.

5.2.1. The participants' backgrounds – Results of online questionnaire

This section provides overview of the participants' backgrounds collected from the questionnaire. The following table briefly summarizes the participants' backgrounds including comfortable languages (Japanese, JPN; English, ENG; Chinese, CHN), current roles (education department, EDU; liberal arts department, EMI), their previous language backgrounds, and Instagram community (the number of followers and their privacy

²⁰ The term "multilingual" in the present research refers to an individual, who has knowledge of different languages regardless of fluency (Blommaert, 2010). It contrasts with the word "bilingual", which often "reflects a so-called monolingual perspective, in which the users of a second language were considered from the perspectives of first-language users" (Kharkhurin, 2019 p. 463). Regarding the difference between metaphors of *multi* and *trans*, Ishikawa and Baker (2021, p. 2) explain that while *multi* in multilingualism and multimodalities, are "concerned with multiple meaning making resources and modes". The term *trans* well captures the act and process of using the resources. Trans perspectives describe "more flexible and dynamic view of multilingual resources" (Cogo, 2018: 362; see also Baker & Ishikawa, 2021).

setting). Those with asterisks <*> are focal participants.

Table 5.1 Summary of the participants' backgrounds

	COMFORTABLE LANGUAGES	CURRENT ROLE	LINGUISTIC EXPERIENCES	INSTAGRAM CONNECTION (NUMBER OF FOLLOWERS / PRIVACY)
SEINA*	F JPN, ENG	TGU, EMI, YR4	Study abroad (U.S. 1yr, Germany 6mos)	459 followers (private)
KANA*	F JPN, ENG	TGU, EMI, YR4	Returnee (U.K. 3yrs)	231 followers (public)
KARIN*	F JPN, ENG	TGU, EDU, YR4	Returnee (Singapore 2yrs) / Study abroad (Thailand 1yr during current study)	1693 followers (public)
RIN*	F JPN, ENG	University staff	Study abroad (U.S. 1yr, France 6mos)	1054 followers (private)
NANA*	F JPN, ENG	TGU, EDU, YR3	Returnee (Singapore 3yrs) / Study abroad (U.S. 1yr during current study)	592 followers (private)
ERIKA	F JPN, ENG	TGU, EDU, YR3	Returnee (U.S. 9yrs)	1033 followers (public)
HANAKA	F JPN	Actress	Received education in Japan	385 followers (private)
KOHEI	M JPN	TGU, EDU, YR4	Received education in Japan / Study abroad (Canada 1yr just departed)	74 followers (public)
MOE	F JPN, ENG	Theater worker	Study abroad (U.S. 7yrs) / Working (U.S. 3yrs)	731 followers (private)
MOMO	F JPN, ENG	Consultant	Returnee (Australia, years of residence not answered)	830 followers (public)
YUCHEN	M CHN, JPN, ENG	TGU, EMI, YR4	Chinese born and raised / Living in Japan (5yrs)	260 followers (public)
YO	M JPN, ENG, CHN	TGU, EMI, YR2	Returnee (China, 5yrs)	664 followers (private)
YUMA	F JPN, ENG	Singer	Study abroad (U.S. 6mos)	1093 followers (public)
SARA	F JPN, ENG	TGU, EMI, YR4	Returnee (Canada, 9yrs)	1907 followers (public)
SAYAKA	F JPN, ENG	TGU, EMI, YR3	Study abroad (Australia 1yr, U.S. 1yr)	449 followers (private)
KAORU	F JPN, ENG	Web translator	Returnee (U.K. 3yr)	306 followers (private)

Of 16 participants, six of them were enrolled in the EMI program at TGU, four were students of the education department, and other six were working. All of them except Hanaka and Kohei had extensive period of experiences as either exchange students or returnees outside Japan including ENL, ESL and EFL countries from minimum half a year to maximum 10 years.

The participants' accounts had an average of 450 followers with some having more than 1,000 followers. This suggests that there are quite a large group of audiences that they share their contents with. Their followers consisted of people from different linguistic backgrounds (see 5.2.2).

Additionally, the findings from the questionnaire survey revealed that the purposes of the participants' Instagram use varied. All of them answered that they use the platform to keep records of special events to remember. The participants often shared special occasions such as birthdays, anniversaries, Coming of Age, and daily events spent with friends and families. Some participants, such as Karin, Kana, Rin, Erika, Moe, Yo, Sara, and Kaoru, responded that the platform is also part of self-expression to show their tastes and worldviews. These participants generally shared posts that have high degrees of visually artistic elements, for instance, the pleasing scenery of nature. Several participants

including Yuchen, Yuma, Hanaka, and Moe stated that they use Instagram to publicize their works and share contents related to professions or any social/cultural activities they are related. For instance, they shared their contents to inform upcoming events they are involved or to show their skills in their hobbies. While the individual purposes for using Instagram varied among the participants, all their contents were made semi-public intending their numerous followers to view.

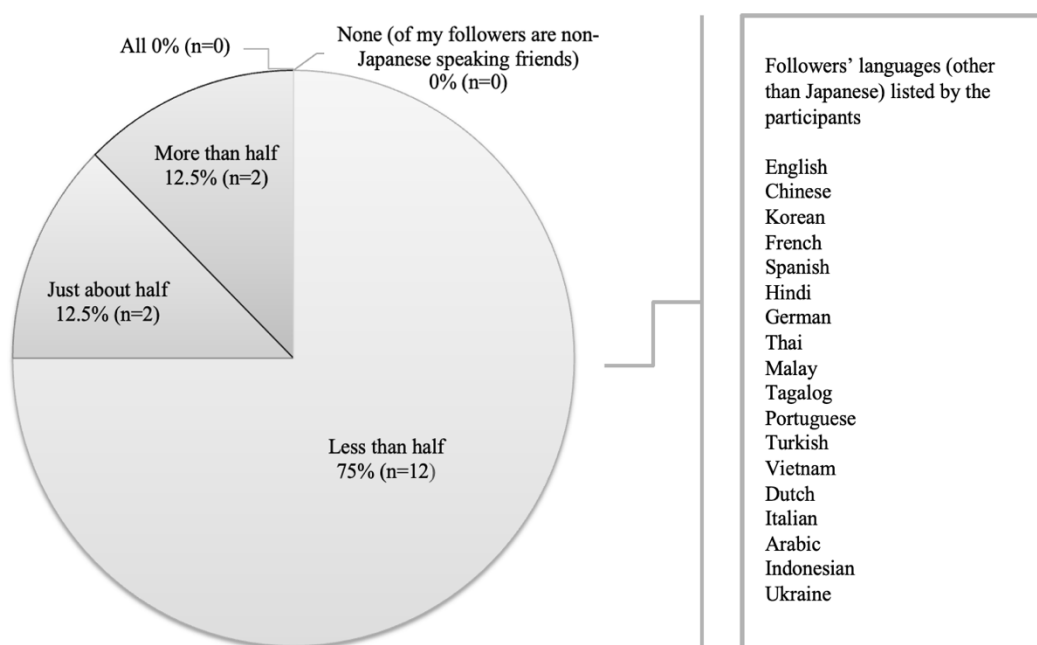
5.2.2. The participants' Instagram followers – Results of online questionnaire

This section presents an overview of the linguistic backgrounds of the 16 participants' Instagram followers based on their responses. When asked to roughly estimate the ratio of followers who do not share the first language (mainly Japanese²¹) with them, 12 participants answered that less than half of their total followers are non-Japanese speakers. Two respondents reported that just about half of their followers are non-Japanese speakers whereas two stated that more than half of their followers do not speak their first language. There was no participant who reported that either all or none of their followers are non-Japanese speaking friends. Therefore, the data suggests that while the majority of their followers are local friends, it is common for the current

²¹ One of the participants was a bilingual Chinese and Japanese speaker who considered Chinese as first language. He stated that less than half of his followers share the first language, so I counted him as one of 12 in Figure 5.1.

participants to from international connections on the platform. Figure 5.1 summarizes the ratio of the participants' international followers.

Figure 5.1 Ratio of the participants' international followers and linguistic backgrounds



The participants listed the languages of their international followers, which ranged from English, Korean, Chinese, French, Spanish, German, Hindi to many others, as seen in the list above. They met their international friends and befriended them on Instagram while, either residing, studying, or traveling outside Japan. Some of the participants were connected with their international friends at TGU, while some were connected with such

friends only on Instagram. This finding suggests that SNS is a space of multilingualism for current Japanese young people to connect with others by transcending geographic spaces.

5.2.3. Language distribution in the posts – quantification of code choices

This section presents the language distribution in the participants' Instagram posts, with the use of manual coding of Nvivo. It is important to note that the code choices are what are observed from their posts, and they might have gone through a broader linguistic repertoire by the time their written products were embossed on the screen (see Chapter 2; see also Canagarajah, 2013a, 2013c). By exploring code choices, this section opens a door to understand part of their translingual repertoires to construct online relationships.

In total, 301 posts were collected from the 16 participants between July 2021 and March 2023. Their Instagram posts were collected from four-month observations except for the focal participants, Seina, Kana, Karin, Rin, and Nana (see the symbol * in Table 5.1) whom I was in contact for approximately 12 months. By using Nvivo coding, the participants' posts were categorized in the following five types: monolingual Japanese posts, monolingual English posts, multilingual posts, posts with emoji only, and posts with a photograph only (without caption).

	JAPANESE	ENGLISH	MULTILINGUAL	EMOJI	PHOTO ONLY	TOTAL	
SEINA*	5	0	2	0	0	7	12 months
KANA*	8	10	1	0	1	20	11 months
KARIN*	11	7	10	1	0	29	11 months
RIN*	22	11	6	6	2	47	10 months
NANA*	11	6	4	4	3	28	11 months
ERIKA	9	1	0	0	1	11	
HANAKA	14	0	5	0	0	19	
KOHEI	0	14	0	0	0	14	
MOE	0	7	1	0	0	8	
MOMO	0	5	18	0	0	23	
YUCHEN	0	0	10	0	0	10	
YO	1	6	5	0	0	12	
YUMA	7	9	13	0	0	29	
SARA	12	7	0	9	1	29	
SAYAKA	3	3	0	0	0	6	
KAORU	4	4	0	0	1	9	
	107	90	75	20	9	301	

Table 5.2 Distribution of languages for each participant

Although code choices varied depending on individuals, Table 5.2 shows that it was uncommon for them to remain exclusively monolingual during the observation period. They updated posts sometimes in Japanese and other times in English, and frequently combined both languages and/or other languages such as Chinese, Portuguese, Korean, and German. Such linguistic hybridity is discussed throughout the two analysis chapters. A few participants, including Erika, Hanaka and Kohei stayed fully or nearly monolingual,

which I also touch later (see Chapter 6 for Erika, and Chapter 5 for Hanaka and Kohei). The selection of language was often influenced by their language experiences and friendships. Some participants, such as Moe, Momo, Yuchen, Yo, and Yuma exhibited a high degree of English use and multilingual use in their posts, which can be attributed to their extensive experience of living abroad and using multiple languages daily in online/offline lives. Other participants, including Sara, Sayaka, and Kaoru switched between Japanese and English depending on each post considering their potential audiences and their emotive motivations.

Although my project focused on the English and multilingual posts, one tendency found in Japanese posts was that they were rhetorically longer than English posts. Biber and Conrad (2009) discuss that, in addition to audiences, one's register and styles are shaped by communicative purposes, for instance, whether utterances are to narrate past events, to describe situation, or to reveal personal feelings (p. 45). The analysis of the categorization of communicative purposes according to code choices suggested that Japanese was used not only to provide locally specific information but also to narrate past events and to explain and describe the photographs.

The question is when and for what purposes they choose to use English or mix and merge different languages in ELF context. As this chapter sees, English in the online ELF

context was used for pragmatically creative purposes to design languages “to be immediately understood in the context in which they are used” (Widdowson, 2021a, p. 192). With pragmatic creativity, English served to describe events that considers, not local, but internationally scoped online friends. For example, Rin’s two posts below can represent such communicative roles of Japanese and English.

Image 5.1 Descriptive and localized caption in Japanese – Rin’s post



Extract 5.1 English translation of Rin’s caption

It was my second time joining Nicolai Bergmann’ flower box workshop 🌹

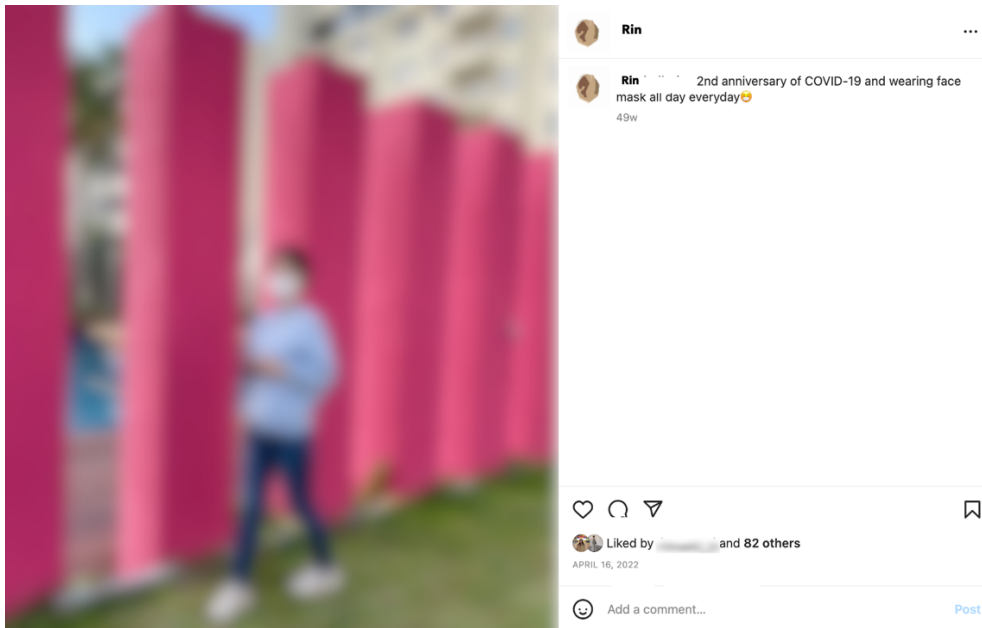
We used tweezers to put flowers in the box but it was difficult and mine looked too packed and the flowers were smashed.

At the end I had my teacher tweak mine...[face with tear] [hearted hand]

The masters are great.

It was luxurious to have some time to face flowers with the view of pond in Dazaihu shrine 🌸

Image 5.2 Brief and universalized caption in English – Rin’s post



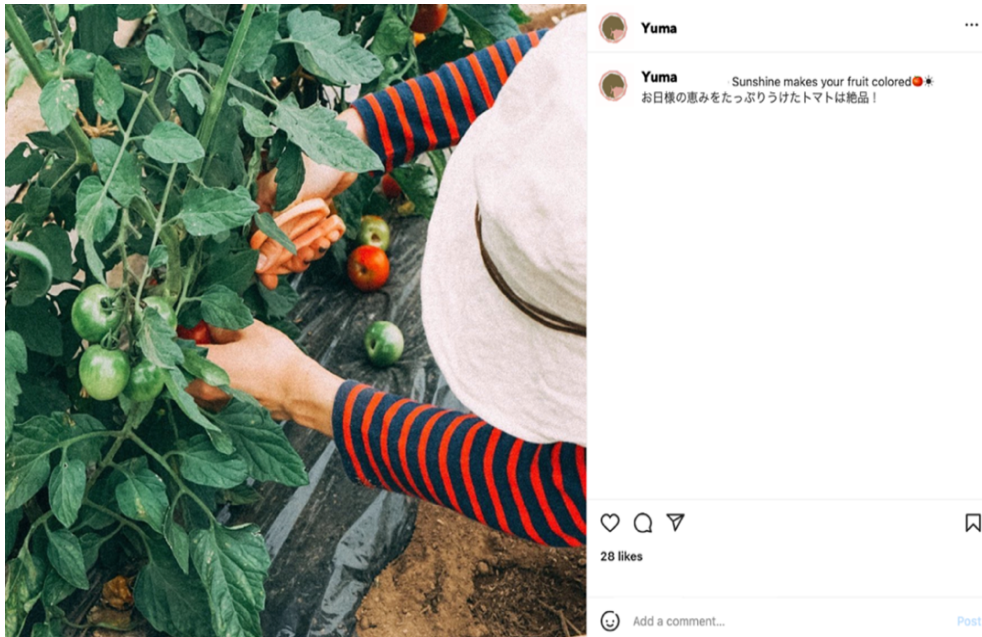
Extract 5.2 Rin’s post extracted

2nd anniversary of COVID-19 and wearing face mask all day everyday 😊

Image 5.1 shows that Rin’s post in Japanese is dense and long. It descriptively narrates past events in the local context such as joining a flower arrangement workshop located in her hometown of Fukuoka. Image 5.2 shows her English post, which aims to share the universally shared topic of the pandemic with her online friends. Japanese was used to describe and localize her content, whereas English served to reach a wider range of audiences.

Nonetheless, considering that the participants' international followers occupy only less than half of their total followers (see Figure 5.1), it is questionable why they are invested in using English on Instagram. It seems rather communicatively efficient to use Japanese even in the ELF scenario (Mortensen, 2013), as the majority of their followers use Japanese. This chapter address this question later, by exploring the possibility of English being used not only for instrumental purposes to facilitate practical and informative communication but also for poetically creative means to achieve, just as art, poetry, and music do, “innovative representation of alternative reality” (Widdowson, 2021a, p. 191). English, in online ELF communication, is used for poetic, playful, and aesthetic pleasures to express oneself in front of audiences. What follows is a post shared by Yuma, in which she shared a picture of her visiting a farming activity and harvesting tomatoes, described in Japanese and English.

Image 5.3 Metaphorical expression in English – Yuma's post



Extract 5.3 Yuma’s caption extracted with English translation

Language guide: English (regular font) and *Japanese* (Italics)

Original Sunshine makes your fruit colored 🍅🌞 [sun]
 お日様の恵みをたっぷりうけたトマトは絶品！

Translation Sunshine makes your fruit colored 🍅🌞 [sun]
 Tomatos which received the bless of sunshine are delicious!

Building on Backhaus’s (2010) framework, the multilingual posts created by the participants could largely be categorized as either “supplementary”, where there was either full or partial mutual translation available between languages, or “complementary” where mutual translation was absent. For example, in the above post by Yuma, the Japanese sentence describes the taste of the delicious, well-grown tomatoes, while the subsequent English sentence describes the color of the fruits. In the interview, Yuma revealed that the English expression, *your fruit*, was a metaphor referring to not literary

the tomatoes but the inner self of an individual (Interview with Yuma, October 8, 2021). In so doing, she expressed how one could feel fulfilled by feeling the sunshine in lives. She engaged in the metaphorical strategy of turning an abstract concept into something palpable (Simpson, 2004), which in this case, likening the one's life to the fruit of the vegetable.

Throughout this chapter, further discussions of the Instagram posts shared by the young individuals reveal how their translingual repertoire became a vehicle of both pragmatically and poetically creative expressions.

5.3. Pragmatic creativity – ELF, translingualism and communication

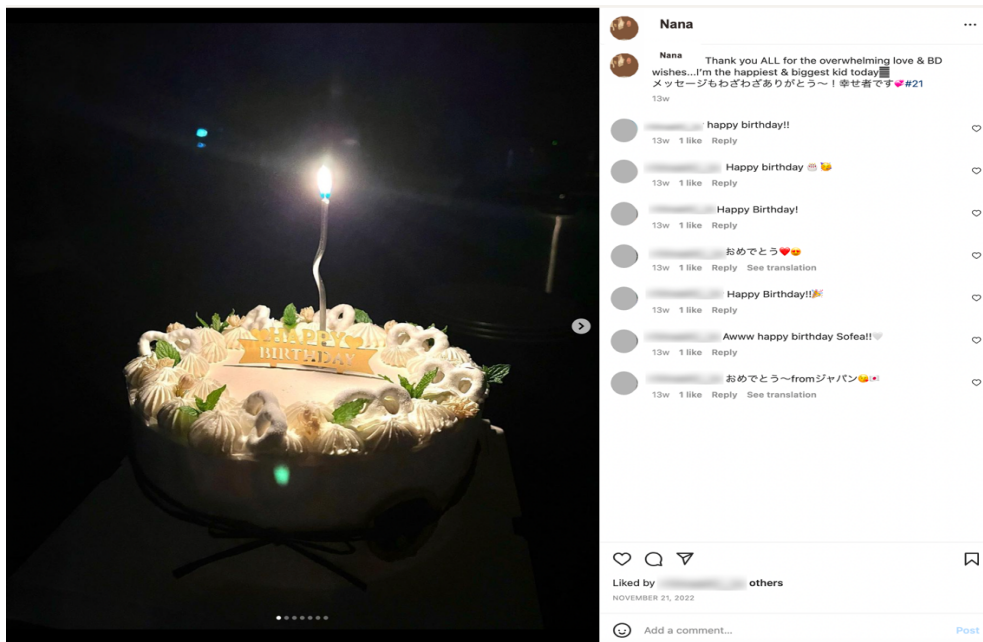
This section discusses the primary role of language on SNS, which is to communicate with a diverse range of online followers. It explores the young adults' pragmatic creativity, or their capability to facilitate and sustain communicative relationships with their friends in ELF context by adopting their translingual repertoire. First, this section discusses how the participants adjusted their rhetoric to fit into the linguistic culture of Instagram (5.3.1). Then, it explores how they designed their audiences by expanding (5.3.2) and specifying (5.3.3) their potential readers on Instagram.

5.3.1. Adopting the online linguistic culture – online ELF communication

SNS users often accommodate their communicative styles to the specific site they are using, acquiring communicative needs of the particular online space, including shared linguistic culture and available technical features (see Crystal, 2011). Likewise, the present young individuals had the knowledge of “Netspeak” (Crystal, 2001; see Chapter 3) or electronically mediated English (e-English), including the recurrence of acronyms, abbreviation, capitalization, and non-standard grammar and spelling. In addition, they were also familiar with the brevity of caption (the text-part of Instagram post) by acknowledging the image-driven culture of Instagram (see Chapter 3).

For instance, Nana shared the following Instagram post (Image 5.4) to reply to birthday wishes she received from her friends. The first languages of her Instagram followers included Japanese, English, Malay, German, Chinese, Hindi, and Korean, which suggested that she participated in online ELF communication. Her Instagram caption below has capitalization and acronymization of words (*Thank you ALL and BD wishes*), both of which have been typically observed from early years of CMC research (Baron, 2000; Crystal, 2001, 2008; Heyd, 2016/2020).

Image 5.4 Netspeak: capitalization and abbreviation – Nana’s post



Extract 5.4 Nana's caption extracted with English translation

Language guide: English (regular font) and *Japanese* (Italics)

Original	Thank you ALL for the overwhelming love & BD wishes...I'm the happiest & biggest kid today 🥹 ²² メッセージもわざわざありがとう~！幸せ者です💕 #21
Translation	Thank you ALL for the overwhelming love & BD wishes...I'm the happiest & biggest kid today 🥹 <i>Thank you also for your messages~! I'm a lucky person</i> 💕 #21

In the interview, Nana explained that she had learned about the capitalization of English words in CMC, as seen in *ALL* in her post above, while text-messaging on Instagram with her American friends she met during her study abroad:

²² Although the researcher's PC screen could not process the emoji Nana used originally (see Image 5.4), she stated in the interview that she used pleased emoji with held back tears.

Excerpt 5.1

N: なんか強調とか、なんか大声みたいになって、大文字使うじゃないですか。

A: はいはい。

N: =それ、そのコンテキストを、友達とメッセージしてる時に、間に学んで、あの、使ってみました。

N: *Like for emphasizing or shouting, you use upper case.*

A: *Yes, yes.*

N: *=Yes, I learned the context [of using upper case] while messaging with my friends, and I used it.*

Tannen and Trester (2013) discuss that the communicative impact of capitalization is visual than verbal to demonstrate “enthusiasm in digital discourse” (p. 111). The excerpt above illustrates that Nana encountered the context in which capitalization was used while engaging in online ELF communication. She then applied her own language experience to her Instagram post. Further, she continued discussing the acronyms *BD* or “birthday”, as follows.

Excerpt 5.2

N: なんか birthday で書いてもいいんですけど、なんか、ま、それだとそのままだから、なんか、あの略して BD にしました。なんか、短めがいいっていうこだわりがあって。

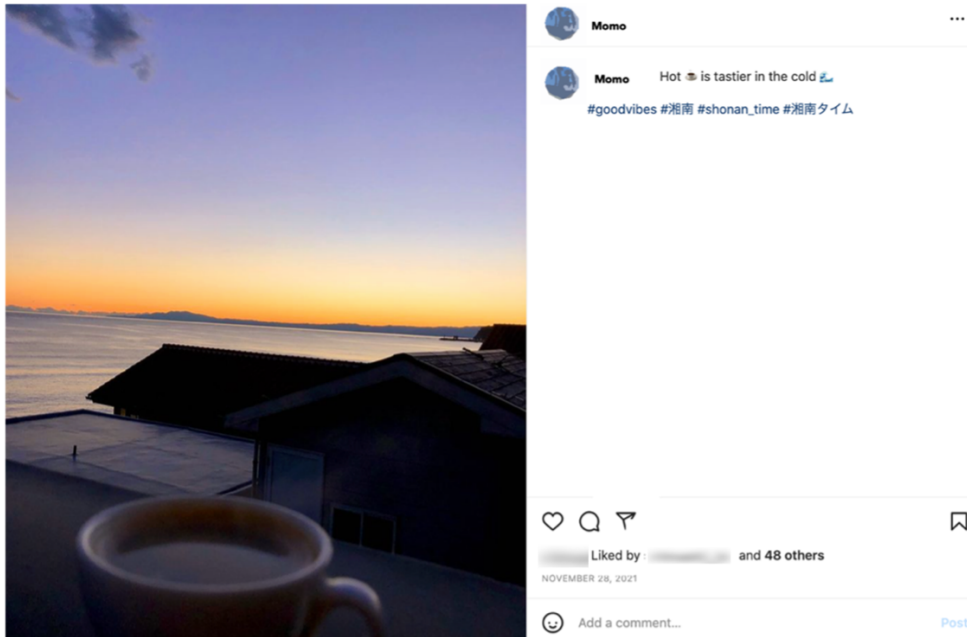
N: *“birthday” is fine too, but it’s just straightforward, so I abbreviated it to “BD”. I like to make it short.*

The aim of acronyms (e.g., *btw*) and abbreviations (e.g., *fav*) in digital discourse has primarily been considered to increase the speed of typing words to avoid breaking of the conversation flow (Crystal, 2008). However, Nana’s remark implied that the acronym was to shorten her caption rather than to accelerate the speed of interactions. With Instagram being a visually driven site, the present young adults tended to keep their texts at a

minimum appearance, except for a few who used the platform as a diary and wrote paragraphs of English texts (see Section 5.5 in this chapter for Kohei and Chapter 6 for Seina). Besides some ideological backgrounds, such as to avoid the risk of making English mistakes or to refrain from appearing showing off English skills (see Chapter 6 for further discussions), the participants' rhetoric indicated that they preferred to write English briefly to provide the title-like expressions for Instagram posts.

The participants were also familiar with relationships between captions (the text part) and other modalities, including photographs, emojis, and hashtags. For example, Momo's post below shows the interrelations of her translingual repertoire (Image 5.5). Momo was regularly participated in ELF communication with her friends from various linguistic backgrounds both on and offline lives. On Instagram, she often shared pictures of sunrise and sunset beach taken nearby her place, one of which was the following.

Image 5.5 Modal and referential roles of emojis – Momo's post



Extract 5.5 Momo’s caption extracted with English translation

Language guide: English (regular font) and *Japanese* (Italics)

Original Hot ☕ is tastier in the cold 🌊
 #goodvibes #湘南 #Shonan_time #湘南タイム

Translation Hot ☕ is tastier in the cold 🌊
 #goodvibes #Shonan #Shonan time #Shonantime

Momo’s picture above captures a cup of coffee in the foreground, with a sunrise beach in the back. The brief caption enhances the senses that are untransmissible from the visual image, describing the coffee (*tastier*) and the temperature (*cold*). Her post shows two emojis relevant to the objects of the photograph, but which fulfill different communicative functions. The wave emoji (🌊) serves as a “modal function” (Schlobinski & Watanabe, 2003, as cited in Siever, 2020), which supplements the object of the visual image. However, the coffee emoji (☕) is more than an accessory to supplement the photograph

and the written text. The emoji performs a “referential function” (Schlobinski & Watanabe, 2003, as cited in Siever, 2020) to replace the noun “coffee”. Without the emoji, the sentence loses its grammatical sense and communicative meaning. Siever (2020) notes that both the modal function and referential function of emojis, with the former being more popular usage, are commonly deployed on SNS. As this chapter sees, the present participants also frequently employed emojis for various functions.

Underneath the texts colored in black, there are four hashtags with the symbol (#), which again has different roles. The first two hashtags (*#goodvibes*) and (#湘南) describe the time spent while taking the picture and where it was taken. These hashtags provide meta-discursive information and commentary about the posts, which have been widely observed on SNS (Squires, 2020). In the interview, Momo stated that the latter hashtags (*#shonan_time*) and (#湘南タイム) are popular on Instagram among locals in and visitors to Shonan, a famous beach area in the Kanto district (Interview with Momo November 21, 2021). Thus, Momo used the hashtags popular among the local SNS community. In this light, the two hashtags fulfill the typical hashtag function on SNS to create what Zappavigna (2011) calls “searchable talk” to approach the communities of common interests.

Online posts shared by Nana and Momo demonstrate how they strive not simply

ELF communication but ELF communication in the digital discourse. The young adults' Instagram posts are shaped by their capabilities to exploit translingual repertoires available on SNS, including orthographies such as abbreviation and capitalization, visual images, emojis, and technical functions of hashtags. Nana and Momo encountered linguistic usage specific to SNS while texting with friends or observing others' language activities in the online ELF context. The participants' rhetorical accommodation on Instagram indicates their investment in joining the online membership.

Knowing the linguistic culture of the platform, it was now time for them to engage in language interaction with their online friends in ELF context by designing their audiences (Bell, 1981; Tagg & Seargeant, 2014; see Chapter 3). For the present participants, their linguistic resources, or “largely between English as a lingua franca and various other ‘local’ languages” (Tagg & Seargeant, 2020, p. 347), were key mediums for modifying relationships, aligning their identities with their audiences, and giving different contexts to each post and interaction. What follows discusses their audience design by expanding and selecting potential readers to manage communicative relationships.

5.3.2. SNS and wider networking – expanding audience

One distinguishable feature of SNS such as Instagram is the context collapsed

situations that it creates, where there is a lack of instantly shared context between the addressees and addressors (see Chapter 3). The present participants had as many as 450 potential audiences (see Section 5.2) and they were not sure exactly who would read their posts. In such context, they suggested that using English was a strategy to expand their audiences, reaching out to those who did not share their first languages. In the border-crossing online ELF communication, English became a medium of “wider-networking” for the young adults to “connect with people who may equally be geographically nearer or far away” (Vettoral, 2014, p. 28). Some participants used English to maintain relationships with friends, who were geographically nearby, living in Tokyo (5.3.2.1). Others used English to reach audiences geographically far away, who were outside Japan (5.3.2.2).

5.3.2.1. Maintaining offline friendships

For some participants, using English on Instagram was to maintain their friendships established in daily conversations outside Instagram domain. In other words, they chose to communicate in English on Instagram because they regularly spoke in English as *lingua franca* with friends in their offline lives. Such an opinion was represented by Yo, an EMI student, in the following excerpt.

Excerpt 5.3

Y: 自分も、あの、なんかこう、[英語を]日本人の人ともその喋りますし、あの、違う国の人と喋るんで、なんかこう日本語とかにすると、逆に読めない人とか多いんで。めんどくさいなと思って、こう、全員分かるようなやつで英語にしました。[...] あの、こう、全員向けは全部英語にします。こう、ジェネラルな言語なんで。

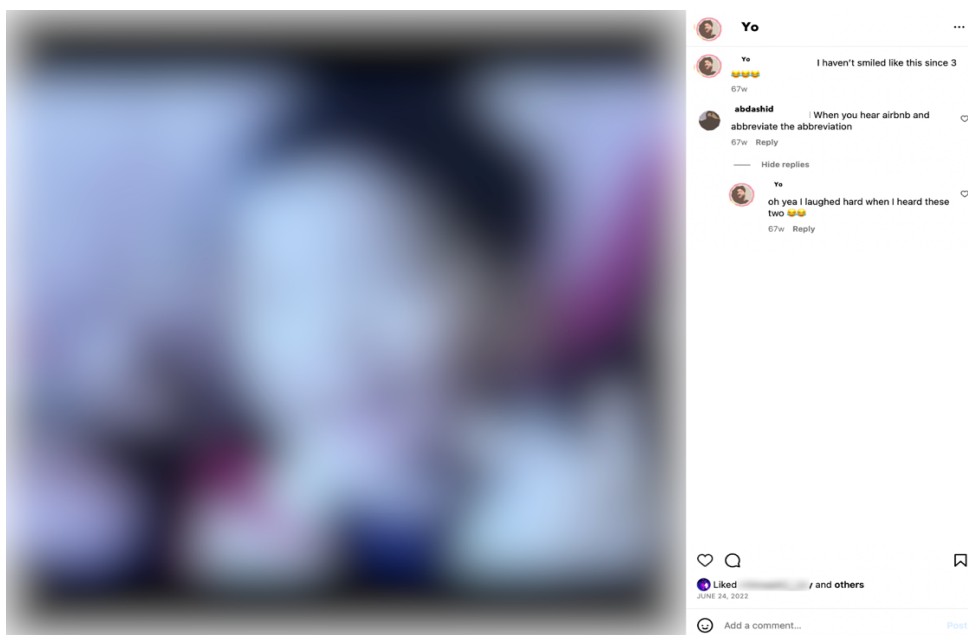
Y: I speak [in English] with Japanese friends and also talk to the ones from different countries, so if I write in Japanese, many would not be able to read [my post]. It is bothersome, so, well, I just chose English for everyone to understand. [...] I use English for posts for everyone. Because it's a general language.

(Interview with Yo, August 2, 2022)

Yo's Instagram followers included speakers of Japanese, Chinese, English, Korean, Thai and others. His commentary above suggests that outside the online sphere, he socializes with these friends, including Japanese-speaking friends, through ELF communication. Yo usually participates in ELF communication in his lives including when he takes classes at EMI course at TGU, when he plays sports, and when he hangs out on weekends. Yo sets his Instagram account private and grants followership only to friends whom he knows outside Instagram. Through offline communicative engagements with his friends, he had clues as to English being a part of shared linguistic resource pool with his friends (see Pitzl, 2016, 2018b). Thus, he was aware that English was the “general language” affordable to his friends regardless of first languages. In Excerpt 5.3, he then suggests that he has already built relationships constructed through ELF communication and that writing in Japanese is “bothersome” [面倒くさい] because that limits some audiences' access to his post.

Yo's opinion was reflected in his Instagram posts which were written mostly in English or multilingual. For instance, Yo shared the following post with a picture of him in a childhood busted into a laugh.

Image 5.6 Friendship constructed through ELF communication – Yo's post and sequential comment by his friend



Extract 5.6 Yo's caption and sequential comments by his friend extracted

Yo
I haven't smiled like this since 3 😂😂😂

Abdashid
When you hear airbnb and abbreviate the abbreviation

Yo
oh yea I laughed hard when I heard these two 🤣🤣

In the post above, Yo jokes about the old picture of him grinning greatly. While his post is targeted to his 836 followers, his Pakistani friend (@abdashid) from TGU, replies to

him by bringing an in-group conversation. Yo then replies and agrees with his friends' recollection, which signals his and @abdashid's co-constructive ELF online communication. Yo's engagement in ELF communication with his whole Instagram follower-group provoked an immediate ELF interaction with one of his followers, with whom Yo became friends through offline ELF communication.

Yo's opinion and his Instagram post reveal that he used English for inclusiveness and for maintaining his friendships constructed through daily offline ELF conversation. His language practices exemplify many of today's young adults in the global discourse whose distinction between online/offline communicative relationships have blurred (see Tagg & Sergeant, 2016/2020; see also Dovchin et al., 2018). Thus, his offline relationships and online engagement set in ELF communication are interwoven. While Yo regularly engaged in ELF communication in his offline lives, it was not the case for other young people in the present study, which is discussed as follows.

5.3.2.2 Creating online friendships

For some participants, SNS was the only space they were exposed to ELF communication. English served to reach people who were "geographically [...] far away" (Vettoral, 2014, p. 28). For instance, Yuchen was a student of the EMI course (just as Yo)

but usually used Japanese or Chinese as a lingua franca with friends outside classrooms on a daily basis. In his free time, Yuchen likes to take photographs with a single-lens reflex camera and uses his Instagram page as a portfolio of his pictures. During the observation period, he used English on Instagram to showcase his photographs in front of world-wide viewers, as articulated in the following excerpt.

Excerpt 5.4

Y: 英語はですね、やっぱり SNS しか使わないですね。日常生活で、日本人とはできるだけ日本語、中国人とは中国語ですね。英語っていうのはやっぱり SNS でしか使わないですよ。SNS っていうのは、もっとお友達だけじゃなくて potential followers もいるんですよね。Potential follower は Facebook とか Instagram とか全世界の人が見られるんですよ。やっぱり英語をそこで使うんですよ。

N: *I only use English on SNS. Every day, I use Japanese with Japanese and Chinese with Chinese friends. English, I only use it on SNS. As for SNS, there is not only my friends but potential followers. Potential followers, on Facebook or Instagram, are from all over the world and they can see [my posts]. I use English there.*

(Interview with Yuchen, February 10, 2022).

Yuchen's remark indicates his opinion about a lingua franca role of English on SNS, where "people from all over the world" [全世界の人] reside. He sets his Instagram in public mode, enabling everyone using Instagram to follow and view his account without his permission. He deliberately does so because the more he has followers on his list, the wider his photographs reach out. By using English, Yuchen outreached "potential followers" who were outside the group of his current 260 followers, hoping that many people would find his talent in photographs. Thus, for Yuchen, English was a means to

increase the number of viewers, who were not in his current communicative group. This resonates with other site users, such as those on Flickr, who chose English to show pictures to as many people as possible (Barton & Lee, 2013). In contrast to Yo whose online ELF communication lied in the continuum of offline ELF context, Yuchen used English mostly only to outreach and to show his creative mind in the online ELF communication (see 5.4 for further discussion on his posts).

Furthermore, Karin, a student of the educational department at TGU was one of the participants who discussed the lack of engagement in ELF communication outside online discourse. She used both Japanese and English on Instagram to share her everyday lives with her Japanese local friends and friends she met overseas, including Singapore, where she lived for two years (see Chapter 6 for further discussion on Karin). Karin chose English to extend readership, as she stated:

Excerpt 5.5

A: 日本語で書く、英語で書く、というのはどういう感じで選択してたりしますか？

M: なんか、海外行った時は割と英語で書く傾向があって、ただ全部英語で書けないんで一部だけとか。なんか海外でできた友達にもなんか載せたのがわかるようになっていうのはやってます。[...] その、向こうで友達になった人とかが、日本語だと読めないから軽く書いて書いたりしたらいいかなと思って。

A: *How do you choose to write in Japanese or English?*

M: *Well, when I go abroad, I tend to write in English, but I can't write everything in English, so I only write a part of it. I try [to write in English] so friends I made overseas can understand. [...] People I made friends with over there could read it if I write [English] a bit because they can't read it in Japanese.*

(Interview with Karin, May 20, 2022)

As exemplified in Karin’s comment above, she partially supplemented (Backhaus, 2010) her Japanese sentences with English to ensure that her overseas friends could understand her post. This practice underscored her awareness of the role of English for a broader readership in the ELF context, as the following post indicates:

Image 5.7 Supplementary use of Japanese and English – Karin’s post and a comment by her follower



Extract 5.7 Karin’s caption extracted with English translation

Language guide: English (regular font) and *Japanese* (Italics)

Original	<p>Karin: 2022.04.03~05 🇵🇭 Day4~6</p> <p>ご飯が美味しくてモールも楽しくてスタバは思ったより苦かった、、☹️ 運転手さんがスキズのビルボードまで連れて行ってってくれてとても貴重なスキズを生で見ることができました🥳 フィリピン見るところないのかと思ってたけどめっちゃ楽しめました😊</p>
----------	--

Tasty meal, awesome shopping malls, bitter coffee ☹️, everything was great 😊
I wanna see my friends soon 🥺

coper:
You should have tried San Miguel Beer.

Translation Karin:
2022.04.03~05 🇵🇭
Day4~6

*The food was delicious, the mall was fun, and Starbucks was bitter than I had expected... ☹️
The driver took me to billboards of Skids [Stray kid] so I could see Skids in real life, which was so rare 🥺
I thought there was no sightseeing spot in the Philippines, but I had so much fun 😊*

Tasty meal, awesome shopping malls, bitter coffee ☹️, everything was great 😊
I wanna see my friends soon 🥺

coper:
You should have tried San Miguel Beer.

After she traveled to the Philippines, she shared the above post in Japanese and English, which are supplementary, containing some messages that are not mentioned in the respective other language (Backhaus, 2010). The second Japanese sentence mentions a South Korean boy's group (Stray kids) she has been a great fan of. English omits this information, as she shares this information mostly among her Japanese friends. Instead, she adds her wish to see her friends in the Philippines (*I wanna see my friends soon 🥺*). Furthermore, she created some humorous effect in Japanese (ご飯は美味しくてモールも楽しくてスタバは思ったより苦かった... ☹️) and in English (*Tasty meal, awesome shopping malls, bitter coffee ☹️*), as she created a contrast between two positive memories

followed by a negative one. In the interview, she stated that while interacting with her international friends in the Philippines, she learned that sense of humor could be shared by different language speakers (Interview with Karin, May 20, 2022). The Japanese and English sentences served to reach different target audiences. For English, it served a lingua franca role to reach her friends who were physically far but virtually close. Karin's post facilitated an ELF interaction with one follower (i.e., @copar) who commented on her post to recommend a local beer, although she did not reply.

The participants had a shared understanding of the social role of English as a lingua franca in the online site. For them, English served to maintain and establish their friendships in offline and online lives. They were invested in using English on Instagram, as they were aware of their wide range of audiences, who varied in the linguistic backgrounds.

5.3.3. ELF, translingualism and wider-networking – selecting audience

This section further presents examples that illustrate the young adults' translingual practices to design audiences in the online ELF context, but for this time selecting, instead of expanding, potential readers. The examples in this section demonstrate the participants' exploitation of translingual repertoire, including linguistic, semiotic resources as well as

technical functions, transcending the boundaries of meaning-making resources (see Baker, 2015, 2017; Baker & Sangiamchit, 2019) to specify their intended addresses. The first section discusses examples of Instagram posts, which delineate building one-on-one communication (5.3.3.1). Then, the second section explores how one Instagram post facilitated multi-directional communication targeting different audiences (5.3.3.2).

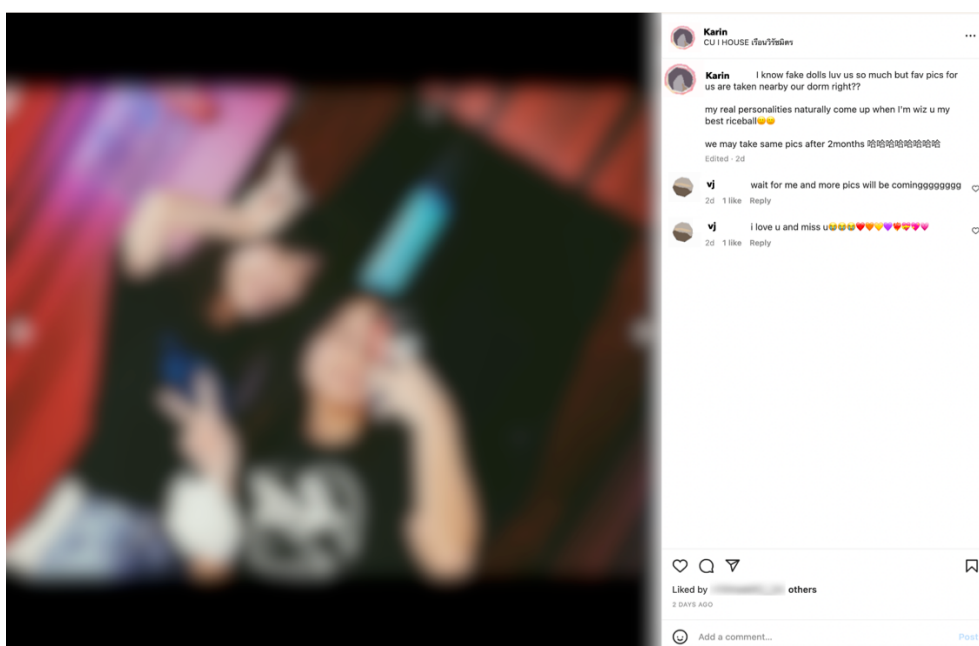
5.3.3.1. One-on-one ELF communication

This section discusses the participants' online practices to build one-on-one communication, beginning with a discussion of another post shared by Karin, who have been just observed in the previous section. In one of her posts, Karin navigated herself to her friend's linguistic orientation in order to show intimacy to her potential "addressee" (Tagg & Seargeant, 2014). To recap, addressee is the ones whom one's post explicitly intends (Tagg & Seargeant, 2014; see also Chapter 3). During the investigation, Karin went to Thailand to study abroad for a year. She shared the following post with a picture of her and her close friend (hereafter called in the username of vj as seen in Image 5.8) from Hong Kong. As a pretextual history, Karin had great trust in vj after facing personal troubles with other friends she made during her study abroad. The post captures Karin

and vj when they visited Madame Tussauds in Bangkok, two months before vj’s departure from Thailand to go back home in Hong Kong.

Karin’s translingual repertoire plays a role in enhancing one-on-one communication. Foremost, the photograph of her and vj itself is an indicator of vj as a Karin’s specific addressee. In addition, Karin also demonstrated some noticeable Netspeak (Crystal, 2001).

Image 5.8 “哈哈” the cultural integration of online laughter – Karin’s post and a comment by her friend



Extract 5.8 Karin’s caption extracted with English translation

Language guide: English (regular font) and *Chinese* (Italics)

Original	<p>Karin: I know fake dolls luv us so much but fav pics for us are taken nearby our dorm right? my real personalities naturally come up when I’m wiz u my best rice ball 🍚😂 we may take same pics after 2months 哈哈哈哈哈</p>
----------	--

vj:

wait for me and more pics will be comingggggggg

vj:

I luv u and miss u 🥺🥺🥺❤️❤️❤️💜💜💜👉👉👉💜💜💜

Translation Karin:

I know fake dolls luv us so much but fav pics for us are taken nearby our dorm right?

my real personalities naturally come up when I'm wiz u my best rice ball 😊😊

we may take same pics after 2months *hahahahahahaha*

vj:

wait for me and more pics will be comingggggggg

vj:

I luv u and miss u 🥺🥺🥺❤️❤️❤️💜💜💜👉👉👉💜💜💜

These include frequent deployment of lower-case and orthography devices whose classifications are examined by Waldon et al. (2020). To draw from their categorization, these include phonetic-driven spelling (*luv*), clipping or removing letters from word endings (*fav pics*), and accent stylization to reflect spoken language (*wiz u*) (see also Thurlow, 2003). In an interview, Karin discussed that these usages aimed to facilitate intimacy and informality to express close relationship with vj (Interview with Karin, March 7, 2023). Her use of Netspeak enhanced the construction of social bonding in the online ELF communication.

In the second sentence, Karin intimately calls vj *riceball*, which vj calls herself. Since Karin had talked to vj about the troubles she had with other friends, she believed that vj would know why Karin was comfortable being with her (*my real personalities come up*). Karin stated in the interview that vj would understand her intention behind the

emojis with not full but moderate smile to show Karin's complex feelings (😊😊), being aware of the friendship struggles she had encountered (Interview with Karin, March 7, 2023). Therefore, for Karin, the emojis served as a secret language to share with vj what has happened in their offline lives.

In the last sentence, Karin jokes that they will be most likely taking a similar photograph of her and vj for farewell when vj leaves Thailand. Karin then indicates large laughter, 哈哈哈哈哈, which is a common online laughter in Chinese that depicts the sound of laughing out loud [hāhā]. The repetition also exemplifies online language characteristics (see Crystal, 2008). Karin stated that because she had studied Chinese, it was to show connection with the friend though she had the political understanding that what she learned was Mandarin instead of Kantonese, as seen in the following excerpt:

Excerpt 5.6

K: 仲良い子が使ってるのと似たような言語を使うことで、私とその友達との間にコネクションっていうか、それを図るために、ちょっと入れました。

K: By using the language similar to the language of the close friend, I wanted to show some connection between me and her.

(Interview with Karin, March 7, 2023)

In the interview, Karin stated that in their daily online ELF communication, Karin and vj regularly use both 哈 and “w”, the Chinese and Japanese online laughter, respectively. Karin had explained to vj that “w” derives from 笑 [warai], another Japanese online

laughter. vj then started to use “w” online, and this time, it was Karin who used ㄱ. The cross-use of online laughter did not only facilitate linguacultural exchange of online language, but also for Karin to initiate the “connection” between her and vj out of hundreds of followers. vj’s reply to Karin’s post also shows vj’s translingual repertoire including some Netspeak such as abbreviations and reptation for emphasis (*more pics will be comingggggggg*) and phonetic-oriented spelling (*luv, u*) and the remarkable use of emojis that indicate her attachment to Karin. Karin’s participation in ELF communication signaled essential values in identity construction not only as a digital being but also as a friend of the Chinese speaking friend.

While Karin deployed her friend’s linguistic orientation, Rin, a Japanese local dialect speaker, navigated her friend to her linguistic heritage. Rin constantly showed playful practices crossing different languages, mainly Japanese and English, since she had online followers from diverse linguistic backgrounds including English, Korean, French, and Chinese, whom she had met during overseas experiences in the U.S. and France (see Chapter 6 Section 6.3.3 for more discussions on Rin). Rin is from and lives in Fukuoka, a prefecture located in the southern island of Japan. She posted the following post when she invited a friend from Tokyo to her city and had breakfast together at her place.

Image 5.9 Inclusion of local Japanese dialect – Rin’s post and a comment by her follower



Extract 5.9 Rin’s caption extracted with English translation

Language guide: English (regular font), *Japanese* (italics), **Fukuoka dialect** (bold)

Original	<p>Rin: 秋の朝ごはん with a guest 🍌 パンストックの明太フランス、評判どおりめっちゃ美味しかった！ #福岡よーきんしゃったね</p> <p>kikimayart: The colors 🍌🍌🍌 are wonderful <33</p>
Translation	<p>Rin: Fall breakfast with a guest 🍌 Mentai Furansu from Pain Stock was so good just as the review said! #WelcometoFukuoka</p> <p>kikimayart: The colors 🍌🍌🍌 are wonderful <33</p>

The phrase 秋の朝ごはん ‘fall breakfast’ intertextually echoes the photograph of the

bread pieces and Kaki persimmons, Japanese seasonal fruits in fall. The Japanese noun phrase is followed by English, *with a guest*. According to the interview, the use of English was intrigued by her desire to convey her joy and to enhance the euphony and flow of texts. With the picture and the phrase, *with a guest*, she specifies her friend as the main addressee of the post. The second sentence explains a Japanese fusional French bread, which echoes with the emoji (🍞) and photograph whose name, 明太フランス [Mentai Furansu], already undergoes a translingual formation²³. The sudden appearance of the bread shop name, パンストック [Pain Stock] without detailed explanation suggests that a localized context that the shop is well-known among Fukuoka residents. Rin's localized information targets her active friends in Japan, more specifically Fukuoka, to read her post while providing little details to friends from other linguacultural backgrounds except that she had breakfast *with the guest*.

At the end of her post, Rin adds the hashtag, #福岡よーきんしゃったね [Fukuoka-yo-kin-shatta-ne] ‘#WelcometoFukuoka’, to target her specific addressee or *the guest*, who visited her. To do so, she uses the local dialect of Fukuoka instead of Tokyo dialect, 福岡よくきてくれたね [Fukuoka-yoku-kite-kureta-ne]. In the interview, Rin suggested

²³ The word 明太フランス [Mentai Furansu] is a combination of *Mentaiko* ‘picy cod roe’ and *Furansu Pan*. *Furansu Pan* is a Japanese word for French baguette that combines the transliteration of “France” [Furansu] and “Pain” [Pan] (see Kay, 1995)

that the particular expression is a traditional one and she does not belong to the social group who uses it frequently:

Excerpt 5.7

R: おばあちゃんたちが言うんだけど。なんか空港とかに書いてあって、空港の、あの、到着ロビーの、なんかエスカレーターで荷物、荷物、受け取るとこまでのところに「よーきんしゃったね」って書いてあって。

A: そうなんだ。

R: 福岡に友達が来てくれた時に、福岡よーきんしゃったねの旅って言って、私がいろんなどこに連れ回すっていう、勝手にやってる。@@

R: *Something grandmas would say. You see “Yo-kin-shatta-ne” at airports when you go down the escalator to the baggage claim at the arrival lobby.*

A: *I see.*

R: *When my friend comes to Fukuoka, I take them to lots of places, and I call it “Fukuoka-yo-kin-shatta-ne trip” by myself. @@*

(Rin, February 5, 2023)

Rin's remark above shows that translingual repertoire also includes resources that she earned from languages from other age groups and public signs. Rin's language practices cannot be categorized according to national borders, but move across regional area and age group. The use of dialect was not only to target her potential reader but also to perform local identities (see Coupland, 2001). Interestingly, even though she noticeably localized her content, the one who commented on her post was not her target addressee but her friend in the U.S. This illustrates complex communicative interaction in the online ELF communication. Rin received a comment, which appreciated the visual presentation of the photograph, as seen in the sequential comment by the username of @kikumayart. Rin's post initiated an ELF interaction concerning the non-linguistic part of the post, colors,

exemplifying multimodal nature of ELF communication specific to SNS.

While Karin navigated herself to her friend's linguistic origin, Rin welcomed her followers to her linguistic trace. Their posts have illustrated their strategies to design audiences and create one-on-one communication on the semi-public Instagram discourse.

5.3.3.2. Multi-directional ELF communication

This section discusses how a single post assists communication with different friends and communities, facilitating multi-directional communication. The illustrative example post was shared by Momo, who spoke English comfortably, having her childhood experience in Australia attending a local school. During the investigation, Momo regularly showed her overt translingual practices both on Instagram and in interview conversations.

Over the observation period, she participated in exercises and glutes training class, about which she constantly updated on the site. The context of the following post tells that she spent time with her Japanese-Brazilian friend (hereafter called in the username of *misaki_kanda* as seen in Image 5.10), who gave a pair of exercise leggings as a souvenir from Brazil. Momo's translingual repertoire manifested in the single post addresses multiple audiences: her transnational friends (wider friends), the Japanese-Brazilian

friend (addressee), and the glutes training group who follow her on Instagram (active friends).

Image 5.10 Targeting addresses, active friends, wider friends, and the internet as a whole – Momo’s post and sequential comments by her friend



Extract 5.10 Momo’s caption extracted with English translation

Language guide: English (regular font), *Japanese* (italics), **Portuguese** (bold)

Original Momo:
 Fresh morning with @misaki_kanda 🌞
 Obrigada for cute outfit 🇧🇷🍑
 似合うように継続します 🍑🔥
 目指せ @mispeachbrasil
 #obrigada #glutesinaction

misaki_kanda:
 🔥🔥🔥

Momo:
 🔥🔥🔥❤️

Translation Momo:
 Fresh morning with @misaki_kanda 🌞
 Thank you for cute outfit 🇧🇷🍑
 I will continue, so it suits me 🍑🔥
 My goal @mispeachbrasil

#thankyou #glutesinaction

misaki_kanda:



Momo:



The expression in the first sentence (*Fresh morning*) contextualizes the photograph, indicating the gathering with misaki_kanda took place during breakfast time, which allows the contextual information to be accessible to all her followers in the ELF context.

Momo's post also targets a specific addressee. To clearly target intended addressee out of her 800 followers, Momo tags her friend by typing the symbol (@) and her username, which is a common technical function on SNS to initiate interaction (Kang et al., 2022). In addition, Momo identifies her addressee through the language of Portuguese (*obrigada*), which is oriented to her friend's identity. Momo suggested in the interview that the gratitude in Portuguese addressed misaki_kanda, based on her linguacultural background (Interview with Momo, November 8, 2021). The expression along with the emoji of the Brazilian national flag (🇧🇷) and the hashtag #*obrigada* further enhances the one-on-one relationship between the two in the semi-public discourse. Momo successfully invites an interaction with misaki_kanda, who comments on the post with the flame emoji (🔥), as a symbolic metaphor for sexiness (see later in this section). misaki_kanda uses the flame emoji (🔥) in her comment, following Momo's use of the

same emoji, and then Momo again uses the emoji in her comment following misaki_kanda's use. This illustrates accommodative and interactive play of semiotic use in online communication (see Nishimura, 2016/2020). Momo goes on stating 似合うように継続します 'I will continue, so it suits me' as a promise to the friend.

Furthermore, Momo's post targets her "active friends" of hip training community. To recall active friends, they are the ones a poster interacts with online regularly (Tagg & Seargeant, 2021). In the post, Momo says 目指せ 'my goal' by tagging a different follower, this time a famous Brazilian glutes trainer. In the interview, Momo discussed her preference for using Japanese when her posts were related to training because her work-out community, including her teacher, is not a frequent English user (Interview with Momo, November 8, 2021). The peach emoji (🍑) appears twice in Momo's post. Siever (2020) discusses emojis from both semiotic and semantic perspectives and points out that emojis on social media can be decoded not only as iconic but also as a social symbol of group and context. In this regard, unlike the Brazilian national flag emoji, (🇧🇷) appears to be not as an iconic representation of the fruit but instead serves as a symbol for the body part being trained, which she aspires to look like a peach. Likewise, the flame emoji (🔥) is another symbolic metaphor for hotness or sexiness, as in something is "on fire" (Dictionary.com, 2018). While she selects active friends of her local glutes training

community in Japanese, the hashtag (*#glutesinaction*) facilitates “searchable talk” (Zappavigna, 2011) to connect with a community of common interest on “the internet as a whole” (Tagg & Seargeant, 2014). Momo’s Instagram post demonstrates how a single post can construct communication and present her identities in multi-directional ways to modify relationships with the intended audiences.

The examples introduced in this section have highlighted the role of translingual repertoire in shaping communicative dynamics and social identity in online ELF communication. The participants employed pragmatic creativity to “create the conditions for effective communication reactively and adaptively” (Widdowson, 2021a, p. 194). In a semi-public ELF communication on Instagram, there are myriads of relationships between the poster and audiences, which are “dynamic between a local offline context and the translocal space” (Tagg & Seargeant, 2020, p. 350). Further, their other available resources, the blend of Netspeak, photographs, emojis, and hashtags become a means for the young adults to establish communicative relationships with individuals of different linguistic backgrounds. They sometimes used languages of the target readers that they do not use in their offline lives (see Barton & Lee, 2013) and employed pictures and emojis. Their translingual repertoires were ways to not only establish a discursively co-constructed relationships with their perceived audiences (Tagg & Seargeant, 2020;

Klimpfinger, 2009) but also to position themselves as translingual and transcultural beings in the online ELF scenario, presenting their digital literacies.

5.4. Poetic creativity – ELF, translingualism and self-expression

SNS is seldom only a space for practical communication but also a self-expressive space to pursue young adults’ “aesthetic and poetic pleasures” (Thurlow, 2012, p. 181). For the present participants, English was a vehicle to express their poetic creativity (Widdowson, 2017, 2021a) to express inner poetic and artistic sentiments in the ELF context. This section presents examples of posts shared by the participants, particularly those who often demonstrated poetically creative practices. This section first presents various examples of poetic creativity in ELF communication (5.4.1), and then discusses poetic creativity and interpretation (5.4.2).

5.4.1. Poetic language in ELF communication

As discussed briefly in the introductory section of this chapter (see 5.2.2. for Yuma’s metaphorical expression of tomatoes), the present participants used English for poetic, playful, and aesthetic pleasures to express themselves. To discuss poetic linguistic practices in the online ELF context, this section first discusses aestheticism and the

emblematic roles of English on Instagram (5.4.1.1) and addresses their voices on poetic self in the ELF context (5.4.1.2). Then, it delves into examples of borrowing from popular cultures (5.4.1.3) and the role of Kanji or Chinese characters in self-expression (5.4.1.4).

5.4.1.1. English aestheticism

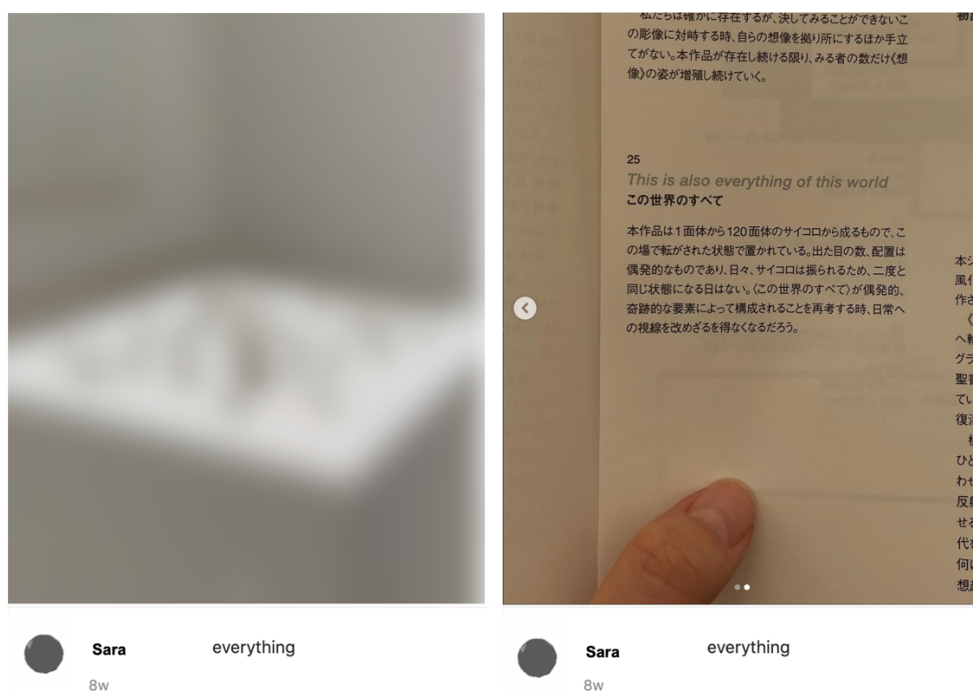
The participants' voices revealed that their investment in being artistic and poetic in English on Instagram reflects the social value of English as an aesthetic language. In this regard, this section delves into the potential language ideology behind their poetic language practices. Blommaert (2015, p. 17) discusses, "English, in many places in the world, is an emblem of globalization itself and of the values and imagination that come with it: it is 'cool' [...] source of distinction" (see also Blommaert, 2010, 2013b; Chapter 2). The young people in this study shared this social value and perception of English as a decorative tool (see Chapter 2) and applied it to their language practices at a personal level, including Instagram posts.

For instance, Sara shared the following post after she went to an art museum. Sara had lived nine years in Canada with her family and was enrolled in the EMI course at TGU. During the observation period, Sara's Instagram posts were primarily image-driven in that she mainly shared her posts with emojis without texts (see Table 5.2). One of times

she included an English phrase was when she shared the following post, in which she attached two pictures taken at the art museum. The brochure she was given at the art museum, captured in the second photograph, says the art piece was titled “This is also everything of this world”.

According to Sara’s own account, she playfully extracted the word “everything” from the title of the art piece to make her language brief, thinking that “everything” would already convey enough message written in Japanese in the brochure (Interview with Sara, March 30, 2022). This shows her translingual repertoire to adopt at her disposal, even the texts in the brochure.

Image 5.11 “Fashionable” English – Sara’s post



Extract 5.11 Sara's caption extracted
everything

The following excerpt illustrates that Sara tends to use English for posts that capture art museums due to the sophisticated impression of the language.

Excerpt 5.8

S : 美術館のやつとかは英語の方が多いかもしれない。[...] 言い方難しいですけど、英語の方が若干おしゃれっぽい感じになるのかなって思ったりします。ちょっと綺麗め？かなっていう感じ。[...] 多分自分が第一言語じゃない方が綺麗に聞こえるから、日常的に使わないから、特別感というか、があるのかなと思いました。

S : *I think that I write in English for pictures taken at art museums [...] It's difficult to explain but I think English makes my posts a little more fashionable. Like a bit sophisticated? I think that because [English] is not my first language, it sounds more sophisticated, because I don't use it daily, there is a sense of specialty.*

(Interview with Sara, March 30, 2022)

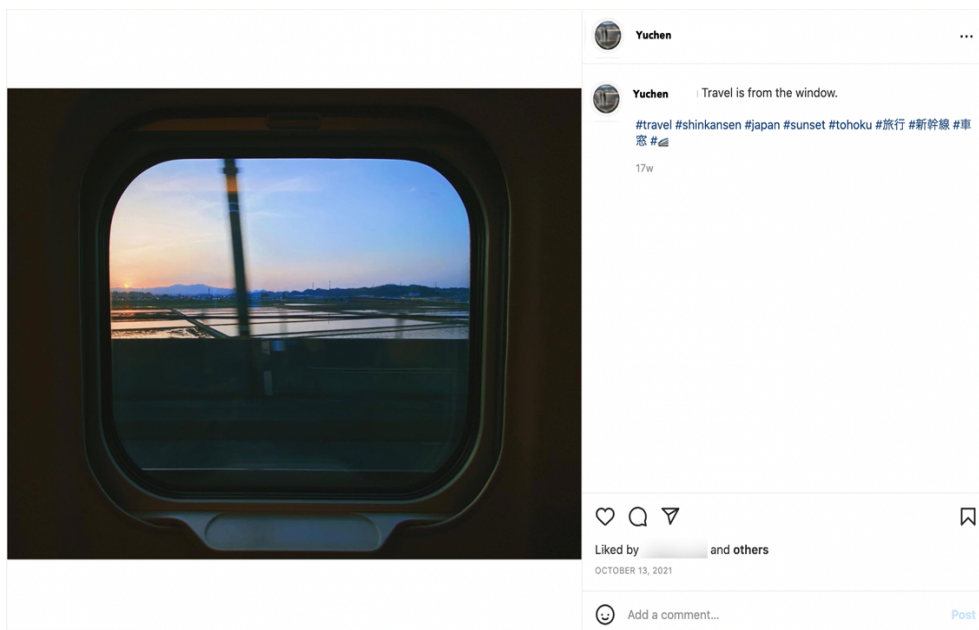
In Sara's sense, English retains an artistic value that is suitable for Instagram posts that captures art museums. In the excerpt, She explains that English sounds more “fashionable” [おしゃれ] and “sophisticated” [綺麗め]. Sara attributes such an impression of English to the language not being her first language with the foreignness that engenders a sense of unusualness and specialty. Blommaert (2015) points out that emblematic English use does not presuppose English proficiency of sign producers and consumers; in fact, their proficiency is often elementary, and they are unsure of what English phrases linguistically mean. This was, however, not the case of Sara, who had decent English-speaking

experiences spending 9 years in an ENL country and using English every day at TGU. The fact that she still perceived English as unmundane and foreign is influenced by the deeply-ingrained social value of English, as further explained by Yuchen, to whom we will turn next.

All the Instagram posts Yuchen updated during the observation demonstrated a mix of languages (see Table 5.2). Recall that Yuchen was a student in the EMI program at TGU. Despite the infrequent exposure to ELF communication outside SNS (see 5.3.2.2), Yuchen opted to use English in the ELF context on Instagram to expand the potential viewers of his photographs. Yuchen used English to not simply expand his potential audiences but also to add a certain flair and aesthetic values to his posts.

In the following example (Image 5.12), he posted about his trip to the Tohoku area. It shows his photograph that captures a window frame of a moving Japanese Shinkansen with a scenery of rice fields with a sunset glow.

Image 5.12 “Luxurious” English – Yuchen’s post



Extract 5.12 Yuchen’s caption extracted with English translation

Language guide: English (regular font), *Japanese* (italics)

Original	Travel is from the window. #travel #shinkansen #japan #sunset #tohoku #旅行 #新幹線 #車窓 #🌅
----------	--

Translation	Travel is from the window. #travel #shinkansen #japan #sunset #tohoku #travel #shinkansen #trainwindow #🌅
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Next to the picture, the text reads, *Travel is from the window*, which can be considered a Yuchen’s creation of generic sentence (Toolan, 1998/2013). Generic sentences typically appear in the simple present tense and make “claim[s] about what is typically true” (p. 60). Yuchen’s proverbial sentence implies that he believes it is widely agreed that enjoying scenery through train windows is a significant aspect of travel. Interestingly, Yuchen’s linguistic expression successfully gains its meaning in the discourse when

paired with the photograph of a window and the view. Once with the photograph, the text carries an implicature that *Travel is from the window* signifies that he enjoyed his *travel* while looking at the scenery *from* his perspective as someone seated by the *window*. Yuchen's poetically creative translingual practices emphasize the interrelation between photographs and languages (Cameron & Panovic, 2014). He also mentioned that he added hashtags to expand the potential viewership of his posts by attracting users who would have searched for these hashtags.

When asked about his language choice on Instagram, Yuchen stated that he chose English because people have a certain feel for the language.

Excerpt 5.9

Y: やっぱり英語かな、どんな人でも共通語としてみんなセンスがわかると思いますよ。
Y: *I would choose English. Everyone has a certain feel for the language because it's a lingua franca.*
(Interview with Yuchen, February 10, 2022).

What he implies in this excerpt is that English is not merely a shared lingua franca for practical communication but also for sharing his artistic taste with his friends. When asked about his intention behind publishing the post above, Yuchen articulated that his expression was influenced by the social perception of English as a luxurious language.

Excerpt 5.10

A: こういう風に言おうと思ったのは、なんでですか？
 Y: うん、やっぱりここで英語を使うともっと高級感が出ると思いますよ@@
 A: 面白い。
 Y: だから英語でしか書かないんです。
 A: 英語が高級感が出るというのはもうちょっと詳しく聞かせてもらってもいいですか。どういうイメージ？
 Y: やっぱりみんな、英語を使うと何か高級感が出ると思ってる人が多くいるんですよね、ですから、ここで英語を使うとこの写真にもなにかあの、価値？芸術的な価値を加えられるかなと思います。[...] 社会的にはやっぱり英語を使うと何かいつもと違うという感じが出るじゃないですか。たとえば高級な商品名とかに、わざと英語を使うとか、そういう感じがあるじゃないですか。ですから、ここでも英語を使います。もっと芸術感が感じられるやつ。
 A: *Why did you want to say it like this?*
 Y: *Yes, you know, when you use English here, [my post] will be more luxurious.*
 A: *Interesting.*
 Y: *That's why I write it only in English.*
 A: *Could you elaborate more on that English is luxurious? What kind of image do you have?*
 Y: *You know everyone, there are many people who think using English engenders the sense of luxury. That's why, if I use English here, I think I can add, like, value? artistic value to my photograph. [...] Socially speaking, using English gives that feeling which is different from ordinal. For example, English is used for the names of luxury products on purpose, you know that kind of thing. So, I use English here. The one that feels sense of art more.*
 (Interview with Yuchen, February 10, 2022).

In the excerpt, Yuchen explains that his pictures would appear more “luxurious” [高級感] with some “artistic values” [芸術的な価値] when it is titled in English. He suggests that English refines his pictures sophisticatedly, providing aesthetic values. He then discusses the socially constructed image of English as seen in the names of luxury merchandises in Japan. Elsewhere in the world in the mass market, English is often applied to expensive commercial products (Blommaert, 2015). Yuchen ascribes his use of English in the personal sphere of Instagram to English in the society. In the second interview, Yuchen also showed me an image of one of Japanese bullet trains whose body was designed in English (Interview with Yuchen, May 20, 2022). He continued discussing the emblematic

value of English.

Excerpt 5.11

Y: なんかあの、なんかあのモノリンガルのやつと比べて、もし日本語の下に英語がつく、ついで、もしくは英語だけっていうのはやっぱり一つ上のレベルに感じられるかなと思います。

Y: Compared to monolingual ones [online posts], if there is English under Japanese, or if there is only English, I think [the post] will become one level above.

(Interview with Yuchen, May 20, 2022)

As the excerpt above illustrates, Yuchen believes that commercial products in a mixed use of English and Japanese or monolingual English would appear more luxurious than those written in “monolingual” Japanese. Yuchen believes such perception could be applied to his Instagram posts.

The personal remarks shared by the participants, Sara and Yuchen, have embossed the social perception of English as a foreign, and thus, cool object (see Blommaert, 2015). They adopted the social image of aesthetic English into their personal Instagram posts, which shows that the young adults’ everyday use of English online is constructed through their linguistic experiences in Japanese society. As Kubota (2016) suggests, the social value of “cool” English in Japan draws attention to the ideologies associated with English and its relation to social, economic, and political power in the globalized world. Such ideological aspects of English cannot be overlooked, which will be further discussed in

the next chapter. Nonetheless, it is also true that the young adults did take advantage of the subtextual meaning of English to use it as a lingua franca to share their poetic and artistic tastes.

5.4.1.2. Poetic self in ELF communication

The participants enjoyed the foreignness of English to express their inner thoughts of poetic selves that might be too articulate in Japanese. Càrdenas-Claros et al. (2009) discusses the “tendency of bilingual speakers to use the language they identify the most with to express personal thoughts” (p. 73) and thus the online communication also saw its users who often “employ their L1 rather than English for content related to personal thoughts and feelings” (Vetterol, 2009, p. 215). Interestingly, such a perspective did not reflect the voices of the present Japanese participants. They enjoyed sharing personal thoughts in English in the ELF contexts of SNS, as they perceived English as being somehow distanced from them and many of their Japanese friends. In the following post, Rin discussed using English for poetic purposes to output her personal feeling.

Excerpt 5.12

R: よく私ポエマーって馬鹿にされるんですけど@@ [...]すごい自分の感情をばって書き出すのが好きなんだけど、それだとなんか日本語にするとちょっと、なんだろ、飾って見えるな、って思ったりとかする時は、英語の方がただなんか、もうストレートに言いたいことがかける。

R: *I often get laughed at for being like a poet @@[...] I like to write and express my emotions*

boldly. But sometimes when I feel like it would look a little too embellished in Japanese, I think that English allows me to express what I want to say straightforwardly.

(Interview with Rin, July 4, 2022)

Rin's followership varies in its language (see 5.3.3.1), and she often uses English as a lingua franca on Instagram. Rin's remark above shows that by using English, she was able to express her personal thoughts more effectively than in Japanese. Rosenhan and Galloway (2019) consider poetry writing in ELF contexts as a mode to embrace the transformative self that may be different from the self in other languages. Rin's commentary illustrates that English is a vehicle to place her poetic self into text.

Further, Kaori, who also writes in English on Instagram, suggests that she uses English to write poetic sentences, as seen below.

Excerpt 5.13

A: なんて英語で書こうと思うときと日本語でってあるのかしら。

K: なんか日本語だと恥ずかしい、ちょっとポエティックな文章とかは英語で書くかもしれない、言われると。[...]キザなかつつけてる文言は英語で書いてるかも [...]

A: その英語だとそのキザじゃない理由みたいなのは、なんでですか。 [...]

K: 日本語だとなんかね、読まれてわかる人が多いから、英語わかる人、多分半分ぐらいだから。

A: *Is there any reason behind writing in English or Japanese?*

K: *I think I write slightly poetic sentences, which would sound a bit embarrassing in Japanese, in English. [...] For example, phrases that sound cheesy, so I write in English. [...]*

A: *Why would it not sound cheesy in English? [...]*

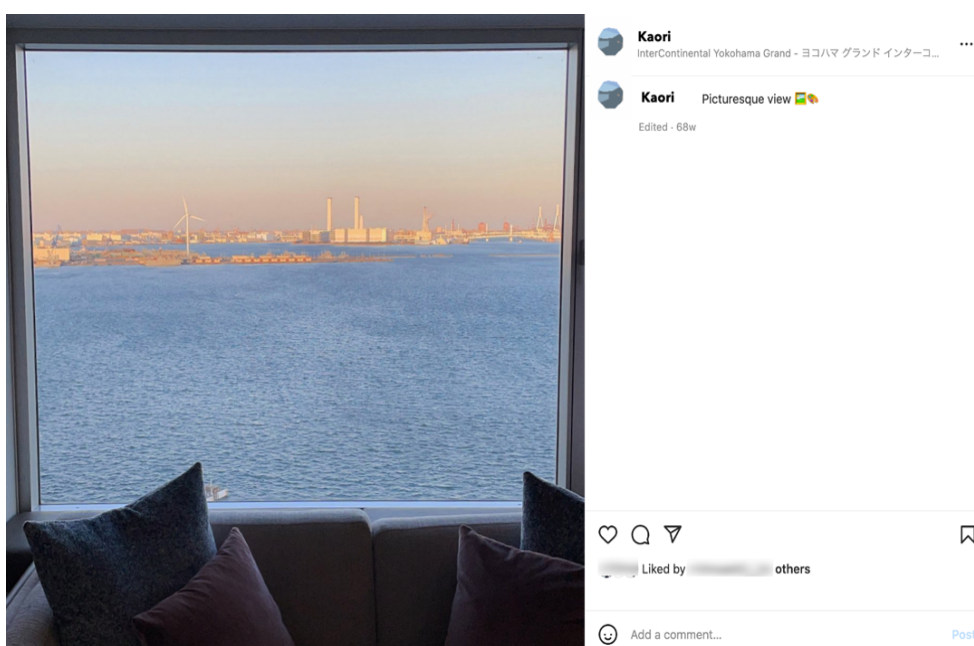
K: *I think it's because many [of my followers] know Japanese, and people can understand Japanese, so if I wrote in Japanese, a lot of people will read it, but only about half of them will understand English.*

(Interview with Kaori, June 9, 2022)

In the excerpt, Kaori implies that she chooses English to show her poetic self because it

is a lingua franca with, potentially, half of her audience. Her remark was exemplified in her online language practices when she used English primarily to express her voice with visually driven contents, as seen in the post below.

Image 5.13 Cheesy in Japanese but poetic in English – Kaori’s post



Extract 5.13 Kaori’s caption extracted

Picturesque view 🌄🌅

As she said in the excerpt, writing in Japanese is too articulate for Kaori to express herself with in front of her followers, which makes her feel embarrassed. She stated that she would have felt shy to explain the beauty of this picture in the same way in Japanese (Interview with Kaori, June 9, 2022), but English allowed her to spark her inner poetic

self.

Moreover, for Yuma, it was natural to constantly update her Instagram page to express her thoughts and ideas in front of over a thousand followers. More than half of her friends on Instagram, whom she met during her six-month study abroad as an actress in New York, speak English as a first language. For Yuma, English is more poetic and emotional compared to Japanese, as the following excerpt shows.

Excerpt 5.14

Y: 英語の方がなんか、メンタルの、ちょっとポエムっぽい。自分の心とかを表現するときとか、みんなに届いてほしい思いみたいなものを、いい具合に、鬱陶しくなく表現できるのが英語。私の中で。

A: なんで日本語だと。

Y: =なんか日本語だと説教くさくなる、とか、あとちょっと恥ずかしいっていうのが多いかも。わかってる人がいるから。

Y: English is for mental states. It's poetic for me. Especially when I want to express my feelings, or thoughts that I want to share with everyone without being too annoying.

A: What if it's in Japanese.

Y: = In Japanese, it often sounds preachy or a little embarrassing, maybe because there are people who understand it [Japanese].

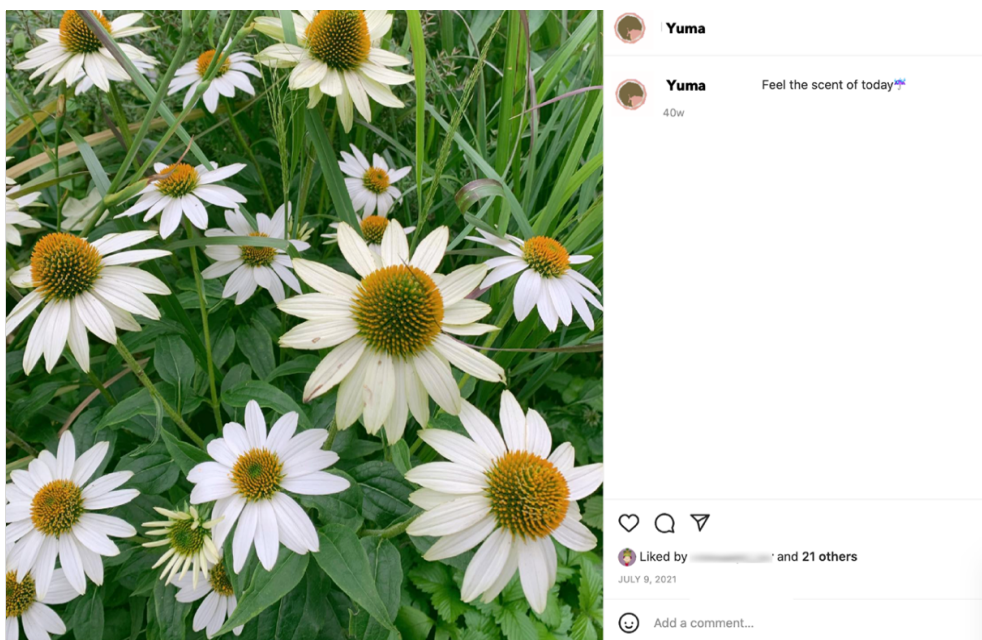
(Interview with Yuma, October 8, 2021)

In the above excerpt, Yuma states that English is for her mental representation to express her inner thoughts in the online ELF context. Compared to Japanese, it is easier for her to be self-expressive in English without being too self-righteous. In this regard, she utilizes the distanced relationship with English to express “thoughts that she wants to share with everyone” [みんなに届いてほしい思い] without being overly pedantic. In this light, the

perceived linguistic distance of English as a foreign language (EFL), in turn, eases her process of expressing her thoughts in the ELF context.

For instance, Yuma shared the following post in early July, the middle of the rainy season in Tokyo. Similar to the other participants, Yuma sometimes began by choosing a picture she wished to post and crafted accompanying text after. On other occasions, like the following post, she first drafted her desired message and chose a picture that well represented the expression.

Image 5.14 Poetic self and English – Yuma’s post



Extract 5.14 Yuma’s caption extracted

Feel the scent of today 🌸

The phrase exhibits neither grammatical nor semantic incorrectness, yet its pairing of two concepts that are not conventionally paired (*scent* and *today*) facilitates the poetic communication (Simpson, 2004; see also Pitzl, 2016). Although there are no direct references to rain in either the photograph or the text, the expression denotes its relation to the rainy season when complemented by the emoji (☔) that serves referential function (Schlobinski & Watanabe, 2003, as cited in Siever, 2020) as well as the contextual scheme of the day it was posted (i.e., July 9, 2021, as indicated in the bottom of the post). In the interview, Yuma indicated that the rainy season in Japan has a unique smell (Interview with Yuma, October 8, 2021). Yuma's expression is based on the "scheme" (Bartlett, 1932), or the shared experience related to local discourse, that her online friends could associate themselves with the smell of the rainy day. This shows the spatiality of translingual repertoire (Canagarajah, 2018a, 2018b), as she exploited possible resources including the environment outside Instagram (rainy season) and the sense (its smell). In the excerpt below, Yuma discussed the post-textual interpretation of her poetic language practices.

Excerpt 5.15

Y:「今日の香りを嗅ごう」だと、本当に「今日のアロマ何にしたんですか」みたいなイメージがあるけど[⋯]日本語の今日だと、日にちに、日にちにすごい限定されてる気が、なんか today だともっとなんか曖昧な、感じがするし。なんか例えば feel the scent of you today, feel the scent of nature today, とかなんでも入る気がする、そこに。勝手に。

Y: When I hear “smell today’s scent” in Japanese, it gives me, literally, the impression of asking “what aroma did you use today?” With the Japanese word for “today” it feels like it’s really limited to a specific date. With “today” in English, it feels more ambiguous. I feel like anything can fit in there, like “feel the scent of you today” or “feel the scent of nature today,” just anything. It’s up to interpretation.

(Interview with Yuma, October 8, 2021)

In the excerpt above, Yuma discusses the different connotations of the word “today” in English and Japanese. She feels that “today” in English can be used in an abstract sense, whereas “today” in Japanese is restricted to a specific date in calendars. The creative effect based on polysemy, or ambiguous words that can be applied in different contexts to express different meanings, is commonly employed in poetic discourse (Lecolle, 2016). Yuma navigated herself between her available resources of “today” in English and Japanese, and played with the lexical ambiguity of the English usage “today” to leave creative interpretation.

As Japan is considered a conventional Kachruvian expanding circle country (Kachru, 1992), English has often been considered “foreign” in the domestic society (see Chapter 2). As discussed in the previous section on the aestheticism of English (see Section 5.4.1.1), the social perception of the foreignness of English penetrates the young adults’ Instagram practices. Nonetheless, this section has explored that the Japanese young adults utilized the socially defined EFL identity to transform themselves into poetic ELF users. They enjoy the foreignness of English as a channel to express their mind freely

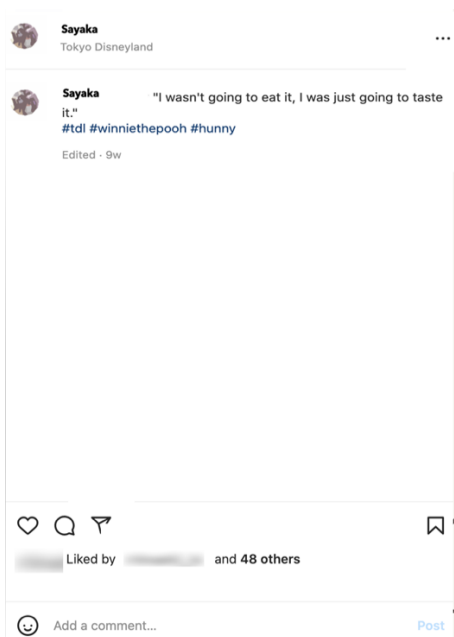
in the online ELF context while being different from the self that uses Japanese.

5.4.1.3. Heavy borrowing and popular culture

The participants not only crafted the caption on their own but also demonstrated “heavy borrowing”, which drew from linguistic resources outside social media, often from popular culture such as cartoon and hip-hop (Dovchin, 2020; Dovchin et al., 2018; see also Pennycook, 2007; Sultana, 2014). Instagram posts shared by Sayaka and Nana illustrated such examples of “cultural jamming” (Kenway & Bullen, 2008) that incorporate resources from popular culture.

In the post below, Sayaka, a student of the EMI program at TGU, shared a picture of herself up-close holding a stuffed Winnie the Pooh bear. The geographical tag, which can be seen underneath her username, shows that she was in Tokyo Disneyland.

Image 5.15 Borrowing from a cartoon – Sayaka’s post



Extract 5.15 Sayaka's caption extracted

"I wasn't going to eat it, I was going to taste it."
#tdl #winnieethepooh #hunny

The post above contains a quoted phrase, and underneath it, there are three hashtags which serve as keywords related to the quote. The first and the second hashtags describe the location and the object of the picture, whereas the last one (*#hunny* [honey]), which intentionally maintains the misspelling from the original cartoon, refers to the pronoun (i.e., *it*) in the quote. The quote she employs is one of the well-known lines from the hungry character, which is also exhibited on the wall of the waiting area for the cartoon ride in the theme park. Using the quote from an English movie adds a humorous effect to her post.

Importantly, Sayaka's phrase should be discussed along with her pre-textual history and post-textual interpretation. She went to a preschool affiliated with an international school in Tokyo and studied in Australia for a year during high school and one year in the U.S. Having the perceived identity as an English user with overseas experiences, she stated in the interview that she refrained from overusing English on Instagram since the act of using English may be potentially perceived as a showoff to her Japanese friends (see Chapter 6 Section 6.2.1.3 and Chapter 7 for further discussion on this matter). In this way, borrowing a line from the cartoon can be interpreted as her negotiation of English use. By using a pre-existing phrase, she avoided drawing attention to her language skills, as the expression was not crafted by herself but instead was quoted from the cartoon.

Similar practice was observed in Nana's Instagram post. In Nana's case, she quoted lyrics from an American hip-hop song. She shared the following post with a picture of

Image 5.16 Borrowing from a hip-hop song – Nana's post

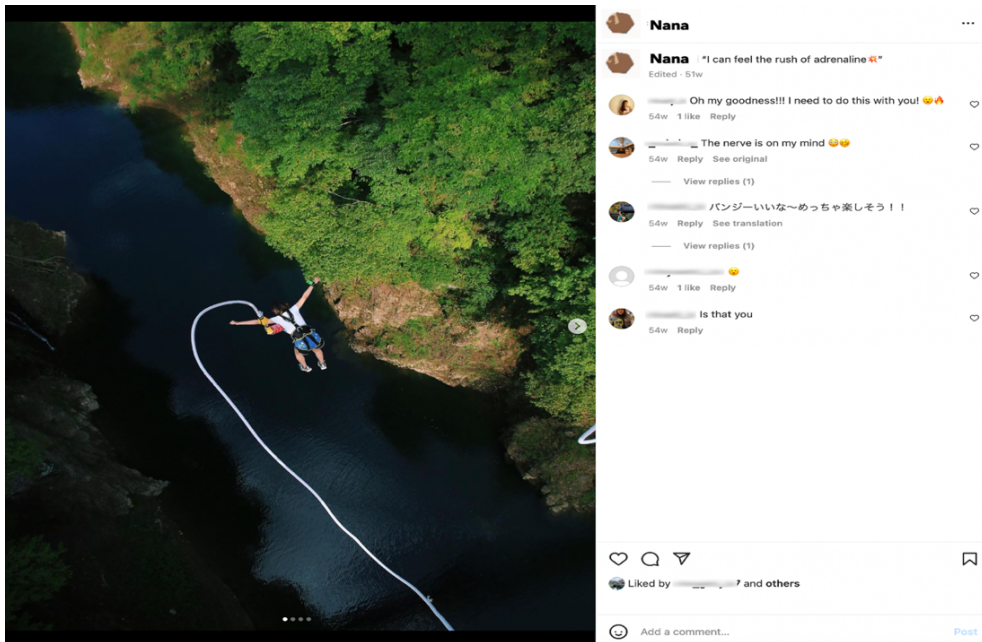


Image 5.16 Nana’s caption extracted

“I can feel the rush of adrenaline 🌟”

herself experiencing her first attempt of the bungee jump. With a picture of herself jumping off to the gorge, Nana’s post above includes the line “I can feel the rush of adrenaline 🌟”. According to her, the line was quoted from her favorite song.

Excerpt 5.16

N: これは、もともと日本語のキャプションで投稿したんですけど、なんか自分がよく聞く曲の歌詞があって、なんかこれじゃんって思って。英語の曲から歌詞を引用したっていうのがこの投稿のキャプションです。

N: *This was originally posted with in Japanese, but I found some lyrics from a song I often listen to, and I thought this is it. So, I used a quote from an English song for the caption of this post.*

(Interview with Nana, August 26, 2022)

Nana initially planned to type in Japanese but opted to extract the lyrics from a popular

love song by an American group because the phrase captured her emotion in this picture. In the original lyrics, “Oh, baby, I can feel the rush of adrenaline. I’m not scared to jump if you want to. Let’s just fall in love for the hell of it [...]”²⁴, the physical “jumping” metaphorically refers to falling in love. Nana recontextualized the word “jumping” in a literal sense to describe her bungee jumping.

Nana’s Instagram post above should also be mentioned with her post-textual understanding. During the conversation with Nana, she was often concerned about potential English mistakes on her Instagram post (see Chapter 6 Section 6.2.3. for further discussion on her attitudes toward English). In this light, borrowing an established line from a song can be considered having a minimum risk of making mistakes.

Recontextualization of borrowed phrases in Sayaka and Nana’s posts illustrated in their “consumption of multiple mixed popular culture resources [that] may result in new forms of mixed and creative expressions” (Dovchin et al., 2018, p. 165). Moreover, the use of quotation marks (“ ”) by Sayaka and Nana can be considered to indicate that they were engaged in mimicking and voicing “others” (i.e., the cartoon character or the American hip-hop group) (Dovchin et al., 2017). This way, although their phrases are considered to be their creative adaptation of their repertoire, the original expressions

²⁴ The song “Fallin’ (Adrenaline)” by the American group “Why Don’t We”

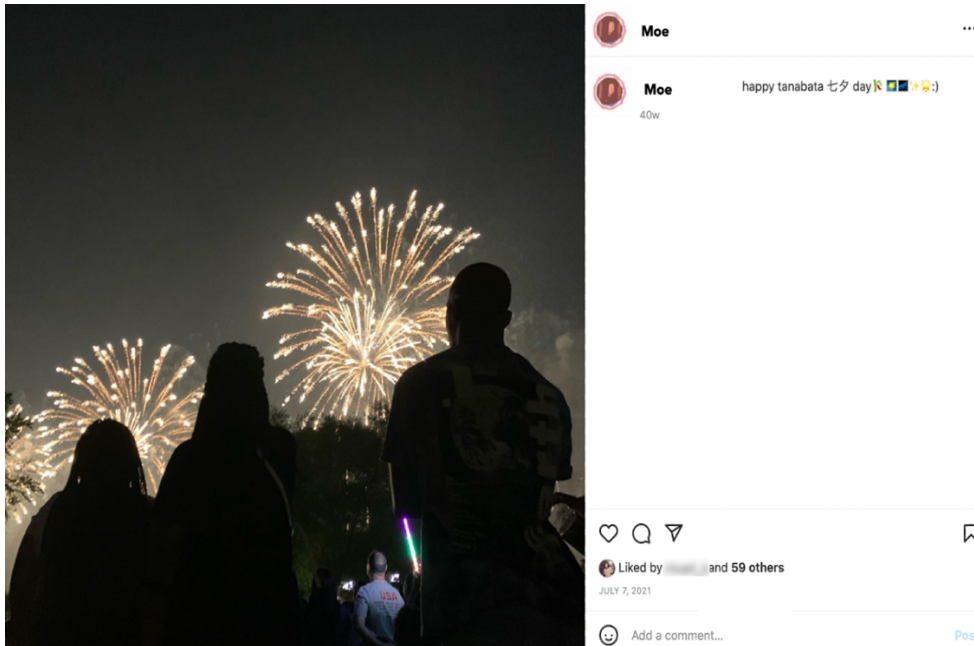
appear to belong to someone else. In so doing, the two potentially dodged attention to their own English competence regarding showoff or grammatical mistakes.

5.4.1.4. Kanji – playing with symbolic characters

The participants' poetic English was often blended with Kanji, Chinese characters used in Japan. Through the use of hybrid linguistic practices, they played with symbolic and visual properties of Kanji characters, demonstrating the linguistic and cultural hybridity of English and Kanji.

For instance, Moe in July shared the following post, which captured the photograph of fireworks she watched on the night of Independence Day in the U.S. As a Japanese person who has been living in the U.S. for 10 years, she often updated her posts that embraced her Japanese cultural identity. For instance, she often made those updates on her Instagram profile to share some current topics, popular music, manga, and cultural celebration in Japan, one of which was the following.

Image 5.17 Kanji for Japaneseness - Moe's post



Extract 5.17 Moe’s caption extracted with English literation

Language guide: English (regular font) and *Kanji* (italics)

Original happy tanabata 七夕 day 🎋🌠🌌✨🌟:)

Translation happy tanabata *tanabata* day 🎋🌠🌌✨🌟:)

Next to the photograph, the caption illustrates Moe’s pretextual behavior of keeping her texts in lower cases to make her post look “kawaii” or cute (Interview with Moe October 6, 2021). The caption is an integration of English, Kanji, Emoji, and Emoticons. The Romanized proper noun *tanabata* is followed by the original Kanji (七夕), which is followed by four emojis including a bamboo tree with a paper strip (🎋), shooting star (🌠) and the Milky Way (🌌), all of which are automatically recommended on a smartphone’s keyboard pat when the Kanji characters (七夕) are typed. The additional emojis of stars (✨)(🌟) describes the traditional starry festival. Moe’s practice shows that

her translingual repertoire consists of not only existing vocabularies but also her ad hoc resources, which were recommended by the technological function of the smartphone. In the interview, Moe discussed her reason for inserting Kanji in the caption:

Excerpt 5.17

M: 固有名詞的なやつはなんか例えば英語でローマ字で tanabata って書いてあっても、なんかの日なんだっていうのは察するだろうっていう。英語のオーディエンス全く意味わかんなくってもなんかの固有名詞なんだろうなっていうのはわかるんだろうなっていうのは思って載せてる。

[...]

A: tanabata っていうのは音で分かるよね、日本人は。漢字なくても。

M: うん、そうだよ。日本ぽさを入れつつ。

M: *For proper nouns, even written in English with romaji like “tanabata”, people would understand that it’s some kind of day. Even if the English audience doesn’t understand at all, they would still know that it’s some kind of proper noun. So I’m posting it with that in mind.*

[...]

A: *Japanese people can understand “tanabata” just from the sound, even without the kanji.*

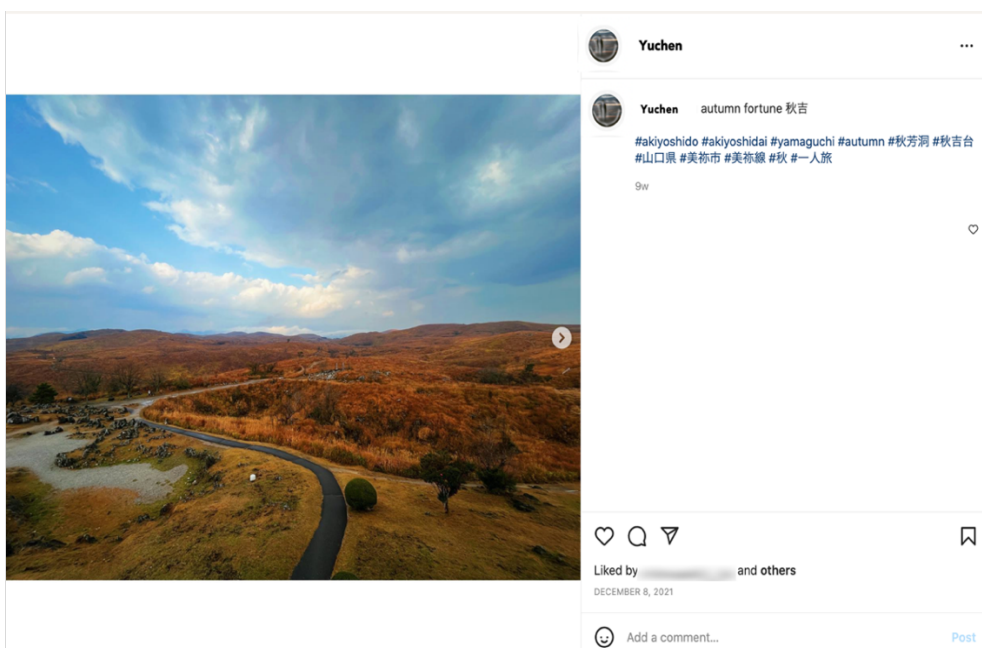
M: *Yeah, that’s true. Also adding a touch of Japaneseness.*

As the excerpt above shows, Moe is aware that *tanabata* might not be comprehensible to her English-speaking friends even when Romanized. Nonetheless, she assumes that due to its inclusion of the word *day*, her friends would understand that the phrase means a proper noun affiliated with a cultural holiday. Kanji here does not facilitate the meaning transmission of *tanabata*, as Japanese readers would already comprehend its meaning through Romanization. The incorporation of Kanji was to accentuate the Japaneseness of her caption. In this regard, the Kanji characters (七夕) play the emblematic role in emphasizing the cultural significance of the day (see Blommaert, 2015). By using Kanji,

Moe enjoyed navigating her English-speaking friends somewhere foreign. Using Chinese characters on SNS is part of presenting the cultural identity of Chinese user living in overseas (Li & Hua, 2019). In a similar way, the example above shows that having Kanji in her Instagram post was significant for Moe to show her cultural identity as a Japanese resident in the U.S.

The play with Kanji was demonstrated also by Yuchen, the Chinese, Japanese and English speaker. During the observation period, he uploaded his photographs mainly when he went on travel. He shared the following post when he went to the Akiyoshi Cave in Yamaguchi prefecture in the fall.

Image 5.18 Kanji and translingual identity – Yuchen’s post



Extract 5.18 Yuchen's caption extracted with English translation

Language guide: English (regular font) and *Kanji* (italics)

Original	autumn fortune 秋吉 #akiyoshido #akiyoshidai #yamaguchi #autumn #秋芳洞 #秋吉 台 #山口県 #美祿市#美祿線 #秋 #一人旅
Translation	autumn fortune <i>Akiyoshi</i> #akiyoshido #akiyoshidai #yamaguchi #autumn # <i>Akiyoshido</i> # <i>Akiyoshidai</i> # <i>Yamaguchiprefecture</i> # <i>Minacity</i> # <i>Mineline</i> # <i>Aki</i> # <i>travelalone</i>

The picture captures the landscape of the area with the scenery of colored trees he took with his camera. Next to the photograph, the text reads, *autumn fortune* 秋吉 [Akiyoshi].

The hashtags provide his international audiences with information of the photographs, such as where and when it was taken.

In the interview, Yuchen shared his post-textual interpretation of the caption regarding the phrase, *autumn fortune*, which is followed by 秋吉 [Akiyoshi] in Kanji. Yuchen usually used English for aesthetics on SNS (see Section 5.4.1.1) and in this case, he added Kanji for the following reason.

Excerpt 5.18

Y: この投稿はね、英語の部分は前と同じように高級感が出るかなと思ひまして。日本語を後につけるのは、日本語、秋と吉の漢字ですね。中国語のニュアンスでも、センスが感じられますから、やっぱり、しかもこの二つの漢字はめっちゃ美しく感じられます。

A: そうなんですか。

Y: はい。

A: どういう意味なんですか。

Y: 秋は、秋ですね。そして吉は、めっちゃいい意味ですね、あの fortune の意味ですね。ここの写真の季節、秋の季節にめっちゃ合うかなと思ひまして。

Y: *For this post, I thought that the English part would give a luxurious impression, just like before. The Japanese at the end is the kanji for "autumn" and "fortune". Even in Chinese, it has this feel, and moreover, these two kanji feel really beautiful.*

A: Oh, I see.

Y: Yes.

A: What does it mean?

Y: Autumn means autumn. And “kichi” [= Sino-Japanese reading of Yoshi] has a really good meaning, it means “fortune”. I thought it would match the season of the photos here, which is autumn.

For someone like me who was born and raised in Japan and primary view the word 秋吉 as a toponym, it took some time to recognize that these characters held auspicious meanings. However, for Yuchen, the phrase went beyond being a mere toponym. He included the two characters in his post, which are “beautiful” [美しい] in both Chinese and Japanese, as the first character (秋) illustrates the context of the photograph and the latter (吉), in Sino-Japanese, symbolizes “fortune”. Instead of simply typing “Akiyoshi” as a proper noun, he incorporated the English translation of the literal meanings of these two separate Kanji characters, creating *autumn fortune*, for the luxurious appearance of his post. Yuchen manipulated the visual representation and iconicity of Kanji as a source of enjoyment (Li & Hua, 2019; see also Crystal, 2008). This example shows Yuchen’s translingual identity of someone who comprehends the characters (秋吉), not only as Kanji indicating a localized geographical term in Japanese, but also, as a literal representation in Chinese characters signifying beautiful meaning, along with the English translation (autumn fortune).

Instagram has become “a place where languages and scripts can be mixed in new

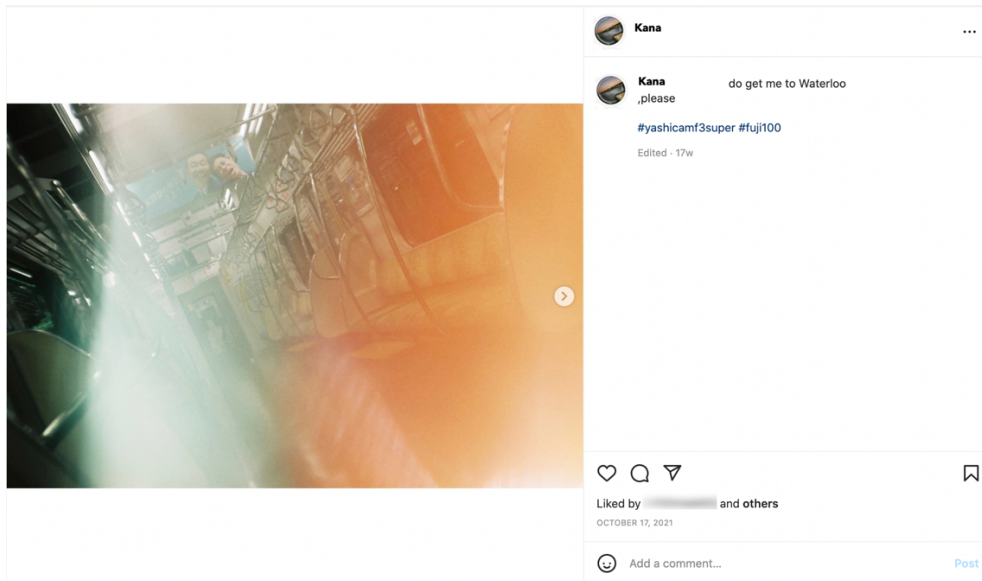
ways, and where this mixing plays an important role in indexing identity” (Sergeant & Tagg, 2011, p. 503). For Moe and Yuchen, the hybridity of English and Kanji “mirror[ed] the mix of global and at the same time local linguistic and cultural identity” (Vetterol, 2014, p. 224). They draw upon diverse linguistic and cultural resources in front of their audiences in the online ELF context.

5.4.2. Poetic creativity and interpretation in ELF communication

So far, this chapter has discussed poetically creative languages. For most of the examples, I, as an addressee of their language, could infer their intention behind their poetic languages, which was also confirmed through the interviews with them. This suggests that their poetic use is, at the same time, communicatively “feasible” (see Cogo & Dewey, 2012; Seidlhofer, 2011; Seidlhofer & Widdowson, 2017). The focus of the present section is English expressions that are difficult to understand in a lingua franca encounter. To discuss creativity of poetic English that may not be after all intelligible in the online ELF communicative context, this section features Kana’s Instagram posts. Kana, a junior year student in the EMI course, spent three years in the U.K. On Instagram, she uploaded pictures with artistic linguistic practices. She shared the following post along with a picture she took inside a Tokyo subway. She was reminded of her childhood

when she used to live nearby Waterloo Station in London:

Image 5.19 Line break and comma: multimodal poetic creativity – Kana’s post



Extract 5.19 Kana’s caption extracted

do get me to Waterloo
,please
#yashicamf3super #fuji100

The picture of Tokyo subway along with the English shows that Kana was emotionally traveling from the present time to the past memories as well as the current location of Tokyo to the city of London. The platform works as a portfolio to show her favorite photographs, which were taken with a film camera as the hashtags show (#yashicamf3super #fuji100).

Excerpt 5.19

K: [...] do をつけると強調されるので、do をつけて、できないのはわかってるっていうか、あんまり希望なんで、希望？、できないことへの願望なんで、最後に please を改行でつけて、なんかちょっとなんていうんですかね、絶望感というか、を出す。出たらなと思ってやりました。

A: 改行の意図はなんなんですか。

K: なんとなく、改行した方が文章が一回途切れるというか。なんか少し、一旦 waterloo まで読んで、ちょっと置いて please に行くとちょっとなんか「お願い」というか、後からなんか、それもなんか絶望感、が、

A: 強調されるかなと。

K: はい。

K: [...] Adding “do” emphasizes that I know I can’t do it [going to Waterloo], so it’s really a hope, more like a desire for something I know I can’t do. So, at the end, I added “please” on a new line to convey a feeling of despair or hopelessness. I did it with the intention of expressing that feeling.

A: What’s the intention behind the line break?

K: I just feel like the text is interrupted when there’s a new line. It’s like you read up to “waterloo”, then take a pause before going to “please”. It’s like saying “please” after a moment of thought, which also adds a sense of despair.

A: So it’s emphasized.

K: Yes.

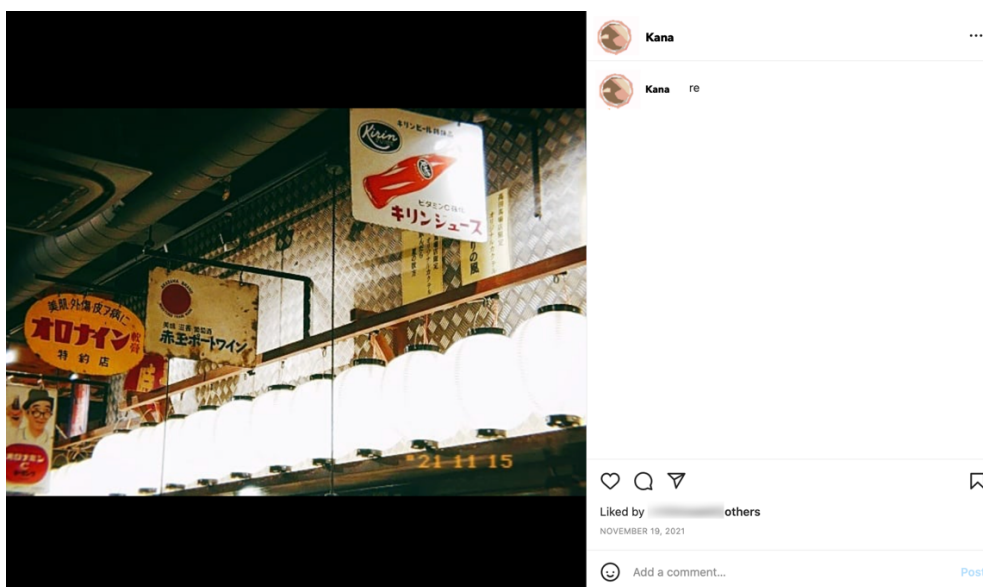
(Interview with Kana, February 9, 2022)

Her remark above shows that she put thoughts into expressing her desire to visit the place that holds personal significance for her. Notably, the line break, which is emphasized by the use of comma, serves to emphasize the sense of despair and intense wish to visit the country. This indicates that she enjoys the expressive potential of the medium, including textual layout and the use of comma (see Jones, 2012; Jones et al., 2021). By paying attention to the details in the written language, she conveyed nuanced meanings that could be lost.

Moreover, another post by Kana, which is given below, was shared when she went to a Japanese old-style drinking place with her friends with her university friends. The

post shows a photograph of the inside of the store in which there are timeworn signboards.

Image 5.20 “re” the translingual letters – Kana’s post



Extract 5.20. Kana’s caption extracted

re

From a reader’s point of view, it may be difficult to comprehend what she intends to say from the two letters, *re*. However, the interview revealed that Kana crafted the English caption with a clear intention:

Excerpt 5.20

K: これがなんかあの、馬場の居酒屋さんなんですけど、なんかそこにすごい久しぶりに行って。なんか1年の時に行ったことがあったんですけど、最近久しぶりに2回目に行って。っていう意味の、もう一回っていうもののre、あとちょっと写真、なんか居酒屋さんの広告がレトロだったので、レトロのレだけ取りました@@

K: *This is from an izakaya [drinking place] near Takadanobaba Station. I went there for the first time in a long time. I went there once during my freshman year, and I went there again after a long time for the second time. So, I used “re” to mean “again” and also, because the picture of*

the advertisement in the izakaya was retro, I took “re” from “retro” @@
(Interview with Kana, February 9, 2022)

Kana drew on the English prefix *re-* to indicate that this was her second visit to the drinking place photographed in this post. Although linguistic plays based on English morphemes are observed in monolingual (Lecolle, 2016) and multilingual²⁵ (Dovchin, 2016) online communication, Kana’s play did not finish with the extraction of the prefix. She was inspired by the antique advertising boards and played on the prefix *re* in English with the Japanese syllable レ <re> from the word レトロ <re to ro>. The term レトロ ‘retro’ is an abbreviation of “retrospective”, which is used commonly to refer to nostalgia or old styles in Japan (Weblio, n.d.). Thus, *re* exhibits her manipulation of interwoven resources, including the photograph and grammatical component of English as well as the localized pronunciation of the English adjective. In the interview, Kana further stated that she was not sure whether her text was pronounced /ri:/, as in the English prefix, or /re/, in the Japanese term (Interview with Kana, May 27, 2022). Her remark suggests that language on Instagram is, for her, to enjoy visual rather than phonetic representation.

Kana’s poetically creative expressions have shown her exquisite artistic sense that she transferred into her text. Fascinating yet baffling point about her English expression

²⁵ Dovchin (2016) discusses the blend of Mongolian term “huumi [throat singing]” and “-ification” in English on SNS.

is that it is so creative and artistic that it is difficult to decode it, potentially creating communicative breakdowns. There would be few people who would understand her rhetorical strategies to express her strong desire to visit the station in London or her nostalgic emotion to be back in the drinking place. But this intriguing facet raises a fundamental question constantly discussed in this section: is English in an online lingua franca encounter purely instrumental, aimed at mutual intelligibility, or does it serve as an artistic medium?

Kana's English expression can be explained from art theory perspective. Modern art theory, as discussed by Sasaki (2022), emphasizes the "aesthetics" of art pieces, shifting the focus of examination from the existence of artistic creativity within the mere art pieces to the interpretive experiences of those who engage with the art. People recognize creativity not only in the art piece itself but also in our experiences. This shift broadened the definition of artistic creativity, embracing not only the realistic portrayal of observable phenomena (e.g., realism) but also the visualization of abstract realities that are difficult to verbalize²⁶. This early 20th century art theory movement was influenced by the interpretivism, which, opposing positivism, is based on the assumption that reality is socially constructed and thus multiple. This interpretive stance in aesthetics resonates

²⁶ As an example, Sasaki (2022) raises "Fountain" (1917) by Duchamp.

with the essence of ELF paradigm, which holds social constructivist perspective to see language being contingent upon individual experiences and knowledge (see Orgeta, 2018).

Kana's linguistic expressions, examined through this lens, emerge as creative acts from two angles. Firstly, her linguistic creation, including *re*, embodies the realization of an imaginal world. She delved into aspects difficult for articulation, visualizing all the physical and grammatical essence in to one, *re*. Secondly, her choice to leave her English expressions open to diverse interpretations aligns with modern artistic phenomena, embracing multiplicity in perception. ELF research, emphasizing the importance of "discourse", aligns with this interpretive perspective, acknowledging the multifaceted social activities underlying linguistic actions (Widdowson, 2004; see also Chapter 2).

In a way, scrutinizing Kana's expressions for mere mutual intelligibility within the context of poetically creative ELF communication, appears to be futile. Focusing on exact transference of her intentions to the audience per se embodies a positivistic stance, implying a singular reality derived from her artistic language actions. Instead, what Kana did was simply to "adapt language to fit their own purposes" (Baker, 2015, p. 161). After the production, her expressions exist open-ended, inviting diverse interpretations from individuals with varying language backgrounds, reflecting the multifaceted nature of online lingua franca communication.

5.5. Pragmatic and poetic creativity and unequal access to English

Before proceeding to the next chapter, the final section of this chapter discusses creativity and unequal access to English, by examining Instagram posts shared by Hanaka and Kohei, who considered themselves elementary English users. In one of their discussions on “unequal Englishes”, Tupas and Rubdy (2015) point out that English has become unequally distributed to individuals across social backgrounds. Similarly, Dovchin et al. (2016) discuss that some might receive more exposure to English than others depending on socioeconomic backgrounds (see also Diniz De Figueiredo & Martinez, 2021). So far, this chapter has paid attention to the young adults’ capability to become pragmatically and poetically creative in manipulating the online ELF communication. It is, however, undeniable that the participants’ investment in using English on Instagram can be interpreted through their sociolinguistic backgrounds. That is, as Salogna (2015) argues, their flexible linguistic practices signal the fact that the participants are privileged to have experiences of accessing English and other resources in the first place. As described in each example, they have had varying degrees of overseas experiences, including studying abroad during high school or/and university and family relocation to foreign countries due to their parents’ jobs. Their socioeconomic

backgrounds provided them with early exposures to English and other languages and cultures and expanded the resources that they could draw on. In light of their pretextual histories, their participation in online ELF communication demonstrated their “advanced linguistic skills and high linguistic confidence in English competence” (Dovchin, 2022, p. 44; see also Dovchin et al., 2016). This suggests that, in contrast, less adaptation of English in the online ELF context may be defined by the writer’s less linguistic fluency and confidence (Dovchin, 2022). The last section of this chapter focuses on the Instagram posts and voices of Hanaka and Kohei, who did not have as much international experience as the other participants.

On Mother’s Day, Hanaka, a 26-year-old actress, updated her post with a picture of a Carnation bouquet, which is commonly gifted to mothers on Mother’s Day in Japan. During her school days, she was not an enthusiastic learner and stayed busy with part-time jobs rather than with schoolwork to pay for her own cellphone bills and a part of her high school and university tuition. She had never been overseas in her life until her university graduation trip to South Korea. Growing up with a single parent, Hanaka had been very close to her mother, and every year on Mother’s Day, Hanaka shares an Instagram post to express her affection to her mother. During the observation period, she occasionally shared posts using hashtagged Korean words, taught by her acting agent,

since her agent encouraged her to do so in order to expand her potential fans outside Japan.

Besides that, the following post was the only multilingual post that she produced by her own choice.

Image 5.21 #happymothersday – Hanaka’s post



Extract 5.21 Hanaka’s caption extracted

Language guide: English (regular font) and *Japanese* (italics)

Original

👤🌹
@momokokato がやってる
@porflowershop というお店の[heart]
スペシャルサンクス！
我が母も 26 年半スペシャルサンクス！
#母の日 #mothersday #happymothersday

Translation

👤🌹
By a shop called @porflowershop owned by @momokokato
[heart]
Special thanks!
Special thanks to my mother for the past 26 years and half!
#mothersday #mothersday #happymothersday

The emojis of a mother and a rose are the representation of Mother's Day and enhance the context of the post shared on a special day. Hanaka then tags and introduces the flower shop and its florist, from which she purchased the bouquet. There is a transliteration of "special thanks!" in Japanese Katakana, [スペシャルサンクス!]. It maintains the local pronunciation of "thanks" [sa-n-ku-su], which contains the replacement of "th" with "s" and the addition of a vowel to the final consonant, as in "su". The Japanese "special thanks" exemplifies the localization of English, which denotes that the English is appropriated in the Japanese linguistic flows (see Pennycook, 2007). The first appearance of the appreciation in Katakana addresses the florist, while the second one is dedicated to her mother, which again illustrates the multi-directional communication of Instagram (see Section 5.3.3.2). The hashtags in Japanese (#母の日) and English (*#mothersday*, *#happymothersday*) add metadiscursive context of this post, which reflects common strategies on SNS (Squires, 2020; see also Section 5.3.2).

In the interview, Hanaka stated that it was an uncommon practice for her to use English on SNS or offline lives, but she added the English hashtags in this post to fit into the special occasion of Mothers' Day:

Excerpt 5.20

H: なんか、特別なスペシャルデーだからね。スペシャルな日だから、なんか、うん、なんかね、ちょっとおしゃれに。

A: [...] なるほどじゃあ、ここに、ハッシュタグは母の日だけなのと、#mothersday、#happymothersday があるのは違う。

H: うん。それはおしゃれさだね。絶対にそれはもうかっこつけだね。

H: *Yeah, because it's special day. It's special day, so, yeah, to make it fashionable.*

A: *I see. So is it different if you have #mothersday and #happymothersday in addition to #Hahanohi [Mothers' Day in Japanese]*

H: *Yeah. It's fashionable. It's completely, to make it look cool.*

(Interview with Hanaka, August 10, 2022)

Similar to the participants' voices previously introduced, Hanaka preferred to use English

for its emblematic role, considering it “fashionable” [おしゃれ] and “cool” [かっこつけ]

(Blommaert, 2010, 2015; see also Section 5.4.1.1). These expressions reflect the social

ideologies of English being the label of sophistication (Dovchin et al., 2016), and it

influenced Hanaka's investment in using English, the unfamiliar language, on SNS.

Further, the following excerpt depicts her discussion on the distanced relationship

between English and her.

Excerpt 5.21

H: [...] ほんとに私はびっくりするぐらい英語はできないから。なんかこれ、私、だって、「マダーズデー」と「ハッピーマダーズデー」でも、わざわざ、これスペル合ってる？

A: =うんうん。

H: うん、わざわざ、私はこのレベルの英単語を、わざわざスペルを調べてるのね@@そのレベルだから、なんか、うん。ちょっとなんか憧れがある。私にとっても、なんか手の届かない言語なので。

H: [...] *You won't believe how bad my English is. Well, in fact, for this one, “Mother's day” and “happy Mother's day”, did I spell them correctly?*

A: *Yeah, yeah.*

H: *Ok, I actually took time to look up how they spelled, even for this level of English words. That's my level, so yeah, well, I have kind of admiration. Because for me, it's a language out of reach.*

(Interview with Hanaka, August 10, 2022)

In the excerpt, Hanaka considers herself an English learner with lack of fluency, who has to search for the correct spelling to type the two hashtags (*#mothersday*) and (*#happymothersday*). Her investment in using the English phrase “Mother’s Day”, which she had heard somewhere, reflects her exposure to English-derived linguistic landscapes. Yet, the phrase in a written form was not at her disposal. She then states in the excerpt that she has “admiration” [憧れ] toward English because it is, for her, something “out of reach” [手の届かない言語]. Hanaka’s perception of English as an unreachable language clearly contrasts with the other participants previously introduced, who enjoyed adapting their English resources at hand.

Another participant, Kohei, a junior-year student, was enrolled in the education department of TGU through a common entrance examination. Since he had never been abroad in his life, Kohei decided to study abroad while in university to make some changes in his inactive undergraduate life due to the pandemic. To earn his bread by himself, he chose to work in the host country by taking a-year leave from the university instead of applying for an exchange program. He opened an Instagram account as a daily journal written in English to keep track of his life before and during his study abroad and mainly used the platform for English practice:

Excerpt 5.22

A: なんか結構全部、インスタ拝見したんですけど、英語で書かれていますよね。[...]
K: あれは、まあ英語の練習ですね@@[...] あの、なんか常用化するみたいな、頭を英語化するみたいなので一応書いてました。
A: 初めての留学ですか？
K: そうです。海外行くのも初めてです。
A: *I saw your Instagram, and you mostly wrote in English.*
K: *Well, it's for English practice@@ [...] Like, I wrote in English to get myself habituated, and to Englishize my brain.*
A: *Is it the first time to study abroad?*
K: *Yes. It's actually my first time to go abroad.*

(Interview with Kohei, May 20, 2022)

He explained that by writing only in English on Instagram, he aimed to, as he put it, “Englishize his brain” [頭を英語化する]. His attitude illustrates the subscription to single-code ideology that insists on the use of English-only, often implemented in the ELT contexts in Japan (Suzuki, 2020) and outside (Faltis, 2019). His articulation of Englishization contrasts with other participants who have demonstrated interplay of diverse linguistic resources. He made an update almost on a daily basis to describe what happened that day, just as in the following post.

Image 5.22 “Englishizing” my brain – Kohei’s post



Extract 5.21 Kohei's caption extracted

It was too cool to go out for me. I haven't been able to study English much. This is because in this week, I have a whole lot of assessment. I am very sleepy. Bye.

To practice English for study abroad, Kohei was reviewing his vocabulary and grammar book, which he used for the university entrance examination. In the post above, as he stated in the interview, he decided to practice the infinitive, which he found in a textbook and drilled the grammar in use (*to cool to go out, to study*). During the interview, Kohei repeatedly mentioned that Instagram was a space where he practiced native speakers' English usages. Since he repeatedly raised the word, "native speaker", I made a follow-up:

Excerpt 5.23

A: さっきから、あの、ね。ネイティブっておっしゃってくださっていますが、やっぱこ
うちょっとネイティブっぽい言葉づかいがしたいとかありますか。

K: 個人的にはあります。

A: あるんですね。

K: [...] もちろん相手に理解する、されるのが大事なんですけど、かっこいいじゃないで
すか。

A: ネイティブみたいにできたらね。

K: はい。っていうのはあります。

A: *You have been, you know, talking about native [English speakers]. Do you want to use native-
like English?*

K: *For me, yes.*

A: *You do.*

K: [...] *Of course, it's more important to be understood by others. But you know, it's cool.*

A: *If you can talk like native.*

K: *Yes. That's what I think.*

(Interview with Kohei, May 20, 2022)

In the excerpt, he states that he pursues native speakers' English because it sounds “cool”

[かっこいい] although he shares his understanding of the importance of communicative efficiency and mutual understanding. In a similar but different way from Hanaka's statement of coolness of English, Kohei's remark shows not only the emblematic role of English but also the native speakerism of English.

Having conducted multiple interviews with other participants by the time of his interview, I had received an impression and built an assumption that the participants often enjoyed using English in their own unique ways. Being curious of his strong adherence to native-oriented English usage, I went on exploring any possibility about his intention to use English in his own special way, only to find his answer was rather negative:

Excerpt 5.24

A: [...] 逆に自分らしさをキープしようかな、みたいな自分らしい英語を使うようにして
ますとかそっちとかあったりしますか。

K: そんな贅沢はないです@@そんな余裕はないです@@

A: @@@

K: とにかく頭に浮かんだこととネイティブが言ったことで自分がそのまま使えるならば
みたいな。

A: *How about, do you try to keep your own language style, or like, do you try to use English that is
your own?*

K: *I don't have that privilege @@ I don't have that luxury @@*

A: @@@

K: *Anything that comes to my mind and a native speaker says it, then I can use it as it is.*

(Interview with Kohei, May 20, 2022)

His answer indicates that speaking like a native speaker is his maximum possible goal, and he believes that he is far from manipulating his linguistic resources. His expression illustrates the power of native speaker ideology shaping his investment in learning/using English on Instagram. In contrast to the other participants' creative use, Kohei articulates that he has no “privilege” [贅沢] or “privilege” [余裕] to enjoy his English resource.

Throughout this chapter, we have seen examples of the participants' exploration of their translingual repertoire in ELF communication for both pragmatically and poetically creative purposes. However, such creative practices may indicate a privilege of the young adult users, who define themselves as proficient enough to do so (see Dovchin et al., 2016; Salogna, 2015; Sultana, 2014). At least, Hanaka and Kohei think in such a way. The two did show their capabilities to adapt the English resources, deploying the spelling and grammar from a dictionary or textbook and the idiom from a native speaker. Yet,

compared to others, they were not those free agents who could fully “adapt” the resources but to some extent they merely “adopted” the fixed linguistic forms in a prescriptive manner (Widdowson, 1975; see also Seidlhofer, 2011). Regardless of their remarks, the two participants were still considered to have pragmatic creativity to connect and talk to their online friends. In contrast to other participants, with longer overseas experiences, who were engaged in ELF communication, for Hanaka and Kohei, English was an unreachable language (as Hanaka said), which required luxury to exploit (as Kohei suggested). It was not something that they can play with ad hoc. The two participants’ stories have shown that creativity in English is around every one of us in everyday discourse, “but not accessible to all in every form and at any level of mastery” (Blommaert, 2015, p. 18).

All 16 participants’ Instagram practices have highlighted the fluidity of online ELF communication, which is determined by the impromptu contexts such as the presence of the potential audiences, the relationships with available linguistic and semiotic resources, and even by broader societal contexts, including differing access to linguistic resources.

5.6. Summary

The present chapter has explored Japanese young adults’ everyday communication

and self-expression within the online space. It mainly centered its analysis on on-screen data with the participants' own interpretations of their language practices. The participants' creative practices at any linguistic level – code choices, the incorporation of linguistic features specific to digital discourse, the exploitation of pragmatically and poetically creative expressions – illustrated how they designed their audiences and communicative styles within the context of ELF communication on Instagram.

The participants harnessed pragmatic creativity to participate in everyday social interactions by adaptively exploiting translingual repertoires for wider networking (see Widdowson, 2021). In the online ELF communicative context, English was used to maintain friendships formed in both online and offline ELF communication. The young adults selected their audiences strategically, creating one-on-one and multi-directional communications with their intended addresses, active friends, wider friends, and the internet as a whole (Tagg & Seargeant, 2014). Through this process, they exploited their heritage language or the language of their prospective audiences (see also Barton & Lee, 2013). Additionally, they employed photographs, emojis, hashtags, and username tagging to identify their intended readers. In this manner, the participants' interactions showcased the dynamism of SNS communication within an ELF context.

This chapter has also addressed the topic of poetic creativity, which has received

relatively limited attention in online ELF research. The participants demonstrated poetic creativity in their self-expression within their everyday private ELF context. They were influenced by the social perception of aesthetic EFL; however, the foreignness of English lead them to invest in using English as a lingua franca, as they believed it would be too transparent in Japanese. Poetic use of English was realized through originally created expressions, borrowing elements from popular cartoons and music, and hybridity with Kanji. ELF communication involves the dynamic translingual process, encompassing all available meaning-making resources and environments (Canagarajah, 2018a, 2018b). In this manner, creativity on SNS, whether pragmatic or poetic, is shaped by the creators' linguistic backgrounds, their sociolinguistic group, and the intended audience, highlighting its socially constructed nature (see Jones, 2012; 2016).

This chapter has unveiled that Instagram serves as a space for young individuals to connect with their transnational friends and to strive in global digital discourse. For them, SNS represents a shining space of ELF communication to showcase their creativity to their worldwide friends who may be physically remote but are virtually proximate. However, there are also “peripheral friends (the overhearers)”, who could potentially influence their language practices (Tagg & Seargeant, 2020, p. 346). To these, I will now turn.

Chapter 6

Self-presentation as English users:

Complexity and struggles beyond the online screen

6.1. Introduction

While the previous chapter has focused on ELF and translanguaging on Instagram posts, or what we see *on the screen*, the attention of this chapter is directed to the Instagram users themselves, who can be observed *beyond the screen*. This chapter aims to bring an emic perspective to discuss ELF communication on SNS. By focusing on the extensive and in-depth conversations with the six focal participants, this chapter delves into their self-presentation as English users/learners in the presence of their online friends. As discussed in Chapter 3, because most of times people prefer being perceived favorably by others, they present themselves by conforming to others' beliefs and social values and behaves accordingly (Baumeister, 1982). In this respect, shedding light on the participants' self-presentation may lead us to explore underlying values and beliefs about English among the youth.

This chapter investigates their voices and to what extent they reflect the prevailing

social perceptions and ideologies associated with English. The young adults' investment in using English on SNS is shaped by their language experiences, including English education as well as study abroad, and relationships between friends and families in Japan. It reveals how ideologies are internalized in the participants and how peer dynamics online influence their language practices. Commonly, the participants' language actions toward English were provoked by the inherent nature of SNS communication, particularly, the perceived permanency of written language (see Chapter 2 and Chapter 3), the culture of online surveillance (see Chapter 3), and the trait of Instagram as a space for sharing idealized versions of selves (see Chapter 3)

The first section of this chapter introduces the voices of three participants, Karin, Erika, and Nana, who were enrolled in the education department at TGU whose students are mostly Japanese origin, having less opportunities to participate in daily ELF communication. They tended to exhibit parts of their identities as EFL learners (Section 6.2). The latter section explores the voices of the other three participants, Seina, Rin, and Kana (Section 6.3), who were exposed to ELF communication on a daily basis with friends or co-workers. These three seemed to acknowledge that they have had the privilege to retain the global-dominant language. This chapter reports on the narratives of the six young individuals, which were built from several interview sessions, by

occasionally introducing remarks made by other participants as a support. The six focal participants all had experiences outside Japan to a varying degree, as returnees or short-term or long-term exchange students whose pre-textual histories are introduced in each section. The sections introduce excerpts from the interviews with my English translation.

6.2. Between ELF users and EFL learners

The present section discusses the voices of three participants Karin, Erika, and Nana. Here and there, these participants' remarks indicated their voices as EFL learners. The section starts with a discussion of Karin, whose online language experiences often shared similarities with those of other participants. Karin was conscious of her online friends' evaluation of her English and the possibility of being perceived as showing off her English competence (6.2.1). Erika, as a returnee, decided to stay monolingual Japanese on Instagram, considering that she does not use English anymore in offline lives (6.2.2). Nana was concerned by the permanency of English mistakes on the internet. She expressed varying attitudes toward who belonged to English and positioned herself between native speakers and her Japanese friends (6.2.3).

6.2.1. Karin – Voice as an EFL learner

Karin was 22 years old and enrolled in the education department at TGU. Karin had moved to Singapore with her family and went to a Japanese junior high school for two years. She then came back to an affiliated high school of the junior high school she attended before leaving Japan. After spending a gap year upon high school graduation, going to a preparatory school for the university entrance examination, she started with an undergraduate degree at TGU. She stated that she usually does not have daily opportunities to converse with friends in English but sometimes has oral presentations at a language assessment seminar. She sometimes, but not often, communicates in English with her overseas friends on SNS such as Facebook Messenger, LINE and Instagram, which indicates that exposure to English outside classrooms mostly takes place in a digital discourse.

Our Instagram accounts were first connected in February 2022 and six months after I started online observation, she moved to Thailand to study abroad. She participated in two one-hour interviews before and after she left Japan, followed by several message exchanges. On Instagram, she had 1,714 followers whose first languages varied from English, Japanese, Korean, Chinese, Thai, Vietnamese, Malay to Spanish, which illustrates that she uses English as a lingua franca with her friends on Instagram. She made

Instagram updates about memorable events such as traveling both in and outside Japan, going to music concerts with her friends, and spending time with her boyfriend. As discussed in the previous chapter, Karin demonstrated pragmatic creativity, especially, as seen in her ELF communication with the merge of the Chinese online laughter, 哈哈 (Chapter5 Section 5.3.3.1). The interviews revealed that Karin was highly conscious of grammar and how she stays inside the territory of her own linguistic competence because of her online friends' evaluation of her English.

6.2.1.1. People might say something about [my English]

Karin stated that she developed English grammar competence when she was striving to have daily conversations outside school in Singapore. When she came back to attend high school in Tokyo after two years, she felt she understood the English class without much effort. Karin stated that during high school, she did not see progress in her grammar competence in use, as she believed that the textbook-based grammar skill without conversation activities was difficult to apply outside the classroom. While she was preparing for the university entrance examination, she found herself struggling with grammar, as she acquired it by herself through firsthand conversation. She missed some of the basic grammar-related questions on the exam day. Since then, grammar has been

her weakness. In the excerpt below, Karin addressed that she was concerned about her grammar when writing on Instagram.

Excerpt 6.1

A: なんか、どんなこと考えながら書いてますか、英語で。@@

K: え、どんなこと考えながら、えっと、「間違っそうだな、まいいや。」っていう気持ち@@ [...] なんかあんまり得意じゃなくて文法が。全部なんか読解とかの方ができ
るんで。なんか全部、受験の時から文法全部フィーリングでやってしまっ。わかん
ないんで、よく。だから「合ってる? なんか恥ずかしいな、えいっ」みたいな。@@

A: なんでそれは恥ずかしいと思うんですか?

K: なんかこいつ英語で書いてるくせに間違ってるってなるから。@@

A: *So, what do you think about when you write in English usually,*

K: *What do I think about, well, “this might be wrong, well, it’s what it is”@@ [...] I’m not really good at grammar. I can do reading better. I have always been doing grammar with my feeling even for the university exam. I don’t really know about grammar. So, I’m like “Is this correct? I feel embarrassed... well, who knows” @@*

A: *Why do you feel embarrassed?*

K: *People would be like “even though she is writing in English, she is wrong”@@*

(Interview with Karin, May 20, 2022)

Having less confidence in grammar since entrance examination, Karin has seemed to label herself as someone who has capability in speaking English but did not have well-acquired English competence. In the excerpt, she states that it would be embarrassing to make English mistakes, which is the sentiment commonly shared by Japanese undergraduate students (Murata, 2016; Murata et al., 2018). The embarrassment she felt was driven by the potential evaluation of her English by her online friends, who might consider her an incompetent English user, someone whose ambitions do not live up to her technical skills.

Chapter 5 has discussed the visual-driven culture of the platform, leading to the shortness of caption (see Chapter 5). Karin also explained that she usually keeps her

English sentences on Instagram brief with little complex sentences. Notably, the brevity of English also serves to avoid the risk of making mistakes, as the following excerpt depicts.

Excerpt 6.2

K: [...] なんか簡単なやつの方が自分書きやすいのと、あとは変に書いてミスったら周りになんか言われそうだな、思われるのがちょっとあれだなって思っ

A: なるほど。周りっていうのは誰ですかね。

K: うーんなんか、日本の友達とか、まあ英語勉強してる人とか。

A: =じゃあ海外の友達よりかはっていうことかな。

K: そうです。海外の友達はそんなに気にしないです、私は。でも日本の子に「あ、この子文法できないんだ。」ってなんかなるのが「私はできるのに」みたいな感じに思われるからやだなって思っ

A: ああ。

K: @@ちょ、ちょっと被害妄想強めなんですけど。@@

A: =いやいやいや。いやわかります、そういう意見あると思います、本当に。

K: *It is easier for me to write something simple. Also, if I write [in English] when I don't have to, and make a mistake, people might say something about it.*

A: *I see. Who are these people?*

K: *Well, Japanese friends, well those who study English.*

A: = *So not the overseas friends.*

K: *No. I don't feel insecurity to my overseas friends. Rather, I don't want my Japanese friends to think "Oh, she doesn't know about grammar, but I do".*

A: *Ah.*

K: @@ I, I know I'm a bit paranoid@@

A: = *No, no, no. I mean, I understand. People share your opinion, really.*

(Interview with Karin, May 20, 2022)

In the excerpt above, Karin states that she prefers to write in English simply to avoid making mistakes and to stay away from audiences identifying her mistakes. She is particularly conscious of Japanese friends rather than friends from other countries. As such, she ascribes her reluctance in making mistakes to their evaluation, as she does not want them to degrade her English competence. While she hedges her remark by joking

about herself (“I know I’m a bit paranoid@@”), during the interview, Karin constantly exhibited a reluctance to commit grammatical errors in front of her Japanese friends.

A similar opinion was raised by Yuchen (see Chapter 5. Section 4. for his posts and his commentary on societal emblematic value of English), when he touched on his reason for using only short chunks of English on Instagram. He believed that the longer he wrote in English, the higher the likelihood of making grammatical mistakes. As a result, he tended to write shorter English sentences, so the “risk” of errors would be minimized (短かったらリスクが低いかなと思いますよ。 “if [English text] is short, the risk is low”, an excerpt from Interview with Yuchen, February 10, 2022).

For a young Instagram user like Karin, writing in simple and brief English was a proactive measure to minimize potential English errors. This helped her avoid possible negative evaluations from her Japanese friends in the online community. Karin’s concerns are derived from her lack of confidence in grammar, which amplified during the university entrance exam preparation. Further, her consciousness was heightened when her English became the subject of peer surveillance on Instagram.

6.2.1.2. A follower directly messaged me, “this should be like this”

Strikingly, Karin’s sense of insecurity about her grammar usage was fostered when

one of her Japanese followers directly messaged and corrected her English. SNS has become a space for interpersonal monitoring where users watch and evaluate each other's lifestyles (Trottier, 2016; see Chapter 3). The present young adults' experiences illustrated that such monitoring culture could be also applied to the discourse of English. In the following excerpt, Karin described the discomfort she felt when the Japanese follower corrected her English on Instagram:

Excerpt 6.3

K: 気づかないまま向こうから間違えてるって思われるの一番恥ずかしいんで。一回あったのが、私昔英語のコンテンツを載せた時に、なんかまあ一応注釈で「間違ってるかもしれないけど一応参考として見てね」みたいな感じで書いてたのに、まあなんか結構英語なんか喋れる男の子が DM[Direct Message]で「これなんかもっとこうした方がいいと思うよ」みたいな[...]それが嫌で。

A: 英語について言われたってこと？

K: そうです。

A: [なんか間違ってる]みたいな。

K: [こっちの方がいい]と思うよみたいな。そうそうそうそう。[...] あんま言ってほしくなかったら注釈してたのになって思っ。

K: *Well, it is the most embarrassing for me to not notice my mistakes while other recognize that I'm making mistakes. One time when I shared my contents in English, well, I added a note and said "it might be incorrect but just look at it as a reference". But some guy who can speak English well DM [directly messaged] me, "this should be like this" [...] I didn't like that.*

A: *He pointed out your English?*

K: *Yes.*

A: *[something like "this is wrong"]*

K: *[like "this should be in this way"] Yeah, yeah, yeah, like that. [...] I added a note because I didn't want anyone to talk about it.*

(Interview with Karin, May 20, 2022)

She states, in the excerpt, that it is “most embarrassing” when her audience finds her English mistakes while she does not. To hedge the risk of such embarrassment, she made a note that her English might be incorrect when she posted in English on Instagram.

Nonetheless, her Japanese male follower pointed out a mistake in her English. Unsurprisingly, she did not like the follower's action and wished he had not said anything to her. Reflecting on this, Karin further stated that, prior to this experience, she did not care about linguistic forms unless they were communicatively feasible but noticed that people who were good at English might not have liked such an attitude:

Excerpt 6.4

K: なんか、会話、向こうのほうが会話慣れてるし。私はたかがもう2年とかそんぐらいだから、し、日本人学校だったし。会話とか全部感覚で結構やってるところがあるんで。通じりゃいいやっていうのが。[...] やっぱり喋れる子から見たら嫌だったのかなって思ってる。

K: He is used to have [English] conversations more than I am. I only [stayed overseas] for about two years or so, and I went to a Japanese school, so I rely a lot on my instincts when speaking. As long as I can communicate, that's good enough for me. [...] but I wonder if the fluent speaker didn't like that.

(Interview with Karin, May 20, 2022)

Karin belittled her experience of attending Japanese school in Singapore for two years and admitted that not everyone agreed her intelligibility-oriented attitude toward English. Her discomfort and sense of humiliation were evident in her reaction when I asked if I could see the details of the post she discussed, and she indirectly declined my offer by saying she did not clearly remember when it happened (Interview with Karin, May 20, 2022 and March 7, 2023). In the second interview, Karin said that next time someone offends her English in the online context, she might unfriend her/his account:

Excerpt 6.5

K: ネイティブの人とかもいたりするから、海外長かった日本人とか、こいつ何やってんだよって、思われるかなって、たまに思いつつ、なんか言われたらそいつ切れればいいや、みたいな感じで。@@@

K: *There are native speakers, or Japanese people who lived overseas for a long time. And I sometimes think they would see me and think, "What the heck is she doing". But if someone says to me something, I'm just going to cut them off [from our online friendship]. @@@*

(Interview with Karin, March 7, 2023)

In the excerpt, Karin is concerned if native speakers and Japanese friends with extensive overseas experience would watch her English. Nonetheless, she suggests that she may eliminate them from the online followership depending on their action. She then further elaborated that before leaving Japan for Thailand, she blocked the aforementioned male follower's account, as she thought she would feel uncomfortable updating posts in English while being conscious of his scrutiny (Interview with Karin, March 7, 2023).

Other participants, including Yuma and Yo, had similar experiences. For instance, Yuma, who exhibited her poetic creativity (see Chapter 5 Section 5.4.1.2), experienced language correction by one of her Japanese followers on Instagram. The follower messaged her and pointed out that she replaced the verb *prove* with the noun *proof* after a phrase with infinitive *I've got to*. Yuma recalled that she reacted furiously to the follower (フォロワーの人から『違いますか』ってきて。[...] 私なんも気にしてなくて。来たのにすごい腹立って。"My follower messaged me and said, "isn't it wrong?" [...] I wasn't really conscious [about English] so I was very disturbed."). Yuma then stated that the

experience made her aware that some readers might check her language, and she said she is now occasionally conscious about grammar and consults a dictionary when she is not certain about the correct usage. Additionally, Yo (see Chapter 5 Section 5.3.2.1 for his pragmatic creativity to maintain offline his friendship) discussed in the interview that he anticipated potential criticism toward his English (see Chapter 7). Yo went on by saying that he usually prioritizes communicative intelligibility over grammar correctness in conversations but checks his grammar on Instagram before releasing his posts to protect himself from his friends' criticism.

Karin experienced receiving comments on her English grammar from Japanese followers. The phenomenon of language surveillance, as manifested in the young adults' comments, has been found to have an impact on their language attitudes, which transformed from intelligibility oriented into grammar conscious. Furthermore, Karin's story of blocking her follower suggested that language correction negatively impacted on her social networks online.

6.2.1.3. I just really don't want to do *eigo-ikiri*

During the conversations with Karin, she often mentioned the term *jitsuryoku* 'skills' when referring to her English abilities. For example, she addressed this word when she

was explaining one of her favorite undergraduate courses in which she read an article, identified unfamiliar words, and translated them. When I asked why she enjoyed the English course, she stated that the class was similar to a university entrance examination, and she felt it helping improving her English skills:

Excerpt 6.6

K: なんか高校みたいな英語って、正直、受験で使えるレベルじゃないじゃないですか。だから、さらに上のもっと物をやってる、難しいのに挑戦してるっていう感覚が良かったです、私的には。大変だったんですけど、それに立ち向かってる、どんどん、実力が上がってくんだなっていうのが、私は大学の英語の授業で感じたところがあったんで。

K: The English we study in high school isn't really at the level that you can use for entrance exams. So, I liked the feeling of challenging myself with even more difficult English, which was beyond my level. It was tough, but I felt like I was gradually improving my competence by facing the challenge. I experienced that feeling in my English classes at university.

(Interview with Karin, March 7, 2023)

Karin's remark indicates her perception of English as a subject that is primarily studied for entrance exams. She was motivated by facing the difficulty and challenges of the literal translation at the English class to improve her English skills. Her reference of skills [実力] seems to indicate grammatical "competence" to tackle examination rather than communicative "capability" to engage in communication (Widdowson, 2003; Seidlhofer & Widdowson, 2017; see Chapter 2).

Additionally, she repeated the word *jitsuryoku* when she discussed if she uses online English translation service when writing on SNS.

Excerpt 6.7

A: じゃああんまり翻訳とかは使わないですかね。

M: 翻訳アプリですか？書くのにわざわざ使わないです。なんかあれじゃないですか、自分の実力じゃないのあんまり投稿に書くとあんまり良くないかなと思って。

A: *So, you don't really use translation?*

M: *Translation apps? I don't really use them when writing posts. You know, I feel like if I use them, it's not really showing my skill, so I guess I think it's not really good.*

(Interview with Karin, May 20, 2022)

Her remark above shows that Karin is conscious of the importance of staying within the range of her own linguistic competence. Her further discussion illustrated that her avoidance of using the language beyond her level is derived from her self-presentation:

Excerpt 6.8

K: [...] なんか色々、略、省略ワードとか使ってみたりとかしたいなって思ったりするんですけど、使わないのって半端にわかって使うと、やっぱりなんか「いきってんのか」みたいな感じになるのが嫌で。英語イキリだけはしたくないんで。いくら海外行っただとはいえ。

K: [...] *Well, I often think I want to use abbreviated words, but if I use words I don't normally use, [people might think] "are you showing off [English]?" and I don't like that. I just don't want to do "Eigo-ikiri", even if I've been overseas.*

(Interview with Karin, May 20, 2022)

In the excerpt above, Karin is afraid that her friends might consider her use of English as *eigo-ikiri* [英語イキリ] or 'English-showoff'. *ikiri* (noun) or *ikiru* (verb), an abbreviation of *ikigaru* in Japanese, refers to when someone is full of themselves (Nihon Zokugo Jisho, n.d.). As we will see in this chapter, the Japanese word *ikiri* was often addressed by the participants. In the excerpt, Karin states that she would never prefer to be seen as *ikiri* by

her friends.

A similar attitude was seen in a remark shared by Sayaka, who deployed her poetic creativity to borrow the Winnie the Pooh quote (see Chapter 5 Section 5.4.1.3). She said that she usually writes simple English sentences on Instagram because she believes that her knowing English may bother her Japanese friends and that her friends would see her *ikiri* (周りの友達日本人いっぱいいるので、英語わかるってちょっとうざいじゃないですか。[…] なんか「え、イキってんの」みたいになるから。“I have a lot of Japanese friends around me, isn’t it a bit annoying when someone knows English? They’d be like ‘wow, you’re such a showoff’ or something like that”, excerpt from Interview with Sayaka, February 10, 2022). Sayaka found herself caught in a dilemma between the desire to express herself in English on the platform and the importance of maintaining social relationships with their Japanese friends. She then made a choice to use only the minimum amount of English necessary in her posts.

Into the further interview, Karin described her feeling when she usually sees someone trying to show their English skills on SNS:

Excerpt 6.9

K: […] なんかそのあんまり完璧とか、できるってわけじゃないのに、バーって喋ってる人とかひけらかしてる人とか、ひけらかしてるつもり本人にはなかったとしても自分が同じことやってそれ間違えてるって気づかれたら恥ずかしいじゃないですか。それ見ると共感性羞恥がもくもくと湧いてきて。こ、こうなります (両腕を体の前で交差し左右の二の腕をさする)。

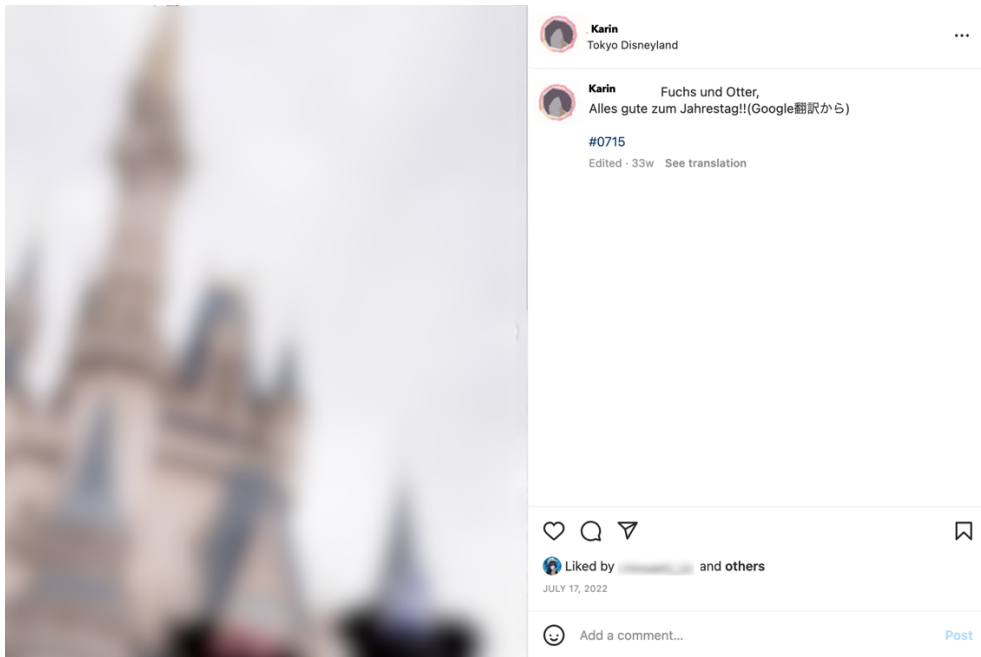
K: When I see people speaking English a lot or flaunting their English even though they are not that perfect or good, there is a sense of embarrassment that gradually grows in me, thinking that if that was me and someone noticed [mistakes], it's humiliating. When I see such people, I also feel embarrassed, I would be like [Karin puts her arms around herself and rubs].

(Interview with Karin, May 20, 2022)

In the excerpt above, Karin states that she feels empathetically embarrassed when she sees someone who is not “perfect” [完璧] or “good” [できる] in English yet “shows off” [ひけらかす] their skills unhesitatingly. She then describes her strong reaction of humiliation when putting herself in the shoes of such people, which would even give her a chill, as evidenced by her body language indicating coldness. When asked to give examples of English uses she felt *ikiri*, she listed the word *gm* (good morning), which was used by her Japanese friend who came back from study abroad (Interview with Karin, May 20, 2022).

During the second interview, Karin suggested that the concept of *ikiri* can be applied to a language other than English. When she shared posts about her boyfriend, she used German, the language her boyfriend has been studying as a second foreign language (Image 6.1).

Image 6.1 German use “from Google translation”– Karin’s post



Extract 6.1 Karin's caption extracted with English translation

Language guide to translation: *Japanese* (italics) and **German** (bold)

Original Fuchs und Otter,
Alles gute zum Jahrestag!!(Google 翻訳から)
#0715

Translation **Fox and Otter,**
Happy Anniversary!!(*from Google translation*)
#0715

Karin listed two animals, which Karin and her boyfriend often joke about resembling with their faces and celebrated their anniversary. She stated that using a language unfamiliar to most of her followers except her boyfriend made her feel that he was exclusive to her (Interview with Karin, March 7, 2023). In this way, writing in German shows her pragmatic creativity to create a private communication channel between them even

though the post itself was in semi-public.

However, she took into consideration not only her boyfriend but also other people who might know German. In the excerpt below, she discussed the reason behind adding the note in parenthesis, Google 翻訳から ‘from Google translation’.

Excerpt 6.10

K: 私 Google 翻訳でやってんですけど、ドイツ語わかる人がこれ見たら、「この子全然ドイツ語できないじゃん」って思われるかなって思って。ま、わかんないのは、事実なんですけど、なんか「下手の横好きみたいな感じで書いてんじゃねえよ」って、前もこんなこと言いましたよね、私多分@@

A: イキ、イキリみ[たいなね]

K: [そうそう]イキリ、そうそうそうそうそう。Google 翻訳からって書いて、ごまかしました。

A: 「私のせいじゃないよ」と@@

K: @@@@そうです。あとは、「ちゃんと私わかんないから翻訳したよ」って@@

A: うんうんうん。言ってるんだ。

K: *I'm using Google translation for this, and if people see this, they might think "she doesn't know German at all". Well, it's true that I don't know German though. They'd be like "I'm doing 'Heta-no-yoko-zuki'", didn't I say this kind of thing in the last interview?@@*

A: *Like ikiri, [or something]*

K: *[Yeah, yeah], ikiri, yeah, yeah. So, I wrote "from Google translation" to hedge.*

A: *Like it's not my fault. @@*

K: @@@@ Yes. And, like "I used translation because I don't know [German]"

A: *Yeah, yeah. That's what you mean.*

(Interview with Karin, March 7, 2023).

By adding the note, “from Google translation”, Karin attributed potential German errors to the limitation of machine translation to protect herself from possible criticism. It was also to avoid being perceived as “Heta-no-yoko-zuki”, referring to someone who is not talented but enthusiastic at something, which she used as a synonym of *ikiri*. By confirming that she did not know German, she ensured that she was not showcasing her language competence in front of her friends.

6.2.2. Erika – Online self and English correctness

Erika was 21 years old and enrolled in the education department at TGU as a junior student. She had lived in California and Washington in the U.S. with her family for nine years attending local schools. She returned to Japan and attended an affiliated high school of TGU. Currently, she does not have opportunities to use English except when she occasionally reunites with friends from the U.S. and talks with them online. She stated that her grammar may be “fragile” when she speaks English with her old-time friends but prioritizes communicative intelligibility than grammar, which, she suggested, was opposite to the language attitude she encountered in a correctness-based class at her high school.

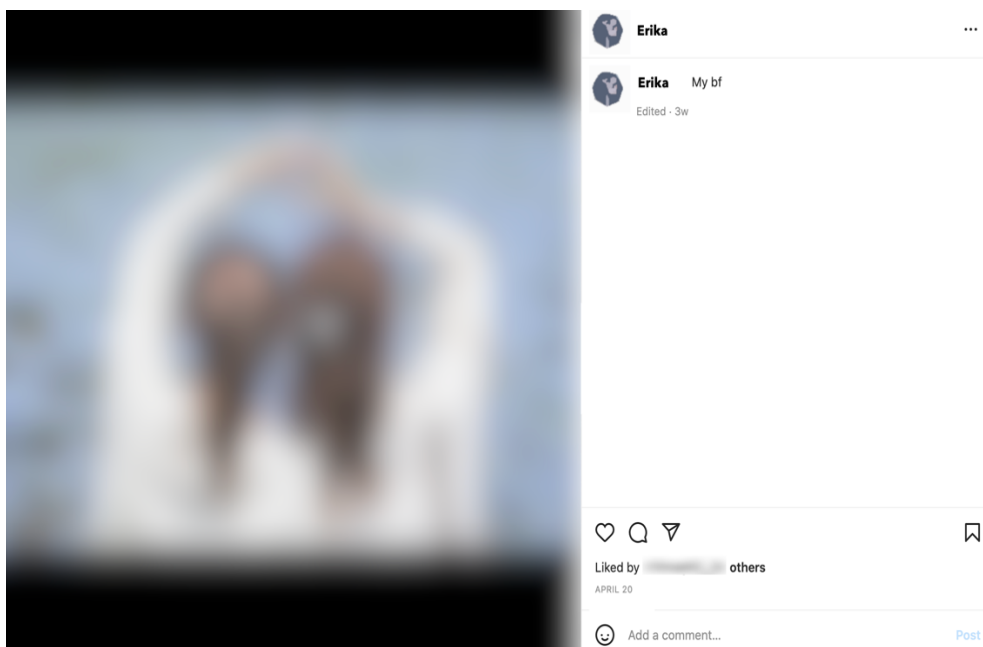
The observation of Erika’s Instagram started in April 2022 and lasted for four months. Although the observation period of her Instagram was shorter than the others introduced in this chapter and she was relatively shy to participate in the interview, she disclosed, in a one-hour session in August 2022, her complex thoughts as a returnee student and as an English user online. Erika kept her account open to the public, so her posts were accessible to everyone on Instagram including her 1,099 followers whose first languages spanned from English, Japanese, Korean to Chinese. She frequently traveled

with her best friend all over Japan, and her account often featured photogenic pictures taken at local sightseeing spots.

6.2.2.1. “I run away from [English] to Japanese”

Despite the considerable years of experience in an English-speaking country and having non-Japanese speaking friends on Instagram, Erika rarely used English on the platform. Over the period of observation, the only time she chose to write in English was when she shared a photograph of her and her best friend (Image 6.2).

Image 6.2 “bf” lost in translation – Erika’s post



Extract 6.2. Erika’s caption extracted

My bf

Along with the photograph, she typed “My bf”, an abbreviation of the word “best friend”. Erika preferred the English abbreviation “bf”, to the Japanese word, 親友 [shin-yu], as the latter, literary meaning “close friends” in Chinese characters, moderates their one and only intimate relationships. This was the only time she used English on Instagram, which was targeted to her best friend.

On daily use of English, Erika reported that she does not usually speak English outside classrooms at TGU but talks in English with friends from the U.S., who attends an international university located in Tokyo. She suggested that her friends are more comfortable speaking English because they “use” English at their university:

Excerpt 6.11

A: えっと、英語は普段使いますか。

E: ま、大学ぐらいでしか使わなくて、うん。久しぶりにその帰国時代の子と会った時は、その子たちが結構[大学名]とか英語を普段使う側の大学に通ってたんで英語を使ったかなってぐらいです。基本はないですね。

A: *Do you use English on a daily basis?*

E: *I only use it at university. Yeah, and when I talk to my friends from the time I was abroad. They went to [name of the university], which is one of these where students use English. I used English with them, but basically, I don't.*

(Interview with Erika August 8, 2022)

The excerpt above suggests that Erika views her friends on the side of using English, which, in contrast, implies that she considers herself on the other side of the line where

people do not use English. This perspective influenced her language practices on Instagram.

Interestingly, it turned out that she rather avoided using English on Instagram. This was due to her belief that she did not have as much up-to-date English repertoire as she wanted in order to use it on the site actively, as shown below.

Excerpt 6.12

- A: 向こうは現地校でしたか、日本人学校。
E: 現地校でした。もうでも高校から帰ってきちゃって、長らく、使ってないっていうのもあって、結構自信がなくなってるんですよ、今。
A: あ、そうですか。
E: それ、それを SNS に載せるのは、って思う節が結構あります。
A: あ、そうなんですか。なんで自信がないんですか。
E: あ、もう、使ってなさすぎて、なんかかっこいい、インスタの英語のなんか流行っているか、みんなの流れを知らないの、なんか思い浮かばなくて使ってないです。
A: なるほど、やっぱり使うなら、流行の英語を使いたいってことですかね。
E: ああ、多分そうだと思います。みんなと同じぐらい、うん、かっこいい文章を思いつきたいのに、思いつかないみたいなの。
A: かっこいい文章ってのは、どういう感じの文章ですか。
E: え、なんか、photo dump みたいな。この前見て、うん、recent photo dump みたいな、最近の写真、うんダンプだって、うん、いいなって。@@@
A: *Did you go to local or Japanese school?*
E: *Local school. I came back from the U.S. for high school. I haven't used it [English] for long time and I don't have confidence now.*
A: *I see.*
E: *So, I feel like I don't want to share it [English] on SNS.*
A: *I see. Why do you not have confidence?*
E: *Well, I haven't used it for long and I don't know about cool Instagram English which is in trend for people. I can't come up with it, so I don't use it.*
A: *I see. When you use it, you want to use trendy English.*
E: *Yes, I think so. Like I want to come up with cool sentences like everyone, but I can't.*
A: *Can I ask what would the cool sentences be like?*
E: *Ah, like "photo dump". I saw it the other day, "recent photo dump". Recent photo and then dump, I was like "oh cool" @@@*

(Interview with Erika August 8, 2022)

Erika's confidence in English had diminished, as she had not used the language for an extended time, and she decided not to use it on SNS. While she occasionally speaks and

text-messages in English with her old-time friends from the U.S., she believes her English is not “cool” [かっこいい] or “trendy” [流行の] enough to use on SNS, whose linguistic culture is constantly reshaping (see Varis, 2016; Thurlow, 2012). As an example of cool English, she listed “photo dump”, a phrase that refers to a trend spread from U.S. celebrities and Instagram influencers of posting random everyday pictures at once in a single post.

It was found that the driving force for avoiding English on the platform was her self-identification as a returnee English speaker, as explained in the following excerpt.

Excerpt 6.13

E: そういの[“recent photo dump”]を多分いっばい見てれば、それを引用して使えろと思ふんですけど、うん、あの英語でいい文章を思い浮かばなくて、それで日本語に逃げてる部分もあると。

A: うん。なるほどね。

E: フォロワーがいて、間違ってるのは恥ずかしいなっていうのが。

A: 間違ってる英語。

E: 間違ってる英語を使いたくないっていう、ゆうて帰国子女なんで。

A: なるほど。間違ってる英語っていうのはどういふ感じですか。

E: なんか、ぎこちない英語、なんだろう。なんか、the best day ever みたいな。なんか恥ずかしくないですか。@@@

[…]

A: ああ、そうか、そうか、どういふ感じで恥ずかしいですか。

E: 多分、その純ジャパで頑張ってる英語を使ってる人の一部になりたくないのかもしれない。

A: いろいろな思ひがあるんですね。なんか間違ってると思っほしくないみたいな感じで、今さっきおっしゃってましたけど、誰に思っほしくないとか、色々幅広いフォロワーがいらっしやると思ふんですけど。ありますか。

E: 多分大学の人とかですかね、なんか、帰国子女なのにみたいな。

A: じゃあ[Erika]さんのことを帰国だっわかってる方とかですかね。

E: そうですね。

E: If I see such phrases [“recent photo dump”] more often, I could quote and use them. Because I can’t come up with English sentences, I run away from it to Japanese.

A: I see.

E: It’s humiliating to make mistakes in front of followers.

A: Mistakes in English.

E: I don’t want to use wrong English, you know, I’m a returnee.

A: I see. What would wrong English be like?

*E: Like, awkward English, let's see, yeah like "the best day ever". Isn't it embarrassing? @@@@
[...]*

A: I see, I see, what kind of embarrassment?

E: Well, I think I just don't want to be one of those jun-Japa who are trying to use English.

A: You have a lot of thoughts. You said you don't want to be seen as if you are using the wrong English. Do you have any one in mind by whom you do not want to be seen in that way. I know you have a wide range of followers.

E: I think people from university. They'd be like "even though you are returnee student"

A: So the ones who know you are a returnee.

E: Yes.

(Interview with Erika August 8, 2022)

As the excerpt illustrates, she finds it humiliation to make mistakes in English as a returnee student in front of her followers. As she confirms in the latter part of the excerpt, she is especially conscious about her university friends on the platform who know her as a returnee. Interestingly, the example she raises as “wrong English” [間違ってる英語], “the best day ever”, is by no means grammatically or orthographically incorrect. For her, the phrase engenders the *jun-Japa*-ness. To recall, *jun-Japa* refers to those who grew up and received English education primarily in Japan (see Chapter 2). Erika believes that the phrase appears as if *jun-Japa* students are “trying to use English” [頑張って英語を使ってる人], which is, as she repeatedly puts it, “embarrassing”. Erika prefers a distinction between returnees, who can use English and *jun-Japa* who “tries” to use English. For self-presentation as a returnee, her language choice on Instagram fell into a dichotomy; to use English or not to. She chose the latter and “ran away” [逃げる], to avoid the risk of

using “awkward English” [ぎこちない英語] so that she could maintain her identity as an experienced English speaker.

She regulated herself in terms of the languages she used for her self-presentation as an English user in the online community. Erika’s acknowledgement of her lack of confidence in her English, stemming from its limited use in her daily life, seemed to, in return, heightened her self-awareness in maintaining her identity as a returnee student.

6.2.2.2. Please don’t make mistakes when posting the picture of me

Another possible reason for Erika’s high consciousness of her self-presentation could be associated with her belief that she was presenting only the ideal part of self on Instagram. Erika’s desire to present herself as a returnee even influenced her attitude toward her friends’ English usage. During the interview, Erika shared a story of the aforementioned best friend of hers, who once posted a photograph on the best friend’s own Instagram account. Erika and her best friend went to the same high school and now go to the same university (but different departments) and have been close ever since. One time, her best friend shared a picture of her and Erika together, along with English caption with a spelling error. Although Erika knew that English was not her friend’s favorite subject since high school, the friend’s English error made her uncomfortable. The

following excerpt depicts her concern unique to SNS where people can be connected without being well acquainted with each other.

Excerpt 6.14

E: なんか最近この一緒に行ってた子のインスタで every が r じゃなくて l で、evely が l で書かれてて。いやあ、私の友達なのに、ううってなりました。私が載ってる写真で英語は間違えないでって思って。@@@

[...]

A: なんで、そこで、その、えっと私が載ってる写真で間違いないでって思いましたか。

E: よくこの子、間違えるんですけど。なんか、やっぱりまあ、そのネットに残るっていうのがあるんで、そういう、もはやネットでしか知らない人も見てるわけだから、そういう自分の印象が悪くなるっていうか。

A: うん。

E: 現実で会ってる人なら全然私のことを知ってると思うんですけど、インスタしか見えない人はそのインスタに載ってる部分しか見えてないんで、その部分で、なんか、うん、失敗したくないなっていうのはあります。

E: *[My friend] wrote “every” with “l” instead of “r” in her Instagram post. It was written “evely” with “l”. I was like, “oh no, she is my friend, nooo”. I thought, “please don’t make English mistakes when posting the picture of meee” @@@*

[...]

A: *Why did you think “please don’t make mistakes when posting the picture of me”?*

E: *Well, you know, it will remain on the internet, and people whom I only know on the internet are seeing the posts too, so, that kind of thing makes me look bad. People I meet in real life, they know me, but those who only see me on Instagram, they just see what’s on Instagram. So, I don’t want to make mistakes in that part.*

(Interview with Erika August 8, 2022)

The striking point about Erika’s case was that because she wanted to be perceived as a proficient English user, she was concerned about her friend’s English. Her consciousness was possibly derived from the technological environment in which she set her account in public and thus anyone could reach her account through the best friend’s tagging. Erika disfavored the fact that people who saw her friend’s post would think she was related to someone who used English incorrectly, which would become, in her words, a “failure”

[失敗] of presenting herself on Instagram. In this respect, her reaction, “Oh no, she is my friend, noo” contextually implies, “Oh no, she is MY (the one who is a returnee and knows English) friend, NO (so please don’t make mistakes for the sake of my self-presentation)”.

She continued discussing that the online space was for the presentation of her idealized self, which she believed was different from her identity constructed in offline contexts.

Excerpt 6.15

E: インスタは自分の理想の自分を載せてるだけで [...]作り物でしかないんですよ。あの、作ってるものなのに完璧じゃなかったら。多分、自分のプライドかな、的に、理想の自分になれてないなっていうのは。

E: I share my ideal self on Instagram [...] It's only a creation. I want to create what I think is perfect. Maybe it's my pride, maybe it [bothers me] that I'm not the ideal me.

(Interview with Erika August 8, 2022)

Erika says that she presented and created her “ideal self” [理想の自分] on Instagram, which is a commonly shared attitude among young adults (Tagg & Seargent, 2020). She further stated in the same interview that she is usually more introverted person than her Instagram self and spends most of her time working part-time. She only shared what she believed to be perfect on Instagram, which also involved her English use. This shows, as Vásquez (2022) suggests, that language fulfills a significant part of self-presentation

online. Erika's "pride" as an experienced English speaker could not tolerate the basic mistake of replacing *r* with *l*, as it would spoil her perfect self-presentation on Instagram.

One of the reasons she was eager to present her perfect self was related to the first contact she made with her university friends during the pandemic.

Excerpt 6.16

E: コロナ禍で自分と会うよりも先にインスタを見られることが多かったんですよ。大学2020に入ってから。

A: あ、もうばっちりコロナの学生さんだ。

E: それで、大学1年生で第一印象が、あの、インスタグラムになるんだったら、あ、作り物でもいいやと思って。@@

E: During the pandemic, people saw me on Instagram before they met me in person. I started university in 2020.

A: Oh, so you are clearly a corona era student.

E: So if my first impression as a freshman is based on my Instagram, I thought, "Well, even if it's created, it's okay"

(Interview with Erika August 8, 2022)

Enrolling in the university in 2020, Erika and her university friends were connected through Instagram before they met in-person. She decided to create a first impression that emphasized only one part of her identity, the one as an outgoing student who loved traveling. Her self-presentation was partially influenced by the social situation particular to the time of the investigation.

Erika's anecdote has depicted her determination to demarcate herself from *jun-Japa* speaker who could only use English in a limited manner. The difference was considerable for her between "photo dump" and "the best day ever", and "every" and "evely", as the

latter being considered English used by those with *jun-Japa* backgrounds. Erika's self-consciousness in maintaining her identity as a returnee was heightened because, in fact, she acknowledged she was not an English user anymore. Her online identity, which included her identity as an English user, was aimed at projecting perfect version of herself. Her language practices illustrated the "high degree of selectivity in how people present themselves (Tagg & Seargeant, 2020, p. 343).

6.2.3. Nana – Ownership of English

Nana was a 20-year-old junior-year student, majoring in education. She spent three years going to a Japanese kindergarten in Singapore. She stated that most of her friends are Japanese, and they have limited international backgrounds. At home, she often speaks and text-messages in English with her mother from the U.S. who speaks English as a first language. She stated that besides communication with her mother, exposures to ELF communication outside classrooms were limited. She discussed that her students from the same department often worried about the lack of opportunities to use English and usually developed their English skills through self-studying TOEIC and TOEFL. Four months after the start of the current investigation, she moved to the U.S. for a year-long study abroad program.

Our Instagram connection was formed in April 2022 and had the first conversation through email. We then had approximately an hour oral interview, once before and two times after she left Japan. Nana constantly shared contents on Instagram about memorable events spent with friends such as traveling and social gathering, which often indicated her capacity to establish interpersonal relationships. Chapter 5 has discussed Nana's poetic creativity when she adapted lyrics from an American hip hop group (see Chapter 5). She had 600 online friends who spoke Japanese, English, Germany, Chinese, Korean, and Malay, and she built new friendships with those from the U.S., Taiwan and India during her study abroad.

6.2.3.1. My mistakes becoming a digital tattoo

When using English, Nana was usually conscious about using the language because over 600 followers on Instagram are, as she put it, “watching”. Her high consciousness about her English usage was closely tied to the nature of SNS, which are, unlike ephemeral speech interaction, permanent on the internet (Baron, 2000). In contrast to spoken conversations at school, Nana often checked her grammar and vocabulary before releasing her posts to the semi-public discourse:

Excerpt 6.17

ポロポロミスがあると頑張って英語を使っているイキリだとおもわれるのではないかと
いう不安があります笑 [...] 最悪の場合デジタルタトゥーになりかねないと思っている
ので自分が恥をかかないようにチェックを必ずします。

*I am worried that if my English has many mistakes, I might be seen as an “English-showoff” who
is trying too hard to use English lol [...] The worst possible case would be my mistakes becoming
a digital tattoo, so I always check my posts to avoid embarrassing myself.*

(Email reply from Nana, August 3, 2022)

Checking vocabulary and grammar was important for her, as she believed that if there
were mistakes, people online would perceive her as *ikiri*. Nana defined *ikiri* by herself,
as an act of someone using English (or other foreign languages) in front of Japanese
people believing that they have sufficient language skills although in reality, they do not.
For Nana, making English mistakes on Instagram was an almost tattoo-like action, which
means it would remain on the internet permanently.

Excerpt 6.18

N: なんか指摘しないじゃないですか、なんかあえて。なんかそれが嫌だなっていう。デ
ジタルタトゥーみたいなもんじゃないですか。SNS って。

A: [...] デジタルタトゥーっていうことが初めてお伺いして。どういう意味ですか? [...]

N: SNS 全般一回あげたものって消えないじゃないですか。いっかい流出しちゃったもの
って、消えないっていうので、消えないイコールタトゥー、でデジタルタトゥーです。

A: じゃあもうマイナスな意味かな。

N: あ、マイナスです。

*N: No one would tell me about [my English mistakes on my posts] and I don't like that. It's like a
digital tattoo on SNS.*

A: [...] I have never heard of the word, digital tattoo. What does it mean? [...]

*N: SNS, in general, once you upload the contents, they will never be deleted. Once spread, it won't
go away, like a tattoo, so a digital tattoo.*

A: So, the word has a negative meaning.

N: Yes. It's negative.

(Interview with Nana, August 26, 2022)

In contrast to the experiences shared by Karin (and Yuma) (see Section 2.1.2) whose English was corrected by one of their followers, Nana seemed to find it uncommon to correct online friends' languages on Instagram. As the excerpt shows, she then suggests that the lack of frequent interaction with her audience would make her English error a tattoo. "Digital tattoo" is a term coined by Juan Enriquez (2013), which refers to the social problem of the pervasiveness and permanency of private information on the internet. Nana applied the term to the description of what it is like to use incorrect English on Instagram.

When discussing English mistakes, she highlighted the importance of acquiring linguistic forms, as the following excerpt shows.

Excerpt 6.19

N: 確かに文法間違ってもインタラクションってできると思うんですけど、なんだろう、その最低限、自分的には結構なんかその書式とか文法とかができて初めて英語を話す人たちと同じ土台に立てるのかなっていう意識があって、これは多分日本で教育を受けたからなんですけど@@@なんかそうですね、結構気にしちゃいますね、結構。

N: *I do think that even with wrong grammar, you can still have interaction. But I feel that at least, being able to understand the format and grammar is a foundation that is necessary to be at the same stage with people who speak English. This might be because I have been through education in Japan. @@@ I do care quite a bit about it, yeah.*

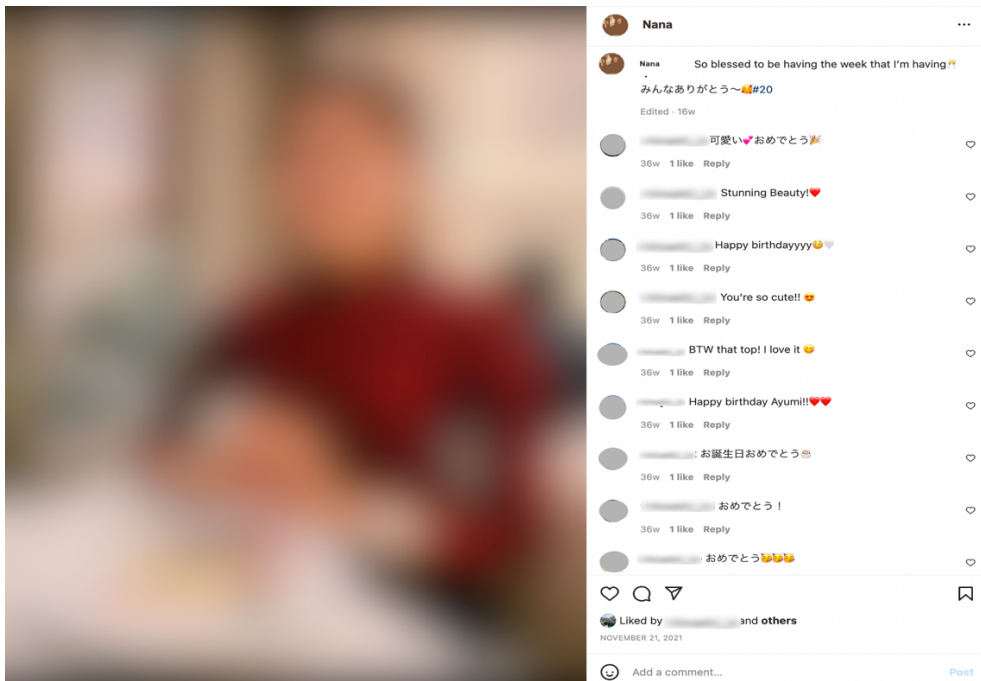
In the excerpt above, while she acknowledges that communicative interaction could be achieved despite grammar errors, grammar is key for her to be on the same stage with "people who speak English" [英語を話す人たち]. Nana attributes her own attitude to the

English education in Japan she had been through. Even though she spoke English with her mother at home and wrote in English on SNS, she perceived herself outside the group of English speakers. Her attitude, as discussed later in this section (see 6.3.2.2 and 6.3.2.3), indicated that the sense of speakership only belongs to a certain speaker community.

6.2.3.2. I asked my mother who is native

During the interviews, Nana constantly presented her admiration for her mother, who has ENL background. She sets her mother as an ideal speaker-self and feels that she is privileged to use English with her mother while other Japanese friends do not have such opportunity. Conversing with her mother is almost the only opportunity in which she is exposed to, as she puts it, “authentic” English, which she defined as well-used usage by those who speak English comfortably. To avoid her English being tattooed on her post, Nana had her English Instagram post checked by her mother. Nana asked her mother to check her English when uploading the following post on her 20th birthday, supplemented by the champagne emoji and hashtag (Image 6.3).

Image 6.3 “blessed”: the checked English caption – Nana’s post



Extract 6.3 English translation of Nana’s Instagram caption

Language guide: English (regular), *Japanese* (italics)

Original So blessed to having the week that I’m having 🥂
 みんなありがとう～🥰#20

Translation So blessed to having the week that I’m having 🥂
 Thanks everyone～🥰#20

By writing in English and Japanese, Nana received over twenty comments to congratulate her on her birthday from worldwide online friends. She was so moved that she decided to use the emoji with hearts whose facial expression looked like herself in the photograph of this post. Her positive emotion influenced her word choice of “bless”, as she stated in the excerpt.

Excerpt 6.20

S: この場合は、なんか、なんか、bless っていう言葉を多分使いたくて、で、あの、私、母がネイティブなんですけど、合ってる？って聞いて、多分これはちょっと直してもらったか、多分そのまま通ってこうやって載せました。

[...]

A: GO サインが出ないときありますか。これ違うよ。みたいな。

S: え、あります。これ私、こだわってるみたいな、ので、でもなんか、そういうときは日本語に変えたりします。あ、じゃあ日本語でいいやみたいな。自分が仮にオーセンテックだとしても、自分がしっくりこないんだったらそれは自分のインスタじゃないなっていうので。日本語でいいやってなります。

A: 譲歩しあってるんですね。

S: そうです。

N: *For this one, I wanted to use the word “bless”, and I asked my mother who is native [English speaker], “is it correct?”. I think this one was corrected a bit, or I think it was passed as it was.*

[...]

A: *Is there any time when your mother doesn't give you a green light, like “it's not correct”?*

N: *Yeah, sometimes she doesn't. But “this is what I like to write about”, you know, in such cases, I change [my post] into Japanese. I'm like, “oh, well, let's just use Japanese then”. Even if it is authentic, if I don't feel comfortable with it, then it's not my Instagram. So, why not just use Japanese.*

A: *You compromise.*

S: *Yes.*

(Interview with Nana, August 26, 2022)

Before releasing the post, she asked her mother to “pass” (or not) her English to be shared online. Nevertheless, she said that she usually does not adopt the suggestion when her personal English checker’s phrasing does not represent her intention. Instead, she would write in Japanese which expressed herself better than in the corrected English. While she wished her English usage to be polished for her perceived audiences, she made sure the language was hers, because, after all, Instagram is a private and self-expressive sphere. In this way, she usually negotiated her English user self and Instagram user self. After she left Japan for Oregon, in the U.S. for study abroad, she continued asking her mother back in Japan to check her English on Instagram:

Excerpt 6.21

A : 今もネイティブチェック受けてます。

N : ああ、うん、チェックていうか、これをキャプションで載せるって言って、そうですね。 [...]

A : あ、そうなんだ。

N : うんうんうん、見てもらったけど、まあ直すほどでもないっていう。

A : *Do you still get native check?*

N : *Ah, yeah, well it's not really a check but I told [my mother] "I will share this caption". Yes. [...]*

A : *I see.*

N : *Yeah, yeah, yeah. But [she] said there's not many things to revise..*

(Interview with Nana, October 7, 2022)

Nana contacted her mother from a distance to confirm if her English was ready to be publicized. Her posts, this time, were passed without necessary correction. Since our first interview, she initiated her conversation about her aspiration for “authentic” English of native speakers, which was also found in her remark on speaking English with other international exchange students in the U.S.

Excerpt 6.22

N : 留学生と喋る時ってなんか、あの、はたしてオーセンティックかって言われたら、なんかそうではないなって気がしちゃって。うん。なんか聞いてても、なんかちょっと今の文法違ったなとかっていうのもあるし。でも話は通じるんですよ。別に。それでも。なんか、それがそれで成り立ちちゃってるコミュニケーションなんで。なんか、自分の中では、あの、オーセンティックだなんていう感じはなくて、なんか自分は結構、そのアメリカで、アメリカに来て英語を学びに来たっていう、そういう意識がすごい、多分、自分の中で強いせいか、なんか、どっちかっていうと、現地の子たちと喋ってる時の方が、なんかオーセンティックに感じます。

N : *When I talk to international students, well if someone were to ask me if [their English] is really authentic, I'd feel like, it's not. Yeah, even while listening to them, sometimes I feel like, "the grammar was a bit wrong." But we still understand each other and our communication is working. Even so, in my mind, I don't really feel like it's authentic. I think it's probably because I have this strong awareness that I came to America to learn English here in America, so when I talk to the local students, it feels more authentic to me.*

(Interview with Nana, October 7, 2022)

Before departure, Nana took a course at the department on globalization and English, which made her aware of conceptualization of English spread worldwide. Though she understood the current situation of English both theoretically and empirically, she admitted that she rather perceived ENL as authentic, which led her mother to give her guidance on authentic English. Her mother's English check continued after she started her exchange year, when she was befriended on Instagram with not only local American friends but also international students including those from Taiwan and India.

In the last interview, she stated that she had gained confidence in her English ability through interactions with local people during studying abroad and that she no longer evaluated her own English negatively, as she did before the departure. The frequency of her mother's English check also gradually decreased. However, she mentioned that she still cared about English correctness on SNS because it would remain on the internet (Interview with Nana, October 7, 2022).

6.2.3.3. If someone who do not have relationship with English uses English, I would

think like “nice try”

While exploring Nana’s attitude toward authentic English, it was gradually revealed that Nana built perception of English as a status symbol in Japanese society, during her experience as a future job applicant. She stated that the companies she applied prioritized hiring people who spoke English, and she felt she was being “flattered” during the application process (Interview with Nana, October 7, 2022). In the following excerpt, she was questioning people’s positive evaluation on her skill as an English speaker because she believed her English was not yet authentic enough.

Excerpt 6.23

N: なんだろうな、伝えるっていう意味では問題ないと思うんですけど、コミュニケーション図るっていう意味では問題ないと思うんですけど、それだけじゃ、こう、なんだろう、あの、それに甘えちゃ、そういうのに甘えちゃいけないなって思ってた、その言語を使う以上、できるだけ正確性とか精度を上げるっていうのが私は礼儀だと思うので、私はなんかこういうことなのかなって気を遣わせることが嫌なんですよね。

N: I don't think I have a problem in communication, but I don't think I should be too lenient with that. I think it is a manner to be as accurate and precise as possible when using the language. I don't like to make others put effort in interpreting [my English].

(Interview with Nana, August 26, 2022)

She states above that, improving accuracy and precision of English is a “manner” [礼儀].

She discusses that she wishes not to make others put effort in making sense of her English.

Nana further talked about the communicative interlocutor she was having in mind:

Excerpt 6.24

A: うん。うん。相手へのね、あの精度を高めることが、えっと相手への礼儀っておし

やってみましたけど、相手ってどんな、誰を、誰
N: = ああ、その言語を、例えば英語なら、英語を使う、話すことを、を普段から使っている人であったり、なんか私が日本語を話す感じでそんなに頭のなかで、んーって考えないで話せるじゃないですか、日本語って、そういう感じでその言語、英語を話せる人を、あの、想定してます。

A: *You said it's a manner for others. Can I, can I ask who are the others?*

N: = *Ah, for example, in English, those who use English regularly and speak English just the way I speak Japanese, like I don't quite think when I speak Japanese, and I refer to those who speak language or English in such a way.*

(Interview with Nana, August 26, 2022)

Nana's remark above suggests that she concerns of her potential interlocutors as native or near native speakers of English. In the interview, she further stated she was far from those people who speak authentic English without “thinking”, and seemed to doubt that she had full legitimacy in using English (Interview with Nana, August 26, 2022).

Furthermore, when she shared her experience of reading her Japanese friend's Instagram post in English, it became evident that she had her own opinions regarding who should use English on SNS. Her Japanese friend recently shared a photograph of paintings with a caption, “Works spending time with Treasure”. Nana reacted to her friend's use of English and described her self-consciousness that developed within herself.

Excerpt 6.25

N: なんか見かけたこともあるんですよ、こういうこと言いたいだろうな、だけど、なんかすごい間違ってるみたいな。なんか自分が彼女の1フォロワーとしてそう思っちゃって、思っちゃったことがあるので、なんか自分が間違えたらこう思われるんだみたいな。@@@

A: 反面教師なんだね。@@@

N: = そうそう、そうです。@@@

A: どう、どんな感じで思ったんですか、恥ずかしいなって思ったんですか。

N: ああ、うん、そうですね、恥ずかしい、95パーくらい、え、これこう思われるんだはずいなあって思いました。@@@

N: I have seen her post [in English] and I was trying to guess what she wanted to say but I was like “[her English] is very wrong”. And I thought, because I saw her in this way as her follower, if I make mistakes [my followers] would see me in the same way too. @@@

A: Like an example of what not to do. @@@

N: Yeah, yeah, yes.

A: What did you think? A little bit embarrassing?

N: Yeah, well, embarrassing, I thought, like for 95%, “wow, this would be what people might think about me. I would be humiliated.”

(Interview with Nana, August 26, 2022)

Nana’s reaction to her friend’s language or what she regarded as “very wrong” [すごい間違ってる] was responsive. That is, considering how she rated her friend’s English, Nana was now aware of how her followers might evaluate her if she made mistakes. She considered it embarrassing to make mistakes in front of everyone, as she elaborated in the following.

Excerpt 6.26

N: 使う分にはいいと思うんですよ。別に。私もめちゃめちゃ間違えるし、相手に意味が伝わってないことっていっぱいあるんですけど、ただ載せるってことは、多少こう合ってるっていう自信とかがないと、あつてるとか、これは見てるみんなに受け入れてもらえるとかっていう自信がないと SNS って載せないじゃないですか、そういう中でそういうことしちゃうんだっていう @@@

N: Well, it’s okay to use it [English]. I make a lot of mistakes too and there are many times I cannot make myself understood. But posting it means you at least are confident that your language is correct. You have to be confident that the usage can be accepted by everyone when you share posts on SNS. So I’m like, “you are brave to do that in this context” @@@

(Interview with Nana, August 26, 2022)

Her remark suggests that posting content on SNS differs from other occasions of English communication including oral conversation, and using English in front of everyone

requires confidence. She further elaborated on herself finding the friend's English intolerable:

Excerpt 6.27

N: [...]なんか結構普段から使ってる子に関してはなんとも思わないんですけど、なんかもう英語とか無縁だよなみたいな人が、頑張って使ってるなどかって私思っちゃうんですね。なんかその、あ、わかった！なんかこの自分あの使う言語じゃないのに使っていて、かつなんかちょっと間違っちゃってるみたいな、なんか残るものならせめて正しく、正しい形で載せるじゃないですか、普通。なのにそこまで注意が及ばなかったのかなって思うとちょっとイキってるのかなって思っちゃいます、私は。

N: [...] *I wouldn't mind people who use English on a daily basis [using English on SNS], but if someone who do not have relationship with English uses English [on SNS], I would think like "nice try". Here is my point! They are using a language that they don't use, and they get it a bit wrong. For something which remains [like SNS], I don't quite understand why [my friend] couldn't at least put it in the correct form.*

(Interview with Nana, August 26, 2022)

In the excerpt, she distinguishes between people who have or “does not have a relationship” [無縁] with English. She suggests that if the latter kinds of people use English with errors, it would be considered *ikiri*. She further described her definition of the sense of belonging to the language:

Excerpt 6.28

A: 自分の言語じゃないのに使ってるチックっていうのは、自分の言語じゃないボーダーラインとしては、やっぱり普段使ってない、勉強してるとかだったら。

N: =あ、勉強してるくらいなら全然いいと思います。本当に使ってない人です。あの無縁な。言語とは無縁な人。

A: *You mentioned people who use English though it is not theirs. How about if they are using the language daily or studying it.*

N: = *Oh, if you are studying it, it is totally fine. But I am talking about people who don't use it at all. Those who don't have relationship with language.*

(Interview with Nana, August 26, 2022)

The excerpt shows that Nana believes that a sense of belongingness to English is granted to those who use it daily or constantly study it. Nana considered herself not belonging to the group of speakers who, according to her, speak “authentic” English. This self-perception was reflected in her remark on the importance of developing linguistic forms to be in line with native or near-native English speakers and her tendency to seek feedback from her mother. In contrast, Nana also did not associate herself with those who do not usually use English and make a “nice try” [頑張って使ってる] at using English online.

Either way, her attitude appears to contradict Widdowson’s (1984) claim on the ownership of English users. Despite using English on SNS, she did not perceive herself or her friend as an English user. However, she considered herself to be between native speakers and those who wrote “Works spending time with Treasure”. She negotiated their linguistic identities by positioning herself in relation to other speakers (see Sung, 2014).

6.3. The voices as experienced ELF users

The present section introduces the voices of the other three participants, Seina, Rin and Kana. These three often used English (and other languages) on Instagram. Outside the online context, they were relatively exposed to daily ELF communication in and outside classrooms. Seina and Kana were enrolled in the EMI program at TGU. Rin, as

university staff, often engaged in ELF communication with coworkers at her office and with friends.

It was a normative practice for the three to employ English and other languages on Instagram. However, similar to the three participants examined in the previous section, they were also conscious of their audience presence. The section first discusses Seina's strong aspiration to be perceived as an English speaker with study abroad experience (6.3.1). Rin's interviews illustrated different attitudes toward being a user of English and of other language on Instagram (6.3.2). Lastly, Kana considered Instagram as a young adults' space for self-expression in English, and she also discussed the nature of Instagram as a place for self-approval and English monitoring (6.3.3).

6.3.1. Seina – Self-presentation as a former sojourner

Seina was a 22-year-old senior year EMI student at TGU. She went through what she explained grammar- and vocabulary-based English lessons in secondary education in Japan, which she described was difficult to apply in real-life use. When she was in high school, she spent one year as an exchange student in Michigan, U.S. After she entered TGU, she also studied in Munich, Germany, for half a year. At the EMI course, she was in a sociolinguistics seminar and worked on English education research. About four

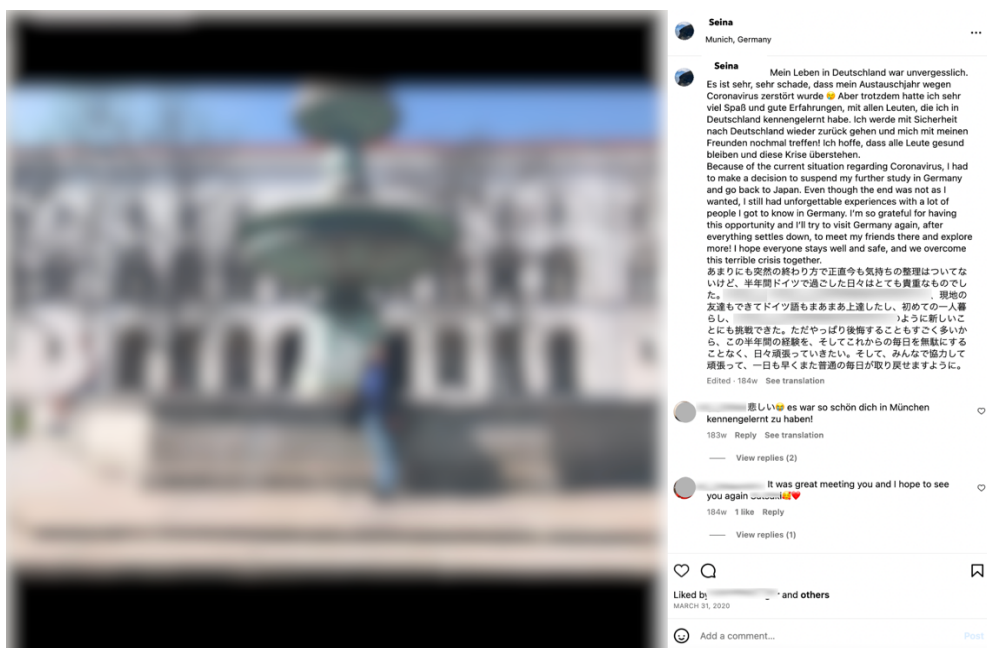
months after the investigation, she graduated and started working as a government official of an education department. The number of Instagram posts declined after she started working.

Seina joined three interviews, which ranged from 30 minutes to 1 hour in length, while we were connected online since November 2021. On her private account with 459 followers, she occasionally updated posts to share memorable life events such as piano recitals, trips and study abroad. During the observation, she used the site as a journal and wrote relatively dense caption. From observation and interviews, it was found that Seina used Japanese when her posts described her local memberships such as her university piano circle group, while she wrote in English when she shared her posts with overseas friends, for instance, study abroad and Coming-of-Age day.

6.3.1.1. Using English studied at school is “corny”

Throughout the engagement with Seina, it was clear that she was conscious of how her English represented her identity as a former exchange student and EMI student. In the interviews, Seina looked back on the Instagram post below in which she summarized her study abroad in Germany, which was suspended halfway through due to the pandemic. Her Instagram post is in three languages, German, English, and Japanese.

Image 6.4 Memoir in German, English and Japanese – Seina’s post



Extract 6.4 Seina’s caption extracted with English translation

Language guide: German (regular), English (**bold**), *Japanese (italics)*

Original

Mein Leben in Deutschland war unvergesslich. Es ist sehr, sehr schade, dass mein Austauschjahr wegen Coronavirus zerstört wurde 😞 Aber trotzdem hatte ich sehr viel Spaß und gute Erfahrungen, mit allen Leuten, die ich in Deutschland kennengelernt habe. Ich werde mit Sicherheit nach Deutschland wieder zurück gehen und mich mit meinen Freunden nochmal treffen! Ich hoffe, dass alle Leute gesund bleiben und diese Krise überstehen.

Because of the current situation regarding Coronavirus, I had to make a decision to suspend my further study in Germany and go back to Japan. Even though the end was not as I wanted, I still had unforgettable experiences with a lot of people I got to know in Germany. I’m so grateful for having this opportunity and I’ll try to visit Germany again, after everything settles down, to meet my friends there and explore more! I hope everyone stays well and safe, and we overcome this terrible crisis together.

あまりにも突然の終わり方で正直今も気持ちの整理はついてないけど、半年間ドイツで過ごした日々はとても貴重なものでした。[...]現地の友達もできてドイツ語もまあまあ上達したし、初めての一人暮らし[...]のように新しいことにも挑戦できた。ただやっぱり後悔することもすごく多いから、この半年間の経験

を、そしてこれからの毎日を無駄にすることなく、日々頑張っ
ていきたい。そして、みんなで協力して頑張って、1日も早く
また普通の毎日が取り戻せますように。

Translation

My life in Germany was unforgettable. It was a pity that my exchange year was destroyed because of Corona virus 😞 But fun and great experiences with all the people I met in Germany. I will surely come back to Germany and meet my friends again. I hope that all people stay healthy and overcome this crisis.

Because of the current situation regarding Coronavirus, I had to make a decision to suspend my further study in Germany and go back to Japan. Even though the end was not as I wanted, I still had unforgettable experiences with a lot of people I got to know in Germany. I'm so grateful for having this opportunity and I'll try to visit Germany again, after everything settles down, to meet my friends there and explore more! I hope everyone stays well and safe, and we overcome this terrible crisis together.

I'm honestly still having a hard time sorting out my feelings about the way it ended so sudden, but every day of the half year I spent in Germany was very precious. I didn't really study but my German skill improved after meeting local friends. There are new challenges such as living alone, part-time work at a restaurant, and playing softball. But honestly there are also many regrets. I will not waste the experiences I gained for the last half year and days from now on, and make the best out of every day in my life. We are all in this together and hope we'll be back to the normal life soon.

Seina stated that the German sentences, which were produced after and partially translated from English ones, were aimed at sharing her study abroad status with her international followers, while the Japanese sentences captured her inner thoughts to remember. All four English sentences in the caption are compound sentences with the usage of the comma, conjunction (*and, even though*), preposition (*after*), and the infinitive. These grammatical structures were meant to show her language competence, which will be further discussed

later. During her time in Germany, she developed her German skill by interacting with local people through social activity and sports. She produced the German sentences above by herself, sometimes recalling vocabulary that local friends used during her stay, such as the term, *zerstört* [destroyed], replacing *suspend* in the English sentences, which emphasized her devastation of finishing study abroad early. She wrote in three languages to expand her audience, as the following excerpt suggests.

Excerpt 6.29

S: やっぱドイツのことなのでやっぱドイツ語で書きたいなって思ってドイツ語で書いたのと。ま、でもドイツ語だけだとわからない人もいるから、英語でも書こうみたいな [...] 割となんか幅広い人に知ってほしいって思ったのか3つの言語で書いてたので今見たら。

S: I wanted to write in German because it's about Germany. But some people don't know German, so I wrote in English too [...]. I think I wanted to let many people know, so I wrote in three languages.

(Interview with Seina, February 8, 2022)

In the excerpt, she indicates that English is to reach people who speak languages other than Japanese and German, demonstrating her active participation in ELF communication. Additionally, German represented her study abroad experiences. Interestingly, Seina, looking back her own post above, stated that she would not use German now.

Excerpt 6.30

S: なんか結構なんかドイツ語でやっぱなんか書きたいなっていうのは結構考えてて、やっぱり今だったら恥ずかしくて書けないんですけど、留学の最後って一番こうなんだろういい感じでその国に染まってて。なんかそういう言語でちょっと書いて、みたいな。

A: いいこと。

S: ちょっとイキリもある、なんかイキリって思わ、思う人もいるかもしれないんですけど@@

S: *I really wanted to write in German. I couldn't write [in German] now because it's embarrassing. It was the end of study abroad and how can I say, I was absorbed into the country, so I wanted to write in the language.*

A: Nice.

S: *I think it's a bit ikiri. I think people would consider it ikiri @@*

(Interview with Seina, February 8, 2022)

In the excerpt above, just as Karin (see Section 2.2.3) and Nana (see Section 3.2.3), Seina mentions *ikiri*, believing that her followers might consider her showing off German proficiency, which is embarrassing. In another interview, Seina stated that there is perception prevalent in public that using foreign languages, even after returning to their home country, is considered showcasing one's language proficiency and experience of living/studying abroad (Interview with Seina, February 12, 2023).

Her study abroad experiences, especially in the U.S., was eye-opening for her, as she found the gaps between the English usage she learned at Japanese high school and the one used by locals in the U.S. As an example of such gaps, she listed the use of the verbs “have” and “like” in present progressive forms, which were corrected in a high school classroom in Japan but used by native speakers of English. When asked about her thoughts on writing online, she stated that she usually preferred using English she learned in the U.S. to what she learned at school, as elaborated in the following excerpt.

Excerpt 6.31

A: 英語で書くとき気をつけてることみたいなあったりしますか？

S: 英語の時は、あの、いかにもその日本語で、学校でやった英文法でガチガチに書いてますみたいな感じにならないようにはしてるかなって思って。なんかそれちょっと、何だろ、なんかちょっとダサいっていうか、どうせ英語で書くならそれこそネイティブが使うような、普通の日本の学校で文法勉強してたら、思いつかないようなこととか、表現とかそういうのを結構使いたいな思って。

A: *Is there anything you care about when you write in English?*

S: *I try not to make my English look like the rigorous English grammar I studied at school. It would be a little corny. When I write in English, I want to use expressions that native speakers would use and those who studied grammar at a normal Japanese school would not come up with.*

(Interview with Seina, February 8, 2022)

Seina avoided using “rigorous” [ガチガチ] English grammar she learned in high school because it was “corny” [ダサい]. For Seina, using English like native speakers on SNS was a way to differentiate herself from those who learned English solely in Japan. When asked about her definition of rigorous grammar, she stated as follows:

Excerpt 6.32

A: 例えば Seina さんのいう日本の文法っていうのは。

S: [...] 日本だけで英語やっていると割と英作文とか私も留学行くまで私もそうだったんですけど、表現のレパートリーが少ないので、結構、同じような、全部 I から始まって、一文も短いみたいな、何とかピリオドみたいなそんな感じ。私も留学行く前まで多くて、他の人もそうかなと思うんですけど。それをなんかわざわざインスタで英語使うのにそんなのカッコ悪いと思って。[...] 結構この英語の投稿も長いかなって思うんですけど、だから結構長くて、短すぎる文を羅列するだけじゃなくて、ちょっと長めのやつでちょっと難しい、難しめっていうか、まあ日本人からしたら複雑かなみたいなので、割と書きたいなって思ってて。

A: *Can you give any examples of English grammar in Japan?*

S: *When you are only learning English in Japan, you don't have much of a repertoire of expressions for English compositions, like everything starts with “I” and the sentences are short. I wrote in that way as with others until I studied abroad. I think it would be uncool to use [English on Instagram at all when it's so simple including “I” sentences] when you go out of your way to use English on Instagram. [...] So, I try not to repeat short sentences, but write longer and more difficult ones that would be a bit complicated for Japanese people to understand.*

(Interview with Seina, February 8, 2022)

In the excerpts, Seina mentions that those who study English in Japan have a limited knowledge of composition and indicates that brief sentences starting with the subject “I” are “not cool” [カッコ悪い] to use on Instagram. Her remark illustrates that using compound sentences and relative clauses in her Instagram post (see Image 6.4) is for presenting herself as a student who learned English outside Japanese classrooms. She published the online post above with sentences that were “complicated for Japanese people to understand”, which implied that her English caption was intended not to be easily understood but to be merely recognized by her Japanese friends. In this respect, her English sentences seemed to play two different roles. On the one hand, her English had referential function; she wrote in English to convey the message to her friends in the online ELF context. On the other hand, her English sentences had an indexical meaning, showing her identity as an experienced English user in front of her Japanese friends.

6.3.1.2. I know that people around me think I am a little different, so I want to live up to that

Seina’s study abroad experiences and enrollment in the EMI undergraduate course raised her self-esteem as an individual who has an international background and hence

proficient in English. At an integrated junior high and high school she attended, she was chosen among six students who went to study abroad. Of all her 450 followers on Instagram, her self-presentation was especially shaped by the presence of Japanese friends from the junior high and high school, who knew that she studied abroad. The following excerpt depicts her thoughts behind producing English posts on Instagram.

Excerpt 6.33

S: [...] 私が留学してるのとか中学高校の友達とか知ってるので、留学したのになんかこんな英語しか書けないのみたいな。留学したんだったらすごそうな英語書きたいみたいな感じなのはあって、くだらないんですけど。

A: =いえいえ、全然。

S: そうですね。中高のフォローしてる友達は全員私が留学してることを知ってて、で、大学もまあ[学部の名前]っていう割と英語が得意とされる学部で、そのサークルの友達とか他の学部の人も多いので、やっぱり英語をやっぱできるのかなと周りから思われると思うのでそれに恥じないっていうか、そうですね、やっぱ普通のちょっと日本で英語やって来たみたいな人とはちょっと違うって思われてるなって自分でもわかるのでなんかそれに沿うようになっていうか。

S: *My friends from junior high and high school know that I studied abroad, so [they might think] “even though you studied abroad, this is all you can write in English”. Since I studied abroad, I want to write in impressive English. I know it’s silly.*

A: = No, not at all.

S: *Well, all of my friends who follow me know that I studied abroad, and besides, I am enrolled in an EMI course [whose students] are good at English. I have friends from my circles and other departments as well. I also think I can speak English well and I don’t want to screw this up. I know that people around me think I am a little different from ordinary people who have studied English in Japan, so I want to live up to that.*

(Interview with Seina, February 8, 2022)

Seina’s account describes that through her “impressive English” [すごそうな英語] on Instagram, she tries to perform her identity as an English speaker who was once a sojourner and a student in the international course. Importantly, she was not sure whether, in reality, her friends from junior high and high school and from other undergraduate

departments expected her to be competent in English. Instead, she only anticipated her friends' reactions.

Seina began learning English in her childhood due to her parents' recommendation to attend an English conversational class. Since then, she has always liked English, and it was her decision to study abroad when she was in high school. Nonetheless, Seina also stated that after she studied abroad, her mother would often pressure her by empathizing the importance of maintaining English skills for a successful career path in Japan:

Excerpt 6.34

S: なんか親に、なんか結構圧かけられて。

A: ああ、それはなんですかね。

S: うん、なぜ、いや、なんかやっぱキープしてほしいみたいで。仕事する時でも、なんか絶対自分の武器って必要でみたいな。[...] で、あなたの場合はなんかもう他が、別にすごい、なんだろう、すごい能力が別にあるわけでもないんだから、なんか言語力は、なんか留学とかも他の人よりはそういう土壌はあるからやっぱそこは生かしてキープしとけば絶対生きるし、みたいな話をすごいされてっていう感じ。

S: *Like, my parent pressures me.*

A: *Ah, why?*

S: *Well, why, you know, she wants me to keep [my English skills]. It'll be definitely weapon for my jobs too. [...] She is like, you don't really have talent in other things, but for language skills, you do have a base that was built by the study abroad, and it would worth if you keep it. She often says things like that.*

(Interview with Seina, October 22, 2022)

There have been constant expectations for Seina to excel in English. Seina's mother explicitly communicated that her daughter did not exhibit exceptional skills other than English. It accelerated Seina's consciousness about her privilege of speaking English and thus she was invested in sustaining her English language proficiency. At her current office,

she is often assigned to paperwork and translation jobs that require English, as she is the most fluent in the language among her colleagues. It appears that her self-presentation as an English user is also constructed through the relationships with her friends, family, and colleagues.

A similar attitude was seen in a remark shared by Moe, who has been studying and working in the U.S. for 10 years. Moe stated that because her local friends in Japan knew that she has been a resident in the U.S. for an extended time, she anticipated that her friends expected her to use English with ease (10年もいるからもう英語、全然、全然不便ないんでしょって多分思うだろうなっていうのを多分思ってると思う。“I think that they think I am all conformable using English after living here for 10 years”, Interview with Moe, May 31, 2022). She also stated that usually when she writes online, she is conscious of correct grammar, having her Japanese friends in mind. Moe’s assumption about her Japanese friends’ expectations became a pressure for her when using English in a daily digital discourse.

Seina (and Moe) believed that her friends would assume that having experience abroad meant she could speak English. She anticipated the followers’ expectations of her and tried to meet the presumed English-speaking self she wanted to live up to. Seina’s accounts exemplified that SNS is a space where users present idealized selves. Her

remarks indicated that English is considered to be an asset earned through privileged experiences.

6.3.2. Rin – ELF user self and Korean user self

Rin was 25 years old, who works as a university staff, participating in ELF communication with students and professors on a daily basis. Growing up, she went to a private high school whose English classes were often conducted in English. As an exchange student, she spent one year in high school in California, the U.S., and six months in Lille, France, during her undergraduate years. She is regularly exposed to ELF communication outside the office when she spends time with her Korean and Filipino friends from the local church.

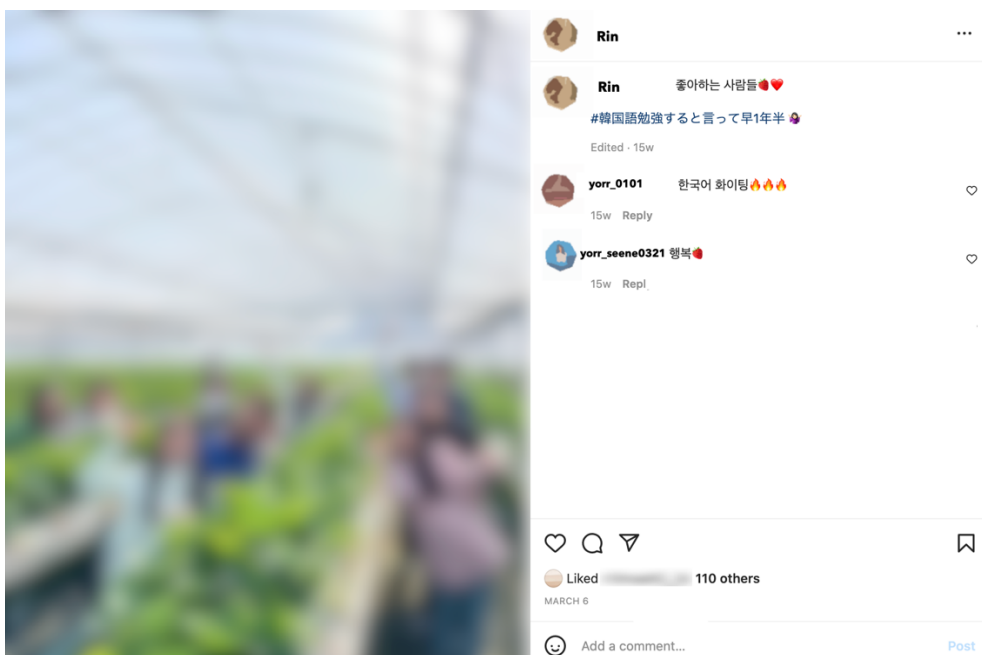
Rin keeps her Instagram account private and uses it to record both everyday activities and special events. She frequently shares photographs for self-expressive purposes with her 1,058 followers. She participated in the interviews three times, and each lasted from 45 minutes to an hour. Over the course of the observation since March 2022, Rin's Instagram illustrated her capability of using a translingual repertoire to build relationships with her friends, as seeing her pragmatic creativity to engage in translocal communication using Fukuoka dialect (see Chapter 5 Section 5.3.3). In addition to

Japanese and English, she often used Korean on the site, which she had been practicing for a while due to her interest in Korean culture such as food and music. Rin expressed contrasting attitudes towards using Korean and English and showed more prescriptive and conscious attitudes when using English on the site.

6.3.2.1. It is funny that I try writing in Korean

Rin's attitude toward using Korean was also influenced by her thoughts on how her unforeseeable audiences would see her Instagram posts. Rin was lenient about her Korean-speaker self as she considered herself a developing learner. She occasionally shared posts in Korean since she was studying the language to talk to her Korean friends and to understand the lyrics of her favorite K-pop songs. In the following post (Image 6.5), she wrote in Korean along with the photograph of her and her Japanese and Korean friends together visiting strawberry picking, which was supplemented by the fruit emoji.

Image 6.5 Korean with a Japanese hashtag – Rin's post



Extract 6.5 Rin's caption extracted with English translation

Language guide: Korean (regular), *Japanese* (italics)

Original	<p>Rin: 좋아하는 사람들 🍓❤️ #韓国語勉強すると言って早1年半 🙋🏻👉</p> <p>yorr_0101: 한국어 화이팅 🔥🔥🔥</p> <p>seene0321: 행복 🍓</p>
Translation	<p>Rin: <i>My favorite people</i> 🍓❤️ <i>#It's been already one and half year since I said I would start studying Korean</i> 🙋🏻👉</p> <p>yorr_0101: Fighting Korean [Grappling with Korean] 🔥🔥🔥</p> <p>seene0321: Happiness 🍓</p>

In the post above, Rin describes her friends in the photograph as *favorite people* in the hangul characters. In the interview, she considered herself as a preliminary Korean learner, who was struggling to type in the language. She was unsure about the pronunciation nor

the accurate meaning of the Korean phrase since she copied and pasted the phrases directly from Instagram posts shared by influencers from the country. This shows that her Korean repertoire constructed online was often assembled visually than verbally.

Underneath the Korean phrase in black is a hashtagged Japanese sentence in blue with a shrugging emoji (see Image 6.5), referring to her moderate Korean learning process. Alternative to the conventional usage of SNS hashtags to reach “internet as a whole” (Tagg & Seargeant, 2014), Rin frequently used them for adding extra information to the main texts in black. She explained that the Japanese hashtag addressed her Japanese friends who knew she was studying Korean.

Excerpt 6.35

R: あとキャプションにあの勉強するって言って早1年半かかっているけど、ここがあの、結局こうやって頑張っているけど、あの実は全然伸びてないんだよっていう、ま、それをここにいた子たちはわかっているから、なんか、あの普段全然喋らないくせに、こういう時だけ張り切って韓国語を書いているよっていう、ちょっと面白おかしさを出したかったっていう。

R: I wanted to show that after all [my Korean language skill] hasn't much developed even though I look trying here. My friends [Japanese friends in the photograph] know that, so I wanted to say that it is funny that I try writing in Korean even though I don't usually speak it at all.

(Interview with Rin, July 4, 2022)

Even when Rin was writing in Korean, she had her Japanese-speaking friends in mind. In the post, by using Japanese hashtag, she acknowledges that it is funny to use Korean on Instagram even though she has not yet acquired the language sufficiently due to

inadequate practices. One of the followers, yorr_0101, a Korean speaker, who most likely read the Rin's hashtag, advises that she keeps up with Korean practice (한국어 화이팅 [fighting Korean] 'Grappling with Korean' 🏹🏹🏹). Nonetheless, it was important for her to inform her Japanese friends about her Korean practice. In the interview, Rin continued elaborating that her hashtags often aimed to demean herself when her online posts exhibited only the positive side of her.

Excerpt 6.36

R: [...]なんか気取ってばかり。結構私気取っちゃうから、SNS 上で。

A: あ、そう。

R: うん、なんかいいとこだけ見せようみたいな感じがあるけど、でもなんか私もその面白おかしくしたり、とか、まあなんだろう面白い具合でとどめられる自虐ネタが好きだから。そう、でもこの裏側ってこうなんだよね、みたいなことをよくハッシュタグで書いて中和してる。

R: *I often show off [my life] on SNS.*

A: *Oh really.*

R: *Yes, I feel like I want to show only the good parts. But I like to be funny, and you know, to joke about myself if it's funny. So, I talk about behind the scenes using hashtags and try to neutralize it [my post].*

(Interview with Rin, July 4, 2022)

In the excerpt, Rin states that she usually displays the “good parts” [いいとこだけ] of herself, which echoes with Instagram users' general sentiments, trying to seek for self-approval by showing an idealized self (see Chapter 3). Simultaneously, Rin showed her shameful self or self “behind the scenes” [裏側] through the blue hashtags. In doing so, she made a sarcastic contrast: Korean-user self on screen and Korean-learner self behind

the screen, who struggles to acquire the language. Her practice signals her “carefully-crafted identity performances” to present not only her idealized self but also “sense of [her] own authentic self” (Tagg, 2016, p. 80). Her perception of using Korean as a “showoff” aligns with the anecdotes shared by Karin (see Section 6.2.1.3) and Seina (see Section 6.3.1.1) on using German for their Instagram posts. Rin perceived her use of Korean as an object of her Japanese friends’ scrutiny, and thus “neutralized” [中和してる] it not to look showoff. Her Japanese hashtag to degrade the potential showoff is considered to be a strategy to balance between the self who desired to show intimacy to her Korean friends and self who wished to maintain friendships with her Japanese friends. In this respect, the main texts in black and hashtags in blue performed different identities. The example also exhibits that not only did Rin’s code choices but also the affordance of technical function, hashtags, demonstrated multidirectional self-presentation, revealing her ample use of communicative modes for identity construction online.

6.3.2.2. If I know the correct answer, then I have to have it correct

While Rin made a joke about herself for Korean speaking self, she was invested in staying as a competent English user who knew what was correct and mistake. Having studied abroad and speaking English as a working-language at her office, Rin was

confident in using the language, which made her conscious about presenting self as a competent user. Rin stated that if she finds any mistake in her English, she usually edits her posts until she can correct her English, as seen in the excerpt below.

Excerpt 6.37

R: 読んでみた時に、え、何これってなることが多くて、それはすごい嫌だから、あんま多すぎると、送信取り消しして、もう1回送ったりとかもしちゃうし、やっぱ SNSだと編集できるから、うん、あの見つけた時は編集コソっとしちゃう。

R: *When you read [my text] again, I often be like “oh what” and I hate that. So, if I have too many [mistakes] I unsend my texts and send them again, or if it's SNS, I can edit [my posts], so I edit them secretly.*

(Interview with Rin, October 12, 2022)

The use of “secretly” [コソッと] implies her wish to keep her English corrected without people noticing. When asked about using English online, she shared her opinion particular to the platform whose communication is written mode, which remains online persistently. She usually edits and corrects her English if she finds errors, believing that her English should be better:

Excerpt 6.38

R: 私は英語できるはず。@@@私の英語力こんなもんじゃないはず、だから、みたいな感じで。@@@

A: なるほど、なんかちゃんとかうキープしておきたいなっていうね。

R: そうそう。

A: なるほど、その、気に、間違えたくないとか思うのは、なんでですかね。

R: [...] 喋ってて文法がぐちゃぐちゃになるとかあると思うけど、文章、タイピングする文は見返せるから。どこが間違ってたかとかもね、音として聞いていくわけじゃなくて、残ってるんだったら、なんか、正解を知ってるんだったら正解にしくちゃって、結構思っちゃう。

R: *I should be good at English. @@@ My English skill is more than this like that @@@*

A: *I see. You want to keep [English skill]*

R: *Yeah, yeah.*

A: *Why do you not want to make mistakes?*

R: *[...] Your grammar could be messy when you speak [English] too, but you can look back on typed sentences. Unlike sounds in speech, mistakes [in typed sentence] will remain, and I think that if I know the correct answer, then I have to have it correct.*

(Interview with Rin, July 4, 2022)

When asked why she checks her grammar before sharing her post, Rin laughingly shared her feeling, “my skill is more than this” [私は英語できるはず]. It is observed her self-esteem and strong interest in reaching an ideal English speaker, who has studied abroad and speaks English daily at her office. She further addressed the difference between spoken and written communication. While she is not overtly conscious about grammar when speaking, she is when writing. Her remark on the “correct answer” endorses the formality and stableness of written language and shows her prescriptive attitudes toward English.

Further conversation with Rin revealed her pride to be recognized as a competent English speaker who would never make English errors.

Excerpt 6.39

R: あの多分、自分のプライドだと思う。正解知ってるし。あの間違いちゃったけど、それが間違えてわかってますっていうプライドだと。

R: *I think it's my pride. I know the correct answer. It's my pride and I want [my online friends] to know that I understand mistake is a mistake.*

(Interview with Rin, July 4, 2022)

She discussed that her “pride” as an experienced English user once living abroad who uses it daily at her office does not allow her to make mistakes in front of her friends on the platform. Rin’s comments have some overlaps with other participants introduced in the present chapter. Specifically, there was a common understanding that written communication preserves language usage; therefore, the consciousness of language raises, and the pride they have in English is heightened.

Rin’s remarks have shown that for Korean, she publicly joked about her language skills using the Japanese hashtags. In contrast, for English, the language she considered herself a proficient user who “know[s] the correct answer”, she maintained her self-presentation as a proficient user demonstrating the “correct” usages. The conversation with Rin revealed her pride to be perceived, by their audiences, as a sufficient English user online.

6.3.3. Kana – ELF user and self-approval

Kana was 21 years old and was enrolled in the EMI course. Due to her father’s work, Kana spent three years in the U.K. from the second grade of junior high to the first grade of high school. Kana used English in the classroom, and sometimes talked to friends from

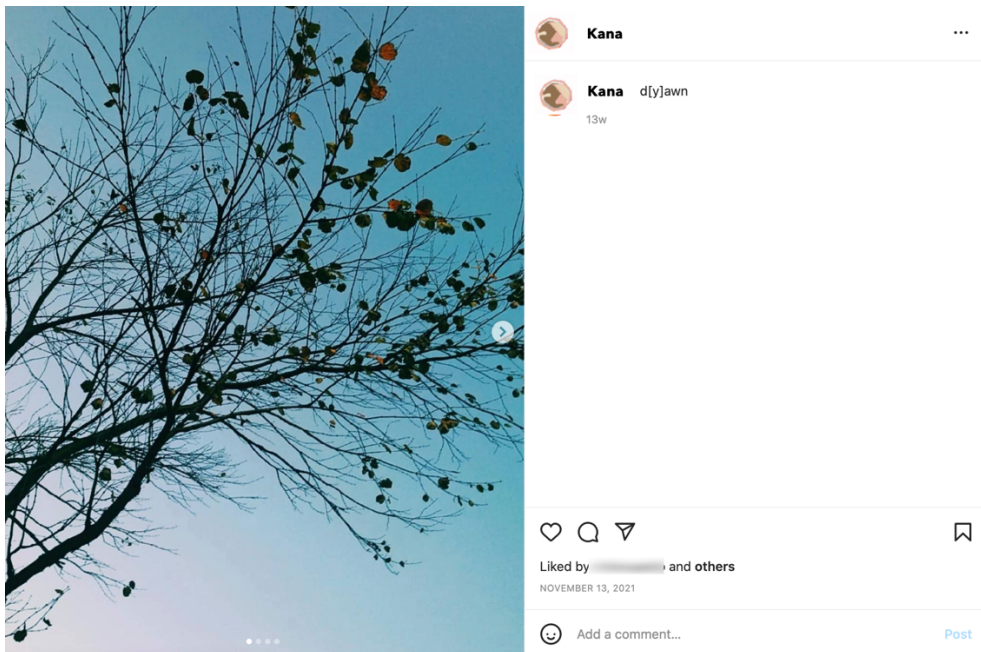
the university and a few from the U.K. over Instagram. Many of her close friends were from a band circle at TGU whose members were mostly Japanese.

She had 231 followers on Instagram, including her friends from Japan and the U.K. I started online observation of her Instagram in November 2021, and she gave willing consent to join 1-hour interviews for four times in total. Her Instagram posts along with edited photographs and short caption were not always explanatory but artistic, as seen her poetically creative English use (see Chapter 5 Section 5.4.2). She often updated her posts late at night, reflecting a wish she described as, wanting to be seen but not by many.

6.3.3.1. Language that adults are just not familiar with

Kana shared the following post with the picture taken in the early morning when she had stayed up all night after she went for a drink with her friends:

Image 6.6 Poetic language play in English – Kana’s post



Extract 6.6. Kana's caption extracted

d[y]awn

In the post, she plays on the word, “dawn”, which captures the scenery of the photograph, and “yawn”, which depicts her physical condition after the sleepless night (Interview with Kana, February 9, 2022). She stated that she preferred to keep her words short and to leave them for interpretation instead of explicitly explaining the photographs or the stories behind them. As the following excerpt describes, her playful language usage dates back to the times when she was in school in the U.K.

Excerpt 6.40

K: なんかあのイギリスにいた時に、英語の授業でポエム、詩をすごいやってたんですけど。なんかすごいリズムとかライム、韻を踏んだりとか[···]韻はちょっとなかなか踏むのが苦手なんですけど。なんか言葉遊び的なのを、どうにかちょっとカッコよく取

り入れたいなという感じで。

K: When I was in the UK, we did a lot of poems in my English class. It was all about rhythm, rhyme, and all that. I'm not very good at rhyming, but I want to incorporate some kind of wordplay that's a little cool.

(Interview with Kana, February 9, 2022)

Experiencing creative exercises such as writing poems at school, she incorporated creative plays into her everyday language activity in a digital discourse. She further stated English was less explicit than Japanese, and for her, was a language that not everybody understood instantly and thus was suitable to play with in a caption. She continued discussing that the reflexive nature of written language allows her to take time to produce her language, which helped her express herself better than speech.

Excerpt 6.41

K: [...] あんまり英語がすごい得意ってわけじゃないんですけど。英語は、なんか喋ると結構、えっと、あんまりそのちゃんと考えずに口から出さなきゃいけないというか。あたふたしちゃって、ぼっぼって、面白くない言葉しか言えないんですけど。日本語も英語もそうなんですけど。だからなんか SNS で考える時間がちょっとあるときは、少しなんか面白いことを、言葉をかけたりとか。

K: [...] I am not really good at English. If I speak in English, I have to get my words out of my mouth quickly without many thoughts. I panic and rush, and I cannot say anything interesting. That applies to both Japanese and English. So, for SNS, I have a little time to think things through, so I can write words that are a bit interesting.

(Interview with Kana, February 9, 2022)

The above excerpt shows that although she uses English in the classroom on a daily basis, she is not particularly confident in using English in speech. Kana finds SNS to be a suitable space for self-expression, as she is able to take the necessary time for “thinking

things through”.

While she often played with the language and expressed herself freely, she understood that the language she used was different from what is said to be correct in classroom contexts.

Excerpt 6.42

K: SNS とかだと主語を抜かしたりとか、単語だけで喋ったりとか[...] 綺麗な英語は習ってる気がするんで。ちょっと違うのかな。

A: インスタとかとは、ま、インスタの英語は綺麗じゃない? @@

K: え、どうなんですかね@@綺麗っていうか、なんなんですかね、若者っていうか。[...] なんか。その綺麗っていうのが、なんですかね、大人とか先生が見てなんか綺麗。若者言葉も結構、日本語が乱れてるとか言われるんですけど、なんかそういう大人から見て、なんか、あんまり使い、あんまり馴染みがない使い方、まあインスタがそもそも馴染みがないのかもしれないですけど。

K: In SNS, for instance, you often skip subjects or you talk only with single word [...] I think I studied clean English, so it's a bit different.

A: Is Instagram, English on Instagram, not clean? @@@

K: Well, I don't know@@ Clean, I mean, [Instagram language is] for young adults. [...] What I mean by clean is, clean from the view of adults and teachers. Young language, in Japanese too, is often considered messy. Language that adults are just not familiar with. Well, maybe, they are not familiar with Instagram in the first place.

(Interview with Kana, February 9, 2022)

In the excerpts, Kana states that the language used by Instagram users is not “clean” [綺麗²⁷] in a grammatical sense, as people omit subjects or communicate with each other with abbreviated words. She suggests that the normativity of language is only evaluated from the perspectives of adults and schoolteachers. Reflecting on her undergraduate

²⁷ The Japanese term 綺麗 <ki-re-i> has a versatile range of meanings, including “beautiful”, “elegant,” “aesthetic,” “pretty,” and “clean.” For this context, I have chosen to interpret it as “clean,” as I believe Kana was referring to English that is not messy or dirty in her statement.

research into young adults' language at a sociolinguistics seminar, she pointed out that youth language is often considered deviant due to the adults' lack of familiarity with the language culture on SNS.

Kana's statement highlights the contrast between the linguistic culture in digital discourse, which the young adults are accustomed to, and that of the classroom, where English prescriptivism often prevails. Kana's remark exemplifies that the language taught in school only represent one of various purposes of using the language.

6.3.3.2. I want to get this reply, or I want to be seen in this way

In the later rounds of the interviews, it was revealed that Kana was consciously refraining from using too much English on Instagram. Below, Kana talks about her perception of the potential evaluation of returnee students by others.

Excerpt 6.43

K: [...] やっぱり帰国生ってなんかなんだろすかしてるというか。 @@

A: @@@

K: 英語を見せびらかしてる感が出そうだなっていうのはあって。

A: じゃあそれをしないように。

K: ありますね。

K: [...] *You know, returnee is usually considered cocky@@*

A: @@@

K: *Like they are flattering their English.*

A: *So, you try not to do that.*

K: *Yes.*

(Interview with Kana, May 7, 2022)

Admitting that Kana herself is a returnee student, who she believes is typically perceived as “showing off” their English, she tries to avoid conforming to this stereotype by abstaining from behaving in such a way.

Kana also elaborated on why she refrained from behaving in a way that people would perceive a returnee student to be. During the interview, she positioned herself as what she termed a “half-baked” [中途半端] returnee, as compared to her friends from the same department (Interview with Kana, January 27 2023). She believed that her three-year stay in the U.K. was shorter than other returnee students, and considered herself more comfortable speaking Japanese than English, positioning herself somewhere between *juna-japa* and returnee.

Excerpt 6.44

K: [...]無意識で英語を話すようなそのバリバリ帰国生の方は英語が出ちゃうみたいな多いと思うんですけど、私が多分英語を喋ると意識的に喋るといふか、そういうそのちょっとカッコよく見られたいっていう感情が乗って喋ると思うので、それはしたくないなど。

A: 気をつけてる。

K: 気をつけてる。

K: There are returnees who are very comfortable speaking English, like they are not aware [of speaking English]. When I'm speaking English, I'm always aware that I have some kind of intention of wanting to look cool. So I don't want to do that.

A: You try not to.

K: I try not to.

(Interview with Kana, January 27, 2023)

In the excerpt above, Kana believes that her use of English on SNS serves more than a

mere communicative function but rather associated with her self-presentation seeking for “cool” self.

She seemed to have felt psychological pressure as a result of self-presentation; approximately six months after I began observation, she deleted her Instagram account entirely. She felt that using Instagram being immersed in others’ lives and exposing her life to the public negatively impacted on her psychological well-being during job-hunting (she agreed to provide her posts as data, which were already gathered by the time). In the excerpt below, she explained that she felt depressed about presenting herself on the platform, explaining the culture of Instagram:

Excerpt 6.45

K: なんか私もなんですけど、自分の投稿になんか人からこう返信されたい、人にこう思われたいみたいな承認欲求が、自分の投稿は見えちゃうんで、今も投稿してない。なんか気持ち悪いなって。

K: This holds for myself too, but I tend to have this feeling that I want to get this reply, or I want to be seen in this way. I sense my desire for recognition from my posts, so I stopped sharing my posts. It doesn't feel good.

(Interview with Kana, January 27, 2023)

Kana’s remark suggested that, in nature, SNS is a space for self-presentation yearning for approval by followers. She believed that people’s investment in using English online was derived from this nature of the platform.

She further suggested that it is a common practice among Japanese young adults to

evaluate how well (or not) their peers' English is:

Excerpt 6.46

K: 教育とか勉強してたんですけど、それでも日本の英語教育ってまだ遅れてるなっと思
ってて、遅れてるくせに、くせにとか言っちゃいけないんですけど、遅れてるのに、
みんな結構文法とか厳しめ、な感じが。私も結構そうなんですけど。だからお互いそ
の喋れないことをコンプレックスを抱きながらも他の人が喋れると、いやらしい、劣
等感で止まるし。喋れなくても結構その「この文法変」とか思っちゃたりとかあるの
かなと思います。

K: I studied education, and I feel like English education in Japan is behind. I shouldn't say this, but it's behind, and yet people are strict when it comes to grammar. I'm talking about myself too. So, they kind of have this inferiority complex of not being able to speak [English]. If other people can speak English, you have this nasty inferior feeling. And if they cannot speak English, you still think like "their grammar is not right".

(Interview with Kana, May 7, 2022)

Kana further noticed that the reason why people are very conscious of others' English derives from the perpetuated belief about prestigious status of speaking English. Kana's opinion suggests that evaluating peers' English is apparent behavior among Japanese students. Her remark indicates that the "inferiority complex of not being able to speak" English affects young adults' behavior to be conscious about both their own and their peers' English. And it is either too good or too bad, but never just right.

6.4. Summary

This chapter has focused on the voices of the six participants and explored their self-presentation as English users (as well as German and Korean users) in the online ELF context. What became evident from the conversations with these young adult Instagram

users was their intricate negotiation of self-presentation as language users, particularly in the presence of their audiences, primarily Japanese audiences. The participants' linguistic attitudes toward English were influenced by the nature of SNS, especially the perceived permanency of written language (see also Chapter 2 and 3) and online surveillance culture (Page, 2020; Trottier, 2016; see also Chapter 3), exhibiting their idealized versions of themselves through their language. Regardless of the language they used, they were acutely conscious of their local Japanese friends online while living in the transnational digital space. The young adults anticipated how their Japanese friends would evaluate their language and acted accordingly.

The first half of this section introduced the voices of Karin, Nana, and Erika, individuals immersed in a daily environment of studying English as part of their course subjects. Karin and Nana were anxious not to make errors in front of their online friends. This was particularly true for Karin, whose behavior was influenced by past experience of language correction by her online peer. Erika even chose to use only Japanese on Instagram to avoid the perceived risk of using what she considered awkward English. The second half of this chapter introduced the voices of the other three participants: Seina, Rin, and Kana, who had real-life communicative experiences with friends and colleagues. Seina, for example, was cognizant of her friends' expectations regarding her English

proficiency and presented herself as an English user who has prior international experiences. Especially Seina and Rin showcased a strong aspiration for self-presentation as experienced English users. Kana further emphasized the nature of Instagram as a space for self-approval, which significantly influenced the young adults' determined self-presentation. In addition, several participants stated that using English can possibly be considered *ikiri* by their Japanese friends, which also shaped their investment in using English on the site.

The young adults often discussed Instagram language practices pointing out their followers' English proficiencies. They provided opinions from reader perspectives, as seen, for instance, Nana's negative reaction to her friend's broken English online (see further discussion in Chapter 7). These perspectives reveal that individuals are highly conscious of how others use language on SNS. Their language practices and attitudes are influenced by the nature of SNS being written communication, which can remain permanently once it is on the internet.

The participants' voices illustrated the fundamental culture of surveillance on SNS, where constant engagement and scrutiny of others' activities and identity construction are practiced (Trottier, 2016; Trottier & Lyon, 2011). The young adults anticipated their peers' expectations and shared a common understanding shaped by the prevailing ideologies

surrounding English in Japan. This includes beliefs related to native-speakerism, the ownership of English, the perception of English as an asset, and prescriptivism in English. This underscores the idea that creativity and self-presentation in written language are social practices, particularly on SNS, which will be further discussed in the following chapter.

Chapter 7

Discussion

7.1. Introduction

The present chapter serves as a bridge between the analysis conducted on screen-based data (Chapter 5) and the subsequent analysis that focused on user-based data (Chapter 6). It aims to develop a comprehensive discussion on how language ideologies and social values shaped by their language experiences influence their creativity and self-presentation when participating in online ELF communication. The discussion points presented in this chapter revolve around a central theme: the complex and diverse language practices and identity construction that arise from the nature of SNS users interacting through written-medium in a semi-public sphere. The discussion points are specific to SNS communication, which contextually differs in many respects from face-to-face communication that has been predominantly investigated in ELF research.

This chapter begins by exploring SNS as a space for creativity and self-presentation (7.2), highlighting how users leverage the platform to express themselves simultaneously

taking diverse audiences into consideration. Additionally, the chapter delves into SNS as a realm where global and local identities intersect (7.3), shedding light on the complex ways in which the participants navigate their identity constructions. By engaging in a discussion of these themes, the chapter aims to contribute to our understanding of the multifaceted dynamics that characterize ELF communication on SNS.

7.2. SNS – a space for creativity and self-presentation

As discussed in Chapter 2, one crucial aspect of SNS is the physical absence of a power actor (e.g., teacher and reviewers) that gatekeeps one's language use. With respect to this aspect, the previous two analysis chapters have revealed that the online platform is two-fold. On one hand, Instagram provided users with a space to have agencies and freedom, allowing them to express their pragmatic and poetic creativity in their unique language practices. On the other hand, the platform also became a space where there were emergent power dynamics among peers, who monitored each other's language, and they monitored their own language through their peers' perceptions.

This section explores these two facets of SNS. Firstly, it reviews how the site served as a space for users to unleash their creativity, examining how they utilized the semiotic resources on SNS (7.2.1). However, users were also highly conscious of their self-

presentation on Instagram, having a sense of awareness that their English was visible to a wide range of audiences (7.2.2)

7.2.1. Creativity and SNS

Chapter 5 has provided insights into the participants' creative manipulation of their translingual repertoire in the online ELF context. The analysis revealed that some of their posts were creatively crafted to convey messages to their target audiences, while others were shared with the artistic potential of being viewed by unspecified audiences. Building on the discussion of creativity, this section delves into pragmatic and poetic creativity (7.2.1.1) and creativity as a social practice in ELF communication (7.2.1.2). Then, to transition into the subsequent section, this discussion examines the relationship between creativity and peer dynamics (7.2.1.3)

7.2.1.1. Crossing pragmatic and poetic creativity

The analysis in Chapter 5 has presented participants' language practices that demonstrated pragmatic and poetic creativity. It explored how ELF communication on SNS can sometimes be poetic, expanding the practical and efficient communicative purposes. To recall Widdowson's (2017) description of pragmatic and poetic creativity,

the former creativity serves the usual purposes of communication in everyday life while the latter involves the creation of individual verbal art that is not found in everyday discourse. This section emphasizes how seemingly unusual artistic expression can be found to sustain the usual purposes of everyday communication on SNS. Although Chapter 5 has distinguished between these two types of creativity for clarity, the interconnected nature of these creativities should be noted, and these two are not linear but it is about the varying degrees to which they manifest in one's language practice.

The degree of different creative purposes could be observed in different types of posts. To recall some examples, posts such as Nana's expression of gratitude for birthday wishes and Karin's reminiscence of hanging out with her Hong Kong friend exhibited pragmatic creativity. While these posts did show participants' artistic choices of their lingual and modal resources, the purposes of these language practices were based on primarily pragmatic creativity, aiming to facilitate immediate interactions with others, as evident from the comments they received. In contrast, other posts, such as Yuma's "feel the scent of today" or Kana's "re" were intended to showcase artistic language without the expectation of immediate responses. Furthermore, remarks by participants like Yuma, Kaori, and Rin indicated that English was a valuable source to represent poetic selves. These posts and interviews highlight the role of poetic creativity on SNS, where English

served not only to be informative or to address someone but also as a means of self-expression and the cultivation of artistic identities within a lingua franca context. This aspect of creativity has received less attention in ELF research, though it is an everyday practice for young individuals.

Kubota (2013) discusses the instrumental value of English in a business sphere and introduces a business individual's remark on language as "only a tool" to achieve their tasks. The present research has presented ample examples to show that such instrumental role of English in formal and business contexts differ in other contexts, every day and youth contexts. In the context of SNS, language is more than *only* a tool; it plays a crucial role in self-expression and the shaping of identities. English online is personal and cannot be disassociated from one's expressive motivation, friendships, and linguacultural identities. Challenging Widdowson's (2017, 2021a) notion that poetic creativity belongs to artists and detached from the immediate realities of the globalized world, young adults engage in poetically creative deployment of linguistic resources in their everyday personal ELF communication.

The poetic linguistic practices observed in the online ELF communication advance communicative situations often discussed in ELF research, which has primarily focused on cooperativeness and mutual intelligibility of meaning. Canagarajah (2013) also notes

that in translingual communication, participants negotiate their resources for “*intelligibility and effective communication*” (p. 69 Emphasis added). The present participants’ poetic language use may present an interesting standpoint in that it may at times lack immediate intelligibility but still achieve communicative effectiveness in the specific communicative context of Instagram. For this, Kana’s use of “re”, a combination of the prefix “re” and the word “retro” can be meaningful (see Chapter 5 Section 5.4.2). Kana’s intention behind her expression is unlikely interpretable to the possible readers; however, it does leave rooms for artistic interpretation and engenders an effect aligning with the nature of Instagram as a platform for users to “fashion” (Pennycook, 2007, p. 6) their resources (see Chapter 3 for aesthetics on Instagram).

Interestingly, if the same expression “re” were sent suddenly via text-messaging or email to specific interlocutors outside the Instagram discourse, it would likely be considered being unacceptable and inappropriate rather than creative. Therefore, as Widdowson (2015b) points out, communication relies on “mutually known social rules of use, conventions of what constitutes appropriate behavior” (p. 367). Kana’s English is successful within the realm of Instagram, which shows that the digital medium, or the “animator” (Goffman, 1981; see Chapter 3) shapes their linguistic practices of a particular social space. In this regard, poetically creative use can be considered a legitimate practice

in ELF communication within the context of Instagram, leading to the discussion of creativity and ecological affordances in the following.

7.2.1.2. Creativity in ELF communication

Chapter 5 and Chapter 6 have illustrated creative practices of SNS users while highlighting their post-textual understanding of their own linguistic practices. This section builds on the data and discusses how written creativity on SNS is not solely inherent in texts, but rather a socially constructed practice shaped by various ecological environments (see Chapter 2 and Chapter 3). These environments include user interactions, available resources, technical affordances, linguistic experiences, and both online and offline life experiences.

Instead of framing creativity in ELF communication only from a textual perspective, the present research considers creativity in ELF communication as a social practice that involves the assemblage of various resources, environments, participants, and ideologies. Creativity is at the center of all resources found in multiple levels, including the design of audiences, the selection of resources, the manipulation of technical affordances, and the incorporation of cultural resources. Importantly, creative online practices are situated within the relationships between users and their follower friends, as well as the broader

digital sphere of Instagram and its cultural practices. Additionally, creativity is also influenced by users' linguistic experiences, including the resources to which they have been exposed, e.g., studying abroad and having international friends, or the lack of thereof, as Hanaka and Kohei suggested (see Chapter 5).

An example of creativity was seen in Yuchen's online practice as a Chinese-Japanese-English speaker. He creatively combine the Japanese toponym Akiyoshi [秋吉] with the phrase "autumn fortune" (see Chapter 5 Section 5.4.1.1). His linguistic practice is shaped by his identities as multilingual speaker, his picture of colored leaves, his experience of visiting the location, the use of relevant hashtags, the culture of Instagram being aesthetic, and his language experience in Japan which views English as fashionable. Creativity in ELF communication goes beyond creativity in grammar; it encompasses spatial repertoires that include contexts, experiences, linguistic affordances, and other environmental factors (Canagarajah, 2018a, 2018b).

In this sense, creativity in ELF communication is not fundamentally different from creativity in other communicative events, including "monolingual" English communication. A critical issue arises when linguistic creativity is solely examined based on the textual-end product, leading to the discussions centered around how the language form deviates from the native-speaker norms. On this point, Li (2018) addresses the

dilemma faced by researchers who examine linguistic creativity in English among translingual speakers because embracing their innovative expressions and merge of different named languages in English necessitates a researcher to adopt a monolingual English perspective as the benchmark. Framing creativity in ELF communication as a departure from conventional norms fosters a differentiation between creativity in ELF communication and that of “standard” English communication, consequently labeling ELF communication as “non-native” communication. This mis-framing of creativity, coupled with the researcher’s dilemma, as mentioned by Li (2018), often occurs when researchers attempt to investigate creativity from a product-oriented standpoint while employing an etic perspective to assess the creativity of speakers/writers.

Therefore, this study has diverged from defining creativity, solely from the researcher’s standpoint, as a different linguistic form observed in conventional English communication. Instead, it has considered creativity as socially constructed phenomenon that emerge and are contextualized within specific settings. The perception of creativity is contingent upon the social group and communicative event within which individuals and their audiences view express their creativity. For future studies, an in-depth investigation into the perspectives of readers (apart from researchers) who evaluates creativity will be necessary. This approach allows for a more nuanced understanding of

creativity in ELF communication, as acknowledges the interplay between language use, social context, and audience reception.

7.2.1.3. Creativity and the emergent power dynamics among peers

This chapter has so far highlighted that creativity does not inherently reside in language products but are constructed through communicative events and relationships. This section further addresses how one's creativity is situated within sociolinguistic contexts defined by people's values, ideologies, and power, in order to be recognized and accepted.

While the investigation into reader perspectives was outside the scope of the present research project, some participants actively shared their opinions on English used by their friends on Instagram. The following examples illustrate some of their reactions:

- Karin felt empathetically ashamed when she saw her friends who were not proficient in English using phrases like *#gm* (good morning) (Chapter 6 Section 6.2.1.3).
- Erika thought it was corny that her *jun-Japa* friends wrote *the best day ever* and wanted to differentiate herself from them (see Chapter 6 Section 6.2.2.1).
- Nana could not understand why her friend, whom she considered not having a

relationship with English, did not check the broken English phrase *Time Spending With Treasure* (see Chapter 6 Section 6.2.3.1).

It is significant that these participants offered their opinions from the perspective of readers. Their viewpoints suggest that perceived creativity does not solely reside in what it is said but also who said it. The phrase *the best day ever* is a popular expression ubiquitously seen on the internet. Likewise, *#gm* is a well-known hashtag on Instagram with nearly 14 million posts associated with it. Nevertheless, the participants perceived these expressions differently when they knew that they were produced by individuals whose English competence was, in their perception, elementary. While generalization is beyond the scope of this project, another example *Time Spending With Treasure* might have been deemed differently depending on the speaker's linguistic background. The same English received different uptake (Blommaert, 2010) being perceived differently, depending on who said it and how they are socially perceived as English speakers.

Widdowson (2017) explains that non-native speakers' language usage is often considered deviation and mistakes, whereas native speakers' English is viewed as intentional creativity (see Chapter 3). Although the power differences between native speakers and non-native speakers have been previously on discussion, a defining aspect

of the present findings was that those who deemed non-native speakers' English as "non-creative" were themselves non-native speakers. Jones (2012) notes that creativity in discourse is situated within social dynamics, requiring acceptance within a social group to be recognized as creative (see Chapter 3). The so-called nonnative speaker participants themselves considered their Japanese peers not qualified enough to freely use English and be innovative in it. Linguistic creativity was situated in sociological power dynamics, which were lateral and not necessarily imposed by the so-called "legitimate" English but, among peers. Further discussion on this topic will follow in the subsequent sections.

7.2.2. Self-presentation and SNS

Trottier (2016) argues that SNS serves as a space for interpersonal surveillance, where users simultaneously act as both the "watcher" and "watched" (p. 61; see also Chapter 3 Section 3.4). The previous section discussed how the participants often became the "watcher" of their friends' English, providing their opinions during the interviews. Interestingly, being the role of "watcher" was a responsive one; that is, their act of observing and monitoring others' language signified their awareness that they, too, were being "watched". This awareness of being scrutinized by unforeseen audiences shaped their language practices and their online presence. This section sheds light on the

emergence of power dynamics which operated through the participants' internalized discourse on SNS.

This section first delves into the peer-to-peer surveillance of English (7.2.2.1), examining how participants felt that their English is monitored by others. It then explores the discourse of *ikiri* (7.2.2.2), the popular expression raised among the participants. Finally, it concludes the discussion on self-presentation and English by addressing the complexity of communicative relationships with audiences on SNS (7.2.2.3).

7.2.2.1. Peer surveillance of English – struggles of SNS

The phenomenon of online surveillance of English among the participants has revealed the complex dynamics of social interactions on SNS. While previous research focused on the online monitoring of peers' lifestyles online, the present study has highlighted that surveillance can also extend to language practices. The presence of unforeseen audiences heightened the participants' sensitivity towards their audiences' reactions to their English. Some participants directly received feedback or corrections from their followers, while others anticipated potential evaluation of their language competence. Despite the supposed freedom of using English on SNS without the conventional enforcement of prescriptive grammar by teachers or other gatekeepers,

participants experienced being corrected by their own friends. The manifestation of power in this context is not strictly top-down imposition but rather lateral, which is “immanent and embedded” (Trottier, 2016, p. 37) within the users themselves.

For instance, Karin in Chapter 6 (see Chapter 6 Section 6.2.1.2) has shared her experience of receiving English corrections from her Japanese follower. Likewise, Yuma received a message from a random follower, pointing out her mistake on replacing “prove” with “proof” (see Chapter 6 Section 6.2.1.2). The English correction by their followers made Karin and Yuma conscious of the fact that their English was being watched by others.

Katayama (2015) investigated Japanese undergraduate students who adjusted their English pronunciation in a classroom, forming fluid power relationships despite the absence of an authority figure (see Chapter 2). Similarly, the present participants observed others’ language use, and in return, they believed their language use was also under scrutiny by their friends. The voices of these six young adults suggested that they “submissively behave[d] in such a way as they imagine the powers that would expect of them, to anticipate, to pre-empt the wishes of the powerful, and to comply with presupposed expectations” (Seidlhofer, 2012, p. 395). Their practices also reflect a popular quote “L’enfer c’est les autres” or “Hell is the other people” by Jean-Paul Sartre,

which refers to the struggle of viewing oneself as an object of the perception of others (see Kumano, 2022). The participants followed and acted in accordance with the internalized discourse shaped by peer power dynamics.

The phenomenon of peer correction on SNS reflects an underlying pedagogical prevalence in ELT in Japan, which focuses on exam-preparation, often emphasizing prescriptivism in English, leading to the lack of providing students with diverse use of English that vary depending on contexts (see 7.4 for further discussion). Some participants such as Yuchen, Karin and Sayaka even refrained from writing long English sentences in the initial place to lower the risk of making mistakes (see Chapter 5 and 6). The participants' sensitivity to language correctness and their attempts to avoid making mistakes reflect their desire to meet the perceived standards set by themselves and their peers and to maintain their faces, which is a clear action of self-presentation (see Chapter 3 for discussion on self-presentation).

Furthermore, the preservation of written language on the internet added another layer of complexity to the participants' language practices. The permanence of online texts, or what Nana referred to as "digital tattoos" (see Chapter 6), contributed to the participants' consciousness and increased stress associated with using English online. The fear of making errors or being judged based on their language proficiency influenced their

language practices.

Chapter 6 has also observed that, in addition to receiving direct feedbacks, participants imagined their audiences and presented an idealized selves on Instagram as competent users of English. Several participants, including Seina, Rin, Erika, Nana, and Rin, expressed orientation towards presenting themselves as experienced users having backgrounds as exchange students, returnees, or EMI students. They positioned themselves as individuals who possessed the “correct” answers. Such attitudes were referred in, for instances, in the cases of Erika and Rin who explicitly used the word “pride” to describe themselves as experienced speakers and adhered to the correct English. Additionally, Seina aspired to produce complex English sentences that might have been incomprehensible to her Japanese peers. These attitudes demonstrated their efforts to distance themselves from their local Japanese peers who lack immersive exposure to overseas experiences.

Iino and Murata (2016) observed *jun-Japa* students distinguishing themselves from other group members such as *kikoku* (returnee students) and sojourners in order to excuse their perceived insufficiency in English (p. 114; see also Chapter 3). The present study has sought the opinions from counterparts: how *kikoku* (returnee students) and former sojourner students compared themselves to others. They felt pressured by the imagined

expectations and reactions, leading them to align themselves with idealized selves as proficient English users. The participants positioned themselves as more capable English speakers than their peers with fewer experiences. This finding resonates with Sung's (2014) discussion on ELF users comparing themselves to other ELF users in terms of English competence by ranking superiority.

Overall, the online culture of being both the “watcher” and the “watched” along with the culture of Instagram as a space to show idealized selves significantly influenced the participants' language practices and self-presentation. The emphasis on competence and pride in their English also reflected the social significance attributed to English within Japanese society (see 7.3. for further discussion). The participants' linguistic identities on SNS were constructed through their relationships with English, their followers, and the platform. The surveillance of English on Instagram reveals the complex social dynamics at play, where participants navigate peers' expectations, correctness, and the desire to present themselves as competent English users.

7.2.2.2. The discourse of *ikiri*

The discourse of *ikiri* was observed among the participants in this study has revealed an interesting aspect of self-presentation and language activities on SNS. The

term *ikiri* was commonly used among the participants to describe someone who shows off their English proficiency, especially those who do so without noticing their own linguistic errors. The focal participants feared the potential perception of being seen as *eigo ikiri*, as it may be perceived as disturbing to their Japanese friends. This concern was evident in the comment made by one of the participants, Sayaka, who believed that the fact she spoke English could be perceived as *uzai* ‘annoying’ to her Japanese local friends (see Chapter 6 Section 6.2.1.3). Moreover, Nana, Karin, and Kana evaluated their online friends’ English as *ikiri* and made an effort not to be seen in the same way. Additionally, Karin, Seina, Rin expressed similar opinions when using German and Korean. This discourse of *ikiri* reflects the internalized power discourses embedded in the participants, where the fear of being judged or teased by peers influenced their self-presentation and subsequent language practices.

The concept of *ikiri* aligns with similar findings in Katayama’s (2015) study (see also Chapter 3), where undergraduate students in an EFL course in Japan eliminated “nativeness” from their spoken English to avoid standing out from their Japanese peers. Katayama (2015) concluded that the students followed an ostensive atmosphere emerged among peers, reflecting the power dynamics within peer groups. The perception of *ikiri* on SNS adds complexity to the power dynamics discussed by Katayama (2015), as the

power is internalized in the speakers themselves without visible audiences present in the same physical place.

There seems to be two contradicting sentiments emerging among the participants; they had pride in showing their idealized selves as competent English users, whereas they tried not to appear show off. While this may appear contradictory, both beliefs stem from the same ideology of English being a symbolic capital representing one's valuable asset (see Bourdieu, 1991, 2014; Holborow, 2015). Because they knew that English was considered an asset in the domestic society, they tried not to show off their status, but, deep down, they aspired to showcase it through their English caption.

Against the backdrop of this belief, similar discourses have been observed in contexts outside of Japan, such as Dovchin's (2015) study on Mongolian youth's online translingual practices. In her study, one participant, who was a Mongolian-Russian-English multilingual, acknowledged that her use of English and Russian on Facebook was teased as *ongiroo* 'showoff' by some Mongolian friends. Dovchin (2015) concluded that their perception of using foreign languages as showoff was linked to the notion of privilege and social status, which was associated with attending prestigious educational institutions and having opportunities to study/live abroad. Dovchin's participant insisted that she was confident in using English and Russian irrespective of her friends' criticism

because it represented her translingual identity, and it was her natural linguistic practices. The discourse of *ikiri* and *ongiroo* highlights the importance of considering ideologies behind English practices on SNS. It reflects that one's investment in English and foreign languages is relevant to ideology and one's social and cultural capital to achieve the language learning and use (Norton, 2013).

Unlike Dovchin'a (2015) participant, who showed rebellious attitudes toward friends' criticism and insisted on her translingual identity, the present participants exhibited a more cautious approach. They only anticipated their friends' reaction for their use of *ikiri* without being actually told and refrained from overusing English. Katayama (2015) concluded that "the physical existence of a power source becomes irrelevant to people's behavior; in other words, people act, talk, and be as expected as far as they are incorporated into the [communicative context]" (p. 121). The discourse of *ikiri* reflects this notion, as their online English practices were controlled not by the presence of people in power but by their own "internalized gaze" (Katayama, 2015, p. 129. emphasis original).

In summary, the discourse of *ikiri* on SNS is shaped by the ideology of English as a symbolic capital in the domestic society, along with the "internalized gaze" that emerges from peer power dynamics. As a result, the participants negotiated their language use to

maintain friendships with both their oversea friends and their local friends.

The construction of relationships with online friends has indexed by their English usage. They used English as a referential role to communicate with and address their friends who spoke various languages, while also self-regulating their English to avoid emphasizing the indexical meaning attached to English.

7.2.2.3. Self-presentation and language – Rethinking audience design on SNS

So far, the previous sections have discussed the participants' self-presentation and English practices, revealing a connection between their language choices and identity construction. The participants' Instagram practices have complicated the audience design model proposed by Tagg and Seargeant (2014) and originally by Bell (1984), which primarily focused on the immediate communicative interactions (see Chapter 3). In Bell's audience design model (1984), addressee is most influential in shaping speakers' linguistic styles. Additionally, in Tagg and Seargeant's (2014) study, wider friends, whom the speaker does not explicitly address in their posts, are mainly subject to be excluded from the core online interactions. The present findings have emphasized considering indexical meaning of English on SNS and presumed expectations from the potential audiences when discussing audience design.

Chapter 5 investigated how English, along with other resources, allowed participants to engage in an intimate one-on-one communication with one specific addressee and in multi-directional communication with different addressees in a single post. For instance, Karin inserted Chinese online laughter to indicate her Hong Kong friend. Additionally, Momo used Portuguese (*obrigada*), a photograph, tagging, and emojis related to Brazil to address her Japanese-Brazilian friend. These findings echoed with previous studies (see Tagg, 2016; Tagg & Seargeant, 2016/2020) that investigated how language on SNS could design audiences and target specific readers. In their studies, the speaker's language in use aligned with their potential readers' languages. In contrast, the present participants were conscious of their Japanese friends while using English (and other languages including German and Korean). As such, their language in use did not align with the language of their potential readers. The analysis in Chapter 6 revealed a self-consciousness directed toward wider friends, or the overhearers, Japanese friends, which complicates the notion of audience design on SNS.

Tagg and Seargeant (2014) primarily focused on the referential aspect of language or how language informed audiences, which lacked in explaining how language presents one's identities and indexical meaning attached to English. The present participants' experiences have suggested that not only their intended addressees influenced the English

practices but also the presence of wider friends, Japanese local friends, significantly influenced their identity formation and linguistic practices. Audience design on SNS has only been discussed within the immediate communicative interaction or what can be seen on screen, which lead to the understanding of the referential role of English in a communicative context. To build upon their studies, the present study has highlighted that audience design on SNS should be situated within a broader sociolinguistic landscape beyond the immediate communicative interaction visible on screen. The participants' experiences indicated that audience design on SNS is enacted through the complex process of considering not only the audiences they want to communicate with but also those they want to present themselves to, considering the social meaning attached to English. This perspective expands the understanding of audience dynamics and the complexities of audience design in ELF communication on SNS.

7.3. SNS – a space for global and local sociolinguistic habitats

Iino (2018) used an expression “a paradoxical space for global and local sociolinguistic habitats” (p. 78) to illustrate EMI in Japan, and this section applies his exact phrase to the context of SNS. In this study, Instagram has become the center of the participants' complex identity and communicative construction, allowing them to

maintain local identities while living in a transnational space.

The portrayal of the participants' Instagram practices reflected how SNS was intertwined with global and local sociolinguistic understanding of English. This is not meant to propose a dichotomy between the global and the local, but rather to examine how SNS served as a space, where these ideas merged. Drawing on this, the last section of this discussion chapter examines the multifaceted positions from which the participants engaged in online communication, having both identities as ELF users and EFL learners. The central argument in this section is that these identities are not fixed, clear-cut, and separated, but rather, they are fluid, ambiguous, and co-present. The discussion does not prioritize one identity over the other but explores how both identities as ELF users and EFL learners evolve through the participants' online practices, influenced by their audiences and their perceptions of English in their online and offline lives. The section begins by examining the participants' perceptions of their language practices in relation to the ELF and EFL paradigms (7.3.1) and then discusses how their identities as learners and users are intertwined in the online discourse (7.3.2).

7.3.1. Using ELF and EFL

The focus of this section is the participants' language use on Instagram, particularly

their use of English. The participants' English use on Instagram reflects their perceptions of English as both a foreign language and a communicative lingua franca. From this perspective, the present section joins the popular discussion on the conceptualization of "E" in ELF communication (see Seidlhofer, 2011; see also Konakahara et al., 2019; Murata, 2020). Seidlhofer (2011) reconceptualizes "E" in ELF communication, challenging the popular discourse of English always perceived as that of native speakers (see also Chapter 2). By exploring "E" in ELF communication on Instagram, this section discusses the coexistence of several discourses surrounding English in the contemporary Japanese society, where the language is viewed as a global communicative tool and at the same time stays as "the English" (Seidlhofer, 2010) of the powerful dominant speech community (7.3.1.1), as well as the language associated with commodification (Holborow, 2015; Kubota, 2016) (7.3.1.2). This section highlights how the participants' Instagram practices reflects these two discourses that they live by.

7.3.1.1. Emblematic EFL in ELF communication

The first point of discussion is how the present young individuals perceive English as a foreign language while also using it as a lingua franca for expressive purposes. Chapter 5 has observed the participants' shared perceptions of the aesthetic value

associated with English. For example, participants like Sara, who used English with a picture at an art museum, and Yuchen, who used the site as a photography portfolio, expressed their perceptions of English as a sophisticated and luxurious language. Then, they used English to embellish the visualization of their posts. Yuchen, for instance, stated that he used English because he was aware of the emblematic function of English in Japan (see Blommaert, 2010; Dougill, 1987; Seargeant, 2011). This belief encouraged Yuchen to use English on Instagram in order to make his artistic contents accessible to a wider range of audiences.

Some participants explicitly expressed their perception of English as a foreign language. This belief was exemplified by Hanaka, who considered English unreachable and associated with *akogare* ‘yearning’ (see Pillar & Takahashi, 2006; Kubota, 2016; see also Chapter 2). The following comments by Kana and Yuma depict their aspiration for English while downgrading Japanese.

Excerpt 7.1

K: なんか日本語だとあんまりなんかタイトルでいいのが思いつかなくて。どれもダサイ気がしちゃう。

A: なんでダサイ気がしちゃうんですか？

K: なんだろう、多分日本語だとわかりやすすぎるのもありますし、多分英語でももしかしたらそのネイティブの方が見たらダサイのかもしれないんですけど

K: *If it's Japanese, I can't come up with a good title. I feel everything seems corny.*

A: *Why do you feel it is corny?*

K: *Well, maybe Japanese is too self-explanatory. Maybe even in English, if native speakers see it, it might be corny though.*

(Interview with Kana, May 27, 2022)

Excerpt 7.2

Y: 格好、まあ自分の言語だからアレだけど、格好悪いと思っちゃう。英語の方がスッキリしてるし。

Y: It's, I mean, I don't want to say this to my language, but I find it not stylish. Besides, English is more concise.

(Interview with Yuma, October 8, 2021)

Their adherence to the “not-corny” and “stylistic” English reflects their ideological perspectives on sophisticated emblematic English. Furthermore, Kana’s remark highlights the power dominance of native speakers in the globalized world, who have the ownership to evaluate English of so-called non-native speakers.

On one side of this discourse, from a critical discourse analytic perspective, one can argue that they are constrained by “English” being the power-dominant Anglophone English. Considering their backgrounds as a returnee/EMI student and a former sojourner who have extensive experiences with ELF communication, the analysis emphasizes how deep the ideology of EFL is ingrained in the minds of Japanese students, which penetrates their online language practices.

On the other side of this discourse, it highlights the young adults’ capability to take advantage of “English” being a foreign language and leverage it in their own creative ways for poetic purposes. The participants flipped the coin and viewed English as an expressive lingua franca through which they could share their poetic selves, the selves

which were different from Japanese-speaking selves. The fact that they creatively used the language in their daily online discourse demonstrated their resourceful agencies to reform, merge, and recreate their linguistic resources. Speakers' use of English in ELF communication is not only defined by competence of conforming to the norms but also capability of adapting their resources (Seidlhofer & Widdowson, 2017). In this respect, the participants' online practices demonstrated that they *are* ELF users, who are capable of maximizing their resources, even if their idea might not sometimes illustrated being *the user*, the socially defined owner of English. Just because they adopted the culture of the power-dominant "English" did not diminish their capability to use "English" as a lingua franca at their disposal.

As Blommaert (2011) suggests, meaning and function of languages, including English, shift in the amid of globalization. English no longer requires physical proximity to the traditional Anglophone speech community. The language is mobile, crossing borders, which is the focus of ELF research and is also reflected in the participants' use of English on SNS. At the same time, their interview narratives have illustrated English in Japan, which is socially considered to be EFL. Nevertheless, many of the present Japanese young adults utilized the socially defined EFL identity to transform themselves into creatively expressive ELF users. For them, the foreignness of English became a

channel to express themselves in an online ELF communication. What they were thinking might be EFL but what they were doing was ELF.

7.3.1.2. Commodified EFL in ELF communication

Another point of discussion is how the present young adults perceives English as a commodity while also using it for a communicative lingua franca. The findings have highlighted the discrepancy experienced by the participants regarding the role of English online and the one in the domestic society. English, for the participants, served as a communicative lingua franca with international friends while it symbolized a social asset which must appear “correct” and “native-like” in front of their Japanese friends. As discussed in Chapter 2, Holborow (2015) discusses that in the neoliberal society, one’s employability is determined by the knowledge, including communication skills, and particularly in the globalization, English skills (see also Kubota, 2011; see also Chapter 2). From time to time, Japanese young people face the social pressure of studying English for their future, including university entrance examination and job hunting. English in Japan has an exclusive value, which promotes the participants’ beliefs about *ikiri*.

Nana and Seina mentioned that they have recognized the power of English through their own experience of job hunting. Nana shared her experience of receiving positive

opinions from interviewers for having English speaking skills during job hunting (see Chapter 6 Section 6.3.2.3). In the third interview with Seina after a year from the first one, the conversation expanded to the role of English in the society. Seina, an EMI student, who presented herself as a former exchange student in the U.S., expressed that she felt pressures from her parent to keep cultivating her English competence (Chapter 6 Section 6.3.1.2). Her critical opinion about the role of English reflects commodification of English in Japanese society.

Excerpt 7.3

- A: 社会的な、なんか、英語の役割とか、おも、なんかありますか、思ったりしますか。[...]英語ってなんか、そう、どんな感じでみんなどんな感じで思ってるのかなって思ってる[...]
- S: [...]うん、なんかその、自分がこう英語を喋れるっていうことの重要性がどこまでなんだろっていう、え、それに対してなんか今はすごい。なんか、英語を、が、できるっていうことがすごい。なんか求められ、過度に求められてるような気はちょっとしてるかな、という感じですね。[...]別に、そこがすごい、うん、なんかわかりますけど、企業としてそういう英語ができる人材が、ま、でも、なんか色々な能力があって、みんな得意不得意もあんのに、なんかすごい英語力だけをこう、なんか基準にしてというか。
- A: [...] 就活されてる時感じましたか。なんか、英語話せるとちょっと多分得してるんだろうな、みたいな。
- S: あー、感じましたね。なんか、すごい面接とかでも、なんか結構留学経験とかやっぱ聞かれるし、で、私結構あの、なんだろう、英検とかも 1 級持っていたりとか、ま、TOEIC もなんか他の、ま、他の人より多分高くて、で、それがなんかすごい面接とかで、あんまなんかうまくいかなかったなって思っても、結構受かったりとかしてて
- A: *Do you, do you have, like, any, any, thoughts on the role of English, like in society [...]. I just thought, you know, like how everyone thinks about English [...]*
- Y: *[...] Yeah, I've been thinking about the importance placed on being able to speak English. It feels like there's a strong demand for it, almost to an excessive level. [...] Well, I mean, I get the significance of it, for companies, they are looking for employees who can speak English. But like everyone has different abilities, and they have their strengths and weaknesses, but it seems like English proficiency is the main criterion companies focus on.*
- A: *[...] Did you feel that during job hunting? Like, speaking English gave you an advantage?*
- S: *Oh, I felt it. In interviews and such, they often asked about my study abroad experience. And, well, I have a high level English certification like I have Eiken grade 1, and my TOEIC score is probably higher than others. Even when I felt like the interview didn't go so well, I still ended up getting accepted.*

(Interview with Seina, February 12, 2023)

The participant young adults acknowledged that English is an asset and has an economic value within the domestic society, and that they were privileged to have had opportunities to learn the language, although as remarks by Nana and Seina indicated, they felt pressure from the society.

It is necessary to connect the role of English on SNS and the one in the society, as young individuals constitute the most dominant group of SNS users in Japan (MIC, 2022b), while at the same time, they are precisely the group of people who directly experience the impacts of language and neoliberalism (Holborow, 2015). They negotiated their affiliations with the “E” in ELF communication, which served as a communicative lingua franca in everyday global digital discourse and as a powerful dominant language that became an asset to participate in competitive globalization.

7.3.2. Being a user and learner

The focus of the last section is the participants’ identities whereby they demonstrated complex user/learner identity constructions in the online discourse. To borrow, Lluda (2018, p. 520), users are defined as those “who are capable of speaking the language and successfully navigate themselves through various interactions and

communicative environments” while learners are perceived to have not yet developed their voices need authority guidance to the correct linguistic usages. The present participants’ user/learner identities online were not stable nor binary but contested, “changing across time and space, and possibly coexisting in contradictory ways within a single individual” (Norton, 2013, p.2). ELF and translanguaging have framed so-called non-native speakers as English users instead of merely learners, seeking for pluricentricity of English (see Chapter 2). The present section argues how SNS became a space to provoke the participants’ identities as, not either, but both users and learners, which were shaped by their imagined online audiences. This section first discusses the internalized learner identity (7.3.2.1) and then addresses the participants’ narratives on English prescriptivism in Japan (7.3.2.2).

7.3.2.1. Internalized learner identity

Chapter 5 has discussed the participants’ pragmatic and poetic creativity when using English. Importantly, the present young people’s audiences were not necessarily the speakers of the traditional inner circle countries, but they were aspired to communicate with their networked audiences with diverse lingua cultural backgrounds. The focus of the analysis was not on the non-conformist linguistic features, but on “underlying

capability that might dispose learners as users to produce [texts]” (Seidlhofer & Widdowson, 2017, p. 328). Their online posts illustrated their identities as “users” of English on SNS, in a hope to reach their transnational friends, which are crucial attitudes in ELF communication.

At the same time, Chapter 6 has captured the constant appearance of their “learner” identities especially expressing their grammatical concerns. Their learner identities were sometimes stimulated by the presence of their Japanese followers, who directly made English corrections (see Section 7.2.2.1 in this chapter). Even without being triggered by their Japanese friends’ overt comments, their learner identities were clearly apparent while they were using English. Their identities as learners were shaped by the nature of the semi-public platform, where their posts were visible to an unspecified number of audiences, which regulated their behaviors. Their comments endorsed their internalized discourse that there had to be the one “correct” English which they believed to be the legitimate form as opposed to their incorrect usages. Such an attitude was represented by Rin’s comments on editing her English if she found any mistakes on her Instagram posts, finding “the right answer” (see Chapter 6 Section 6.3.2.1).

Yo, an EMI student, explicitly expressed his resistance to native speakerism, questioning the arbitrary definition of native speakers. He discussed that many so-called

native speakers use different kinds of English. In the interview, Yo expressed ELF-oriented attitudes and his lenient opinion about how others perceived his English, while also showing his concern about possible criticisms.

Excerpt 7.4

Y: あ、気にしない、英語は全く気にしないですね。

A: 気にしない。

Y: 英語は、開き直ってます。なんか英語は、あの、みんな勉強するんで下手な人もいるしうまい人もいるし、例え今上手い人も、昔はこいつは下手だったなって時期絶対あるんで。ただ、人によっては下手な時期がすごいちっちゃくて覚えてない人もいるし。[...] みんな下手な時期あったなって開き直ってます。みんな英語勉強してる段階なんで。あの、終わりが見えることじゃない。

A: うんうん、うんうん、なるほど、なるほど[...]。インスタは？

Y: インスタもそうですね、あ、でもなんか、投稿系はちょっと一回止めます。一旦止めて一旦自分で読んで、自分で読んでOKだなど思ったらのっけます、文法が。

A: なんで1回止めるんですか。

Y: あの、ちょっと間違ったら嫌だなってちょっと思うんで。

A: あ、思いますか、なんでですか。

Y: こう、英語使うとか自分で言ってるんですけど、なんかできないのに使ってるのかよこいつとか言ってくる人、たまにいるんですよ。

A: ほんとに、いるの。

Y: うん、いるんですよ、本当に。だから、あのまあ、ぶっちゃけ気にしてないんですけど、ま多少は、ちょっと気にしといた方が自分のためかなと思って、こう文法系とかも、ちょ、ちょっとだけ、あの、あの、気にして書くようにしています。

Y: *No, I don't care about [what people think about] my English..*

A: *You don't.*

Y: *I'm more lenient regarding English. Well, everyone's studying English, so it's natural that there are both people who are not good at it and those who are good at it. Even those who are currently good at it must have had a time when they were not good. Some people were not good at it only when they were little, so they don't remember that period. Everyone had a period when they were not good at it, and I accept that. We're all at stages of learning English. There is no ending.*

A: *Right, right, I see, I see [...] How about when you are using Instagram?*

Y: *It's the same on Instagram. Oh wait, but for posts, I pause a moment. I pause, read it myself, and think if my grammar is okay, then I post it.*

A: *Why do you pause?*

Y: *Well, I feel a bit uncomfortable if there are any mistake.*

A: *Ah, you think so. Why is that?*

Y: *Well, I'm saying that "I use English", but sometimes there are people who say to me "Why are you using it when you don't know how." It happens occasionally.*

A: *For real. There are?*

Y: *Yeah, there are, for real. So, well, I don't really care but to some extent, I think it's better to be a little bit mindful about my English for my own sake. So, I try to pay a little attention to grammar and such when I write.*

(Interview with Yo, August 2, 2023)

His experience at the EMI program and living overseas supplied him encounters with people from different origins speaking varieties of English. In the excerpt, Yo clearly states that he does not care about forms. His remark indicates that regardless of English backgrounds, language learning is an endless process for everyone. Yo's opinion reflects his understanding that it is inevitable for everyone from different backgrounds to speak English on their own level. However, when he starts discussing his linguistic behavior on Instagram, he gears himself toward grammar conscious. Although he believes he "uses" English ("I'm saying that I use English" [英語使うとか言ってるんですけど]), such identity is deprived by his imagined readers' comments that he anticipates ("why are you using it even though you don't know how" [できないのに使ってるのかよ]). The follow-up message exchange confirmed that Yo did not mean to identify the exact person who made such a comment but raised it as an example of potential criticism that generally emerges (Instagram message exchange with Yo, July 4, 2023). The perception by his friends was internalized within himself, which lead him toward prescriptive thoughts on English in order to protect himself from possible criticism. Llurda (2018) describes learners' attitudes as having a belief about "correct language" being the only acceptable form. Yo's attitude was rather the contrast, until his internalized unkind evaluation by imagined

readers induced his learner identities.

7.3.2.2. English prescriptivism in Japan

The conversation with the participants has often expanded to their language experiences and how their experiences were relevant in their investment in English online. While using SNS, they unfolded their ingrained learner identities residing in them. In Chapter 6, Karin's comments indicated that her insecurity about her grammar and orientation to the correctness is derived from her language experience as a test-taker at university entrance examination (Chapter 6 Section 6.2.1.1). Similarly, Kohei, an English education department student, who used Instagram to practice English, shared his educational experiences. Although sharing English posts for language practices clearly showed his learner identity, he was, to an extent, "using" the language on Instagram by adapting his available resources (see Chapter 5 Section 5.5). He unfolded his opinion when he was asked why he was conscious of grammar:

Excerpt 7.5

A : なんで気にしてしまうんですか？

K : は²⁸、多分大学受験をしたからだと思います@@

A : @@大学受験をするとやっぱり文法を気にしちゃいますか。

²⁸ [は] or "wa", instead of being pronounced "ha", represents an abbreviation of "sore-wa" [それは] ("for that point").

K: そうですね、そこをめちゃめちゃ突かれるんで、大学受験って。いやそれを、無視して、英語の間違いなんか気にしないからしゃべれって言われても、自分で間違えたまま進んでしまうのは、理論では分かっているけども3年間そう強制されて生きてきたので、ちょっと難しいかなって言うのは思います。

A: *Why are you conscious [of grammar]?*

K: *Well, that's possibly because I took university entrance examination @@*

A: *@@ So university entrance examination makes you conscious about grammar.*

K: *Yes. That is exactly what university entrance examination tests you. And then, I'm now told that I can ignore that part and can speak without being conscious of mistakes. I understand it theoretically, but I think it's difficult to continue [using it] with mistakes, because I was forced [to be conscious] for three years.*

In the excerpt, Kohei laughs as if to say he can find nothing except university entrance examination as a trigger of his grammar consciousness. His investment in using English without adherence to the correctness was intervened by his learner identities that had been constructed during his high school years. His expression, “I was forced to” [強制されて], reflects that his grammar consciousness was shaped within relationships between him and the power operates in the society such as the competitive entrance examination and teachers who prepared him for it.

Furthermore, Kana, the student at EMI program who constantly showed poetic representation of her repertoires, discussed “inferior complex” that Japanese students hold (see Chapter 6). To recall her remark, she stated that grammar-based and exam-based ELT in Japan has led Japanese students to point out others’ mistakes although they have inferior feelings if others do speak good English. Having studied English education in Japan and experiencing a few years at Japanese high school, she continued sharing her

opinion about Japanese students' attitudes toward English.

Excerpt 7.6

K: なんかもその、根底にあるのが、やっぱ日本人の、英語の、さっきの文法的な厳しさとかもありますし、なんか綺麗な英語じゃないとしゃべっちゃいけないみたいな、恥ずかしいとか、完璧主義なのかな、とかが邪魔して[...]

A: ああ、どういうふうにしていけば打破できますかね。

K: うーん。それが全然わかんなくて。難しいですね。でもなんかその、そもそも結構先生たちがそういう教育を受けてきてるから、先生たちがまずそういう意識とかを、変えてきてる方だと思うんですけど。

K: At the core of the issue, I think there's a strictness among Japanese people when it comes to English, like grammar and the idea that you can't speak unless it's clean. [Willingness to speak] is hindered by the feelings of embarrassment and perfectionism [...]

A: How do you think we can overcome that?

K: Hmm, I have no idea. It's difficult. But I think it is attributed to the teachers who have received that kind of education themselves. They need to change their attitudes first, although they are changing gradually.

In the excerpt, Kana points out that emphasis on grammar is the “core” of the issue of students hesitating to speak English feeling ashamed, which have been also discussed by ELF researchers in Japan (Murata, 2016). Kana also mentions the perceived perfectionism held by Japanese students, which was also brought up by D'Angelo (2018)²⁹. Knowing that she has studied English education, I asked her opinion on how students can overcome such a problem. Kana's answer shows her belief that the problem lies in teachers, who themselves were educated in grammar-based lessons, calling for change in teachers' attitudes. Her remark indicates that the impact of grammar

²⁹ D'Angelo (2018) discusses Japanese English speakers' attitude toward English in relation to culture. He attributed Japanese students' perfectionism in English to Japanese traditional culture of having a belief about the way things are done in the correct way, as seen in tea ceremonies and flower arrangement.

consciousness persists from generation to generation, teachers to students. It becomes apparent that students are one of the victims of the long-lasting correctness-based attitudes toward English.

The opinions raised by the present participants have suggested that their learner identities and their high consciousness of correctness have been constructed through their relationships with societal environments and their linguistic experiences. Their language practices and identities were shaped by sociological discourse, as summarized by Iino (2020), who argues that “the core issue lies not in speakers themselves, but in the mindset or ideologies held by the wider society” (p. 55). The analysis of their online posts confirmed that they were *users* who utilized available English resources on Instagram for communicative and expressive purposes, but their identities as *learners* always remained an integral part of their self-presentation.

The language practices of the present participants stimulate discussions concerning the problematic dichotomy of user/learner identities. Matsumoto (2019, p. 572) points out that user/learner identities are not binary but rather complex:

Although it is a legitimate point that ELF research should focus on English language use, differentiating language users and language learners is not a clear-cut process

and is a rather problematic, binary categorization because language learning can take place whenever language is used—especially in classroom settings.

As Matsumoto (2019) indicates, identities of users and learners coexist, especially in academic discourse. While the identities of Japanese university students in classroom discourse have been studied by ELF scholars (e.g., Konakahara et al., 2019; see also Chapter 2), there has been a theoretical tendency to distance EFL and ELF as well as learners and users. Iino and Murata (2016) described that their undergraduate participants are in a “gradual transformation [...] from EFL learners to ELF users” (p. 111) and that they are “going through a transitory period from EFL learners to ELF users” (p. 114). Although their investigation and discussion did not imply a complete shift from EFL identity to ELF identity, their wordings somewhat implied that these two identities were linear and something “transformable” and “transitionable” from one to another. Instead of considering these identities in linear, the present research argues that these identities can present simultaneously together in certain contexts, such as ELF communication on SNS.

ELF research has been a great contribution to the empowerment of so-called nonnative speakers in educational discourse in Japan, regarding them as ELF users, not

simply EFL learners (see Murata, 2016, 2020). However, the powerful belief has seemed to provoke the elusive perception which considers having identities as EFL learners as unfavorable attitudes. As a result, there seems to be an impression that ELF research has hesitated to affirmatively discuss students' identities as "learners" of "EFL" (Jenks, 2022). Nonetheless, it has been evident that online users employed English as an expressive lingua franca while maintaining awareness of its foreignness and social status. Their learner identities should not be misconstrued as evidence of being excluded from the category of ELF users. Instead, the discourse of EFL and ELF and their identities as users and learners emerge in a complex way.

7.4. Summary

Building on the data analyzed in Chapter 5 and Chapter 6, the present chapter has discussed linguistic creativity and identity construction of young SNS users in a space where communication is written mode and reaches multiple unforeseen audiences. The socially constructed nature of creativity and identity construction on SNS has been explored, considering the various ecological environments that shape individual's language practices. The significance of understanding creativity in ELF communication within the broader context of communication has also been emphasized, moving away

from linguistically viewing it through the lens of native-speaker norms. The pragmatic and poetic creativity and self-presentation of the participants were not static but were influenced by their available linguistic and visual resources, technical affordances, the linguistic culture of the platform, and their linguistic experiences both online and offline lives. These resources were employed in relation to the presence of their online audiences and the shared norms in collective behavior within peer groups, leading them to negotiate their identities and languages practices. Their linguistic practices illustrated that, as Kramsch (2001, p. 70) puts it, one's language activity is "acts of identity".

This chapter has also disclosed the phenomenon of online surveillance (see Trottier 2016; Trottier & Lyon, 2011), suggesting that SNS users not only monitor others' lifestyles but also languages. The young adults' investment in English on SNS was constructed through sociological discourses, ideologies and power dynamics (see also Darwin & Norton, 2015; 2023), leading to discussions on peer-correction of English on Instagram, presentation of an idealized selves as competent English speakers, and the discourse of *eigo-ikiri*.

The participants' English practices on SNS indicates, as highlighted by Darwin (2020), "how ideologies collude and compete, shaping learners' identities and positioning them in different ways, as learners move fluidly across online spaces" (p. 534).

Throughout this chapter, it was discussed that multiple discourses associated with English fluidly, such as referential and indexical roles of English, the discourse of EFL and ELF, and English user/learner identities, all shaped ELF communication on SNS. These aspects were not clear-cut and separable, but presented simultaneously in the SNS users' online posts, in their language practices, and in their identities. SNS served as a window – for them to navigate their linguistic creativity and identity construction, and for us to observe how they do so.

Chapter 8

Concluding remarks

8.1. Introduction

The present thesis has explored creativity and self-presentation exhibited by Japanese young individuals on the popular SNS, Instagram, with the guiding principles of ELF and translanguaging. This research has aimed to shed light on the sociolinguistic dynamics of English within the realm of everyday online communication among Japanese young people – a domain that has received scant attention in academic discourse. In concluding this thesis, the present chapter addresses several key points. Firstly, it summarizes the findings and discussions by revisiting the research questions (8.2). Subsequently, it explains the potential limitations inherent in the current research (8.3). Then, it addresses the distinctive contributions that the present study has made (8.4). Finally, it provides directions for future investigation in the field (8.5).

8.2. Summary of research findings – revisiting research questions

This thesis examined the participants' online language practices through two lenses: the onscreen language data and their voices reflected in interviews. The two analysis chapters effectively addressed the four research questions. This section summarizes the key findings and discussions, highlighting insights from the analysis of the online practices (8.2.1) and the participants' interview narratives (8.2.2).

8.2.1. Exploring on-screen – findings from the online linguistic practices

The present research initially formulated four key questions, with the first two focusing on the participants' engagement with their online posts:

Q1. What roles does the translingual repertoire play for the Japanese participants in ELF communication on SNS?

Q2. In what creative ways do the Japanese participants use the translingual repertoire on SNS?

To explore these inquiries, Chapter 5 primarily investigated Instagram posts with the support of the participants' post-textual interpretation of their own linguistic practices

obtained through interviews.

In addressing Question 1, this study unveiled that the translingual repertoire, for the participants, played roles as a medium for both facilitating interactions and expressing artistic selves. These linguistic activities were captured through the concepts of pragmatic and poetic creativity, drawing inspiration from Widdowson's (2017, 2021) conceptualization. English has used as a lingua franca for wider networking; some used it to maintain existing friendships in their offline lives in local Tokyo, while others used it exclusively on SNS to connect with friends who were physically distant or to expand their potential followership. Moreover, they specified audiences among their numerous followers by exploiting their translingual repertoire. Furthermore, using English was, for some, a channel to express their poetic creativity in ELF contexts reflected in their artistic practices. This challenged Widdowson's (2017, 2021) discussion that poetic creativity does not reside in immediate communicative realities. Although it is noted that pragmatic and poetic creativity are not two extreme concepts but varying degrees of manifestations within one's online post (Chapter 7 Section 7.2.1), the study has revealed these two creative purposes the participants used their translingual repertoire for.

Question 2 sought to delve into the detailed instances of the participants' pragmatically and poetically creative language practices. Their resources served as

essential components of their language practices on SNS. The examples of Instagram posts presented in Chapter 5 have illustrated the dynamic employment of their translingual repertoires, including their comfortable languages and dialects, e.g., English and Japanese (and Fukuoka dialect), their addresses' languages, e.g., Chinese and Portuguese, and languages they are studying, e.g., German and Korean. Their repertoire included photographs, emojis, lower/upper cases, abbreviations, repetitions, hashtags, line breaks, which are related to their personal experiences and relationships.

In addition, participants often employed English emblematically, particularly, in poetic expressions, where the language served artistic purposes. Some participants exemplified the ideology of English given emblematic roles and is considered to have a sense of sophistication. Further, exploiting aesthetic dimension of English, they used English to showcase the poetic side of themselves, by occasionally incorporating reinterpretation of cultural resources such as popular cartoon, song, and Kanji characters.

These linguistic practices underscored the participants' capability to dynamically maximize their translingual repertoire within the context of online ELF communication, challenging the formal categorizations of language and other modes within conventional frameworks. This phenomenon not only showcased the resourcefulness of today's young people in establishing online communicative relationships but also underscores the

evolving nature of language as it interacts with users' creativity in contemporary SNS communication.

8.2.2. Going beyond the screen - findings from the participants' voices

Other two research questions were formulated to investigate the perspectives of online users. Focusing on six participants with whom I engaged extensively, this study aimed to address the following questions:

Q3. How does the presence of imagined audiences influence the Japanese participants' creativity and self-presentation?

Q4. How do linguistic ideologies and social norms influence the Japanese participants' self-presentation as English speakers on SNS?

To address Question 3, the present research has revealed that the contextual milieu of SNS as a context-collapsed space, with a considerable number of unforeseen audiences, significantly influenced the participants' creative practices and self-presentation. As elaborated earlier, the participants designed their audiences, and adapted their language practices accordingly. However, their interviews have revealed that they not only

designed their audiences but also, their language uses were designed for audiences. In Chapter 6, the participants' interviews unveiled their specific imagined audiences, notably their Japanese friends, or "wider friends" (Tagg & Seargeant, 2014), who were not necessarily the intended addresses of their posts. Their constant cognizance of their Japanese friends who would potentially be "watching" their English (and occasionally German and Korean) revealed the prevailing power dynamics within the peer circles. This, peer-to-peer, or lateral online surveillance on SNS (see Trottier, 2016), made the participants mirror their peers' potential evaluations into their language practices.

The six focal participants' narratives on the peer-surveillance provided insights into the prevalent ideologies and social norms internalized in the participants mainly concerning English prescriptivism, native-speakerism, and the societal value of English as an asset. These addresses Question 4, the last research question.

The prescriptivism in English was clearly visible. They were strongly determined to avoid English errors especially due to the text-mediated and pervasive nature of SNS, where "mistakes" become permanently etched, or "tattooed" to borrow Nana's word (see Chapter 6 Section 6.2.3.1). Some participants had experiences of being subject to grammar corrections by mere passersby of their online contents (see Chapter 6 Section 6.2.1.2). Additionally, the participants themselves presented their prescriptive attitudes

toward their followers' English during the interview (see Chapter 7.2.2 for this discussion).

Furthermore, the participants' narratives reflected native speakerism spreading in the online discourse, which influenced their desire to show idealized selves. Such attitudes were revealed, for examples, in Nana's aspiration to use "authentic English" online, asking her native-speaker mother to check her English (see Chapter 6 Section 6.2.3), and Seina's remark on using English expressions from the ENL country, as English learned in Japan is "corny" (see Chapter 6 Section 6.3.1).

In addition, these participants' voices reflected the domestic social value of English as an asset. The participants, mostly returnees or former sojourners, hold on to the idea that being able to English or having lived/studied in English-speaking countries is a prestigious value. Such attitudes were perceived through several participants' remarks on the "pride" of showing idealized English speaker identities. Yet, they did not ostensibly show their pride on screen, as that arrogance would potentially be labeled *ikiri* by their Japanese peers. The concept of avoiding *eigo-ikiri* has illustrated the unique culture among young adults, especially those with a high degree of language proficiency, to maintain friendships with local Japanese friends online. Importantly, Chapter 6 and Chapter 7 have highlighted that the ideologies internalized in their discourse have been

constructed through their social experiences, including university entrance examinations, commercial tests, teachers' attitudes in English classrooms, job hunting, and pressure from family that fostered prescriptivism in English, native speakerism, and beliefs about commodified value of English.

By addressing these four research questions, the present study has illuminated the complex interplay of online communication and ideologies that shape their creativity and self-presentation. If Chapter 5 presented the light side of SNS, the fun and playful aspect of the young people's online practices, Chapter 6 have shown the shadowy side of SNS, the struggles and conflicts seen in the users' inner voices. With the nature of semi-public communicative discourse with diverse audiences, their online language practices were "open to interpretation and recontextualization" (Tagg & Seargeant, 2020, p. 350) by their friends, depending on different localities. This research has extended the discussion on ELF communication on SNS by capturing the ways in which translingual repertoires were adapted by young individuals being entrenched within peer structures and prevailing sociolinguistic ideologies.

8.3. Limitation

The present research is subject to two major limitations that have constrained the

scope of this investigation, which are limited participant demographics and the focus on a single online site.

The first limitation pertains to the demographic composition of the participants, particularly concerning their linguistic backgrounds, access to English, and gender distribution. In this study, the participants were primarily selected from the English education department and the EMI program at the highly regarded private university in Japan (see Chapter 4 for introduction of the participants). Admissions into these departments, which require English proficiency, underscored the participants' established competence in using English online. Furthermore, most of the participants had prior experiences as exchange students or returnees, coupled with parental influences and financial support. This facilitated their access to English and other languages, as well as exposure to ELF communication. It is difficult to deny that this research predominantly examined a selected group of privileged individuals with pre-existing linguistic resources and transnational relationships, especially considering that acquisition of English is frequently associated with elitism (see Kubota, 2019; Yoshimoto, 2020). Nonetheless, the distinctiveness of this research lies in its revelation of how these individuals struggled with self-presentation *because of* their extensive experiences of using/learning English.

Furthermore, the participants in the present research were predominantly female.

While participant recruitment was conducted across various classrooms irrespective of gender, the study had female-majority participation. This gender inclination might be attributed, in part, to the researcher's gender, potentially enabling female participants to feel more at ease in sharing their experiences within the private sphere of SNS. Moreover, this gender tendency could also be linked to the relationship between females on SNS and idealized self-presentation. Manago et al. (2008) documented pressures faced by women on SNS, where there is an increased expectation to present themselves favorably. Trottier's (2016) examination of online surveillance also consisted of dominantly female participants. This correlation between female individuals and self-presentation on SNS provides an avenue for further investigation.

The second limitation concerns the restriction of the analysis to a single online platform. The study exclusively examined the "post" function of Instagram due to feasibility constraints, overlooking its "story" and "messaging" functions. Each of these functions potentially yield distinct insights, as users show varying language practices across functions in a single platform (Elordui & Aiestaran, 2022). Additionally, Graham (2020) notes that communicative participation also varies across platforms (see also Subrahmanyam & Šmahel, 2011). A more comprehensive analysis including cross-functional and cross-platform examination can uncover complex linguistic practices and

identity construction. Although this extensive examination lies beyond the scope of the present research, it is important to acknowledge that this study only scrutinized the part of the multifaceted online engagements young people have within this digital ethos.

8.4. Contributions of research

The present research yields substantial contributions to the domains of ELF and translingualism, offering valuable insights into language and identities within the digital era. This section delves into the contributions of this research, exploring theoretical (8.4.1), pedagogical (8.4.2) and methodological (8.4.3) dimensions.

8.4.1. Theoretical contribution

Chapter 7 (see Section 7.3) has discussed the multifaceted positions from which the young individuals engaged on SNS, having both identities as ELF users and EFL learners. From this aspect, this research contributes to the theoretical underpinnings of ELF and translingualism especially by discussing the conceptualization of “E” in ELF communication (8.4.1.1) and user/learner identities (8.4.1.2).

8.4.1.1. “English” in ELF communication

The present section delves into the discourses associated with English in ELF communication on SNS. Chapter 7 explored the conceptualization of English in the online ELF context on SNS, revealing it to be a foreign language (EFL) and lingua franca (ELF). The language practices and identities of the participants were linked to both these conceptualizations of “English”, highlighting the co-existence of these discourses.

ELF research traditionally emphasizes the cooperative and interactive nature among communicative participants in face-to-face communication. However, the presence of diverse audiences in the online semi-public space of SNS has created a distinct lingua franca encounter, differing significantly from face-to-face communication discussed in prior ELF studies. Unlike the studies where shared linguistic norms emerged within in a group of interlocutors (see Cogo & Dewey, 2012; Pietikäinen, 2018; Pitzl, 2018b), the unpredictability of participants on SNS led to the emergence of multiple linguistic norms. This communicative situation compelled communicative participants to navigate themselves between ELF and EFL orientations, in the process of designing potential audiences.

ELF researchers have critiqued the uncritical portrayal of “English” as a singular standard variety associated with native speaker ideologies, moving away from framing it

as “foreign” (see Murata, 2020; Seidlhofer, 2011; Widdowson, 2013). However, as noted by Jenks (2022), these conceptual shifts from the categories of EFL to ELF are often “based on exogenous justifications” (p. 46) proposed by researchers. Therefore, a nuanced investigation is necessary to explore how English is viewed among the communicative participants. In the present online ELF context, English was viewed as a both communicative and expressive tool and as a powerful language associated with aestheticism, native speakerism, prescriptivism, and the beliefs about the language as an asset.

The findings of this study have illustrated language practices and identity construction unique to the semi-public and multi-party communicative context of SNS. Through the observation of their online posts, the poetic linguistic practices of the participants expanded the understanding of English beyond the boundaries of pragmatic creativity used for cooperative communication. An etic examination into their interviews also revealed that English, for SNS users, served as a lingua franca (ELF) not only for conversations but also for the cultivation of artistic identities. However, further conversations indicated that their artistic investment in English was influenced by their socially defined foreign language (EFL) identity. They suggested that their EFL identity sparked their poetic expressions in using English within a lingua franca encounter (see

Chapter 7). Furthermore, while the participants communicated in English with friends from diverse backgrounds in the online lingua franca context (ELF), their consciousness of online surveillance reinforced their internalized discourse chained to EFL.

The young individuals signified their identities on SNS embodying the powerful global dominant English (EFL) and with English as a lingua franca (ELF) to connect with friends from various parts of the world. While ELF literature has often considered EFL labels as “imprecise and problematic” (Jenks, 2022, p. 46), the present study has shown that even within a single communicative event, their language practices and attitudes, which could be labelled both EFL and ELF, were seen. Their language practices and identity constructions were associated with both the conceptualizations of “English” in the online lingua franca encounter, emphasizing the co-existence of both the EFL and ELF discourses.

8.4.1.2. user/learner identities in ELF communication

The discussion of English leads to the conversation of users and learners. This section explores the construction of user/learner identities that are fluid and often grow simultaneously in a contradictory way within an individual and within a communicative event. The central argument of this research posits that one’s identities as users and

learners are not separate or switchable but can coexist (see also Chapter 7). To develop this opinion, this section addresses and raises important inquiries into the versatile interpretations of terms “users” and “learners” in ELF communication when these terms are used in ELF literature.

Jenks (2022) critically points out that ELF research has rejected discussing the categories of “learner” when referring to English speakers and instead socially categorized them as “users” from researcher’s emic perspectives even if such identity labels are not reflected in their participants’ voices (see also Jenks, 2013). Building on this discussion, this research emphasizes a confusion in the academic discussion within the field of ELF research due to the multiple discourse structures from which the terms “users” and “learners” are interpreted and explained in ELF literature. This section addresses that such theoretical confusion caused ELF researchers’ avoidance in categorizing speakers as “learners”. By exploring the different discourse levels of the terms, “users” and “learners”, this section addresses the theoretical entanglement ELF research holds and offers conceptual suggestions for researchers to discuss and employ these terms.

In the academic discourse, the term English “users” has been interpreted in ELF literature as individuals, irrespective of their linguistic backgrounds, having capability of

exploiting linguistic resources in given interactions, contrasting with “learners” who weigh the conformity to the norms over efficiency and mutual understanding (Seidlhofer & Widdowson, 2017; Lluda, 2018). With this interpretation of “users”, the participants can be considered users, as seen my etic view of online observation, in a way they maximized their potential resources in the online sphere to build communicative relationships and create poetic representations. In their post-textual understanding of the post with an etic view, they elaborated how they mixed and merged different linguistic, modal, and cultural resources for social bonding in ELF communication. While these communicative activities reflected what ELF research has defined users, they also expressed their strong “learner” identities, as seen in their emic remarks on, for instance, their grammar consciousness. Even if they are users in each communicative event, their learner identities do not disappear; however, them possessing learner identities does not necessarily deprives the fact they are “using”, exploiting their resources in a lingua franca encounter.

There is also another discourse when the term “users” are employed by scholars in ELF research. That is, “users” are discussed in the discourse concerning a global ownership of English, who have received entitlement to English, contrasting to “learners” who are considered secondary speakers (see Widdowson, 1994). With this interpretation

of “users”, a few participants showed their user identities, stating that English belongs to many in the world (see Yo’s discussion in Chapter 7). To delve into their emic perspectives, many expressed rather learner identity categories by regarding English as the powerful single “English” spread globally (see Jenks, 2013). Their identities were constructed through the internalized discourse of English as an object of *akogare*, sophisticated, authenticity, an asset, status, and advantage that might lead to *ikiri*. The last chapter has seen a contradicting existence of “users” and “learners” in these senses within an individual, Yo, who expressed “user” identity discussing multiple belongingness of English in this world while also showcased “learner” identity when he anticipated the potential online criticism towards him, e.g., *できないのに使ってるのかよこいつ* ‘Why are you using it when you don’t know how’, to recall his remark (see Chapter 7 Section 7.3.2.1).

In attempt to address the complexities of discourses in which the terms “users” and “learners” are discussed and interpreted by ELF researchers, this section employs the discussion of small “d” discourse and big “D” Discourse (Gee, 2011, 2015). Gee (2011) introduced the term Discourse with an uppercase “D” to discuss language in relation to socially significant identities. While small “d” discourse refers to any stretch of language in use, big “D” Discourse involves how language interacts with people to create social

and historical activities and how people's linguistic identities are framed in society (Gee, 2015; Gee & Handford, 2012). His discussion helps our understanding of how one's linguistic practices are interpreted and discussed from different discourse levels, one is at the immediate communicative event and the other is at the sociological structure.

The concept of small "d" and big "D" Discourse offers some guidelines for understanding how researchers interpret and employ the terms "users" and "learners" when investigating ELF communication. These terms are often confusingly employed and discussed in the two "d" and "D" d(D)iscourses in ELF research; however, there should be a clarification in this matter. To apply these concepts into the discussion which has just unfolded in this section, the first discussion of the terms "users" and "learners" are associated with the exploitation of resources in a personal communicative event. These terms are discussed in the small "d" discourse, by investigating the language in use and immediate language experiences. When the notion of "users" is discussed, in a communicative investigation, in terms of utilizing the language resources for hands-on lingua franca encounter, the discourse level in which the term is discussed is small "d" discourse. Similarly, when a speaker reflected upon their personal and daily experiences of grammar-review or vocabulary searching before using the language for a lingua franca encounter, the term "learner" is considered to be discussed within the domain of the small

“d” discourse. Rhetorically, these academic discussions are, by applying the concept of lowercase “d”, using the terms of users/learners in small cases – “users” and “learners”.

However, the discussion on user/learner identities in small cases does not speak to the speakers’ identity categorization in relation to social issues (see Jenks, 2022). Thus, there appears another discourse, big “D” Discourse in which these users/learners terms are employed in academic discussion in ELF research. The concept of users/learners identities are employed and interpreted by a researcher in their discussion in association with social issues, structures and other sociolinguistic realities in globalization and how speakers make sense of their linguistic practices in response to these ideologies. In these cases, it is understood that the terms users/leaners are discussed within the level of big “D” Discourse. These social issues may include topics related to social categories of native and non-native speakers, rich and poor, and global South and North. For example, “user”, in this discourse, can be interpreted as those who hold the ownership and entitlement of English or have socioeconomic access to English resources. In contrast, “learners” can be considered the opposite, who are labeled as not having any custodian to English. This level of research discussion captures how the terms users/learners are framed into social structures, and thus is relevant to the uppercase “D” Discourse. In a rhetorical manner, such academic discussions are regarded as employing the terms in

upper cases, “Users” and “Learners”.

In ELF literature, the terms users/learners have often been unclearly discussed in these different discourse levels, leading to some knowledge confusion and conflicts. It is important to note that, as Gee (2011) notes, the small “discourse” and the big “Discourses” are always interrelated, as language in use creates social discourse and social discourse shapes micro interactions. However, it should be emphasized that the entanglement of the small and big d(D)iscourses in ELF research has caused some misinterpretation and misconceptualization of the terms, users/leaners. Jenks (2022) warns ELF researchers to categorize speakers “users” from exclusively an etic perspective rather than exploring an emic view. In other words, in a research paper, the small letter “user” categorization, whether or not they are exploiting their resources, can be discussed and explained from the analysis of the conversation data; however, to discuss their “User” identities, whether or not they have the ownership, the exploration into their own voices is necessary. Furthermore, the small and big discourses support the understanding of learners. ELF communication has tended to avoid any use of the word “learners” to describe its speakers. This is because, by using the term, a research project potentially deprives the language ownership from its participants; in other words, they have rejected interpreting their identities as “Learners”. However, avoiding the term “Learners” does not necessarily

mean the research ought to refrain from discussing their identities in a small “d” discourse, “learner”. For any language speaker, including the first language speaker, it is a natural practice to seek for the appropriate forms including grammar and vocabularies for meaning making, which does not hinder their identities as “users” or “Users”. Reflecting upon my self-experience, although I found my identities a “learner” who struggles with and continues practicing forms, I consider my identities align with a “User” in the current society and a “user” who exploits available resources communicating with my friends, not necessarily a “Learner”, who has no custody in English. However, if I were required to take commercial tests and feel constrained with the ingrained power of native speakers, I would consider myself Learner in the particular context.

In the present research of online ELF context too, various dimensions of both small cases and uppercases of users/learners identities were observed. Participants’ identities were discussed in their pragmatic/poetic creative exploitation of linguistic resources and also in terms of checking grammar before releasing their posts, which discussed “users” and “learners”. In the cases of the present participants, while they were seen “users” in each communicative context, their ideological ideas did not reflect the belief about “Users” of English, they remained to be “Learners”. Although it is necessary to continue developing theoretical understanding in order to deepen this matter, this section has aimed

to identify the entanglement of user/learner discussion in ELF communication, pointing out that these terms have been discussed and interpreted in different dimensions of discourses, ranging from immediate language interactions and personal linguistic experiences to sociological and ideological beliefs. For researchers to address user/learner identities in ELF communication, it necessitates careful treatment to understand multiple discourses surrounding these terms. It is important to understand these user/learner identities can be found in a contradictory way within a single speaker and a communicative event, questioning a dichotomous approach to user/learner identities.

8.4.2. Pedagogical contribution

The present investigation into the semi-public communicative discourse has offered insights into two pivotal concepts: creativity and identity construction. The findings from this study offer some hints for discussing pedagogical contributions. This section first addresses the application of SNS for creative linguistic practices (8.4.2.1) and emphasizes the importance of understanding peer power dynamics (8.4.2.2).

8.4.2.1. Creative practices through SNS

Both the pragmatic and poetic creative language practices observed in the present

participants offer potential for continued exploration of digital platforms as educational resources for students to explore their translingual repertoires and reflect their digital presence in relation to others.

With the expanding population of internet users, language learning now extends beyond traditional classrooms into what Sauro & Zourou (2019) term “digital wilds”, informal and real-life online domains. SNS represents an effective space for students to creatively utilize their repertoire to communication with others and to examine naturally occurring language practices. For example, Dovchin (2019, 2020) and Canagarajah and Dovchin (2020) have spotlighted the effective use of platforms like Facebook for Japanese students to be exposed to English used by worldwide users. These SNS practices offer students firsthand experiences that are “more realistic, relevant, and reflective of the lingua franca nature of the English language” (Kiczkowiak, 2020, p. 4). Importantly, SNS furnishes an arena for students to explore how genuine ELF communication involves participants’ translingual practices, utilizing multiple languages and modalities. For example, Han and Reinhardt (2022) suggest that SNS, including Instagram, provides a venue for students to engage in creative practices using not only their available languages but also multiple modalities including images.

Notably, the significance of utilizing SNS extends beyond students’ exploration of

available linguistic resources; it contributes to cultivating students' digital literacies, seeking to elucidate how individuals' online linguistic practices intertwine with broader social structures and networked relationships in the era of globalization (Barton & Lee, 2012; Darvin & Hafner, 2022; Han & Reinhardt, 2022; Kim, 2022; Tagg & Seargeant, 2021). This engagement is associated with "new literacy practices" (Lankshear & Knobel, 2012), which refers to evolving ways of communicating in the online participatory culture, fostering the idea of literacy as a social practice. Through self-reflection on their online language practices, students can foster a critical awareness of identity construction and the social dynamics they construct within digital wilds. Kim (2016) discusses that SNS can help students find transcultural identities, cultivating the idea that their linguistic identities are no longer bound to national borders. Recognizing that their self-presentation varies depending on different audiences from different lingua cultural backgrounds, students can learn "multiple subject positions" they draw from when they communicate online (Kim, 2016, p. 215). In addition, SNS can serve as a tool for students to explore, reflect upon, and discuss ideologies, social structures associated with the current global issues, also nurturing the internet literacy to evaluate vast information on the internet (see Darvin & Hafner, 2022; Tagg & Seargeant, 2021).

Embracing SNS as an educational tool enables students to grasp the complexities

and dynamics of communication in the digital age, along with the interplay of underlying ideologies and societal values that influence their language investments in online spheres. Students are afforded the chance to reflect the multifaceted nature of language interactions with friends representing diverse linguistic, cultural, and social backgrounds.

8.4.3.2. Understanding peer-power dynamics

The second educational implication is associated with recognizing the influence of peer pressures both in and outside language classrooms. The self-presentation observed on SNS, shaped by the presence of others, can be applicable to classroom discourse. This study has observed that, in the absence of authority figures such as teachers, learners' language investments were significantly influenced by the presence of their peers. This phenomenon was understood through the idea of the "internal gaze" (Katayama, 2015; also discussed in Chapter 7), which leads learners to perceive themselves through the lens of their peers' perspectives (see Foucault, 1977, 1980).

Previous research has explored peer dynamics in Japanese classroom discourse, revealing how students often view themselves within the context of group dynamics. Regardless of language practices, Iguchi and Kawamura (2021) examined Japanese students who frequently struggled with peer pressure from an early age, often conforming

to group norms and values to avoid standing out. Such peer pressures were also evident within language classrooms, as illustrated in Katayama's (2015) study on students' experiences related to English pronunciation (see Chapter 2 and Chapter 7). Besides Katayama (2015), students in Murata and Iino's (2018) study acknowledged that they were consistently conscious of their classmates' evaluations of their English competence and opinions.

The findings of this study have highlighted that despite teachers' efforts to create classroom environments conducive to active English interactions, external peer pressures can potentially outweigh such encouragement. Despite teachers' attempts to cultivate user identities, learner identities can be provoked by the perceptions of themselves and their friends. While the lack of exposure to ELF communication may be one of the reasons for students' attitudes toward conscious of prescriptive grammars in English (see Saito, 2019; Tanaka & Saito, 2021), students' investment in using/learning in English is shaped by power dynamics. Given that many participants in this study have had substantial exposure to ELF communication in their lives, this research signifies the additional the necessity to consider the peer influence factor in classroom discourse, which may impact students' investment in using English both in and outside the classroom. It is important to consider that a speaker in ELF communication is not always positioned as the central conductor of

language practices in a given communicative encounter but is positioned in relation to others (see Canagarajah, 2013b). Power dynamics extend not only between teachers and students or between native and non-native speakers but also among peers themselves. Further research is necessary to explore how student identities are constructed in relation to their peers and how they present themselves in language classrooms.

8.4.3. Methodological contribution

Lastly, this research makes notable methodological contributions. This section emphasizes the significance of multimodality (8.4.3.1) and a user-focused approach (8.4.3.2) when investigating online ELF communication.

8.4.3.1. Multimodality in written ELF communication

Studies on CMC have highlighted the multimodal nature of online communication (see Chapter 3 Section 3.2.2.2). Within ELF research, as Matsumoto (2019) argues, there remains a relatively unexplored domain concerning multimodality, particularly in written communication (see also Konakahara, 2020, 2023; Matsumoto & Kubota, in press). Drawing largely from translanguaging, this study has explored that ELF communication involves a repertoire that consists of more than a single language and a single mode.

The present research has thoroughly acknowledged the value of different facets contributing to online communication, including images, emojis, textual layout, and the function such as hashtags, tagging, and auto-suggestion of emojis. These resources not only supplemented linguistic codes but also constituted integral components of communication interwoven with one another.

In contrast to exclusively investigating English, this research has underscored the role of these relative elements for both communicative and self-expressive purposes. Consequently, the present study has contributed to the inquiry into multimodality within ELF communication and has shed light on how these modalities play pivotal roles in one's creativity and identity construction.

8.4.3.2. Ethnographic perspective in SNS communication

Another substantial contribution lies in its application of ethnographic perspectives. One significance of this research is its consideration of SNS as a looking-glass that mirrors sociolinguistic realities of English, not merely as an endpoint of linguistic analysis. From a Netnography perspective, this study focused not only on online traces but rather on the human stories behind them. Chapter 4 has discussed a substantial methodological shift in CMC research, transitioning from linguistically centric analyses

to a user-centric approach. This involved incorporating ethnographic viewpoints and integrating participants' perspectives through interviews (see Chapter 4 Section 4.3.1). Prior online ethnography investigations have focused on the stories within online interactions, such as communicative strategies, target audiences of speakers, and rationales underlying linguistic hybridity and cultural appropriation (see Chapter 2). Chapter 5 delved into these aspects to comprehend creative linguistic dynamics in ELF communication on SNS. Despite the academic significance of these foci, this research calls for the extension of researchers' perspectives beyond the confines of on-screen activities to users' voices beyond the online screen. Chapter 6 incorporated perspectives encompassing participants' linguistic experiences and friendships, thus facilitating an exploration of the ideologies and social meanings associated with language, which significantly shaped the ELF communication on SNS.

By doing so, the present research has revealed how the participants' online practices are intertwined with their offline lives. Moreover, this research has illuminated how speakers in ELF communication on SNS were situated within broader social dynamics and peer relations, rather than being free conductors of language resources. Such inquiries would notably contribute to our comprehension of English used in *lingua franca* communication in an online discourse.

8.5. Future research

As far as my knowledge extends, the present research stands as one of the pioneering studies that delve into the everyday online linguistic experiences of Japanese young individuals through the lenses of ELF and translingualism. Consequently, many facets remain relatively unexplored, offering promising avenues for the development of research in the field. The last section of this thesis elucidates the potentials for future research.

Firstly, there is a continuing need for sustained research into online linguistic practices within the Japanese population, approached from ELF and translingual perspectives. The forthcoming phase of research, particularly the investigation into written communication within ELF contexts, aspires not solely the examination of linguistic attributes to celebrate cultural, linguistic, and modal fluidity but also to comprehensively examine ideologies and social norms surrounding the online users. In doing so, future research can not only employ an etic perspective (e.g., online observation) but also an emic perspective (e.g., interviews). This would illuminate not only the immediate localized context where communicative interactions unfold but also furnish a broader sociolinguistic comprehension of language among Japanese English

users on SNS.

While the present study concentrated on individuals who possess extensive exposure to ELF communication and relatively high linguistic proficiencies through their overseas experiences, future research could diversify its participant demographics. For example, a prospective inquiry could focus on individuals who have received education primarily in Japan (just as Hanaka and Kohei in the current research), individuals from locales outside the multilingual urban Tokyo, and those who are in younger generations, including teenagers. Regardless of their linguistic backgrounds, SNS assumes the role of a valuable domain for exposure to English and other languages, catering to both linguistic and emblematic values. In response to the research limitation, there is also a scope to expand the gender representation in participant demographics.

Secondly, prospective research could assume a more reader-oriented perspective, exploring the interpretation of participants' linguistic practices from the point of potential readers. The focus on readers' viewpoints was limited in this research, as the study primarily explored participants' self-presentation through the gaze of imagined readers, and the uniqueness of the present research lied in participants' awareness of imagined audiences without the physical existences. The focus of the study did not go further than investigating online comments in reply to the participants' posts. Future research could

substantially explore the perspective of readers, probing how they construe online ELF communication. This could encompass collecting ample online comments or holding focus groups to discuss collected online posts. Readers play significant roles in written communication (see Tanaka, 2021), and elevating the readers' perspective could uncover linguistic ideologies and norms inherent in readers in ELF communication.

Lastly, there exists a promising avenue for research involving different SNS platforms. Some scholars advocate for cross-platform analyses to comprehend linguistic practices and identity construction across various channels (Brunner & Diemer, 2022). As the younger demographic is typically versed in having accounts across various platforms, such as Instagram, Twitter, Facebook, TikTok, and Threads, they are exposed to a myriad of emerging communicative patterns and social norms emerged. SNS continues to develop at a rapid pace. The latest SNS called Dystopia, released in fall 2023, is an homage of "1984" by George Orwell, carrying "Big brother is watching you" as the platform's principle. The site experiments with the presence of AI as a big brother, who censors the site users' language usages, aiming to eliminate online bullying and other harmful comments and consequently make change in our online communication (PR Times, September 24, 2023). The platform may bring fresh insights into the present research, which has consistently discussed peer-to-peer, instead of top-down, language

surveillance on SNS. Additionally, these new kinds of platforms necessitate more research on not only how we write and read online but also “how *we* are being read, tracked, and made legible online” (Darvin & Hafner, 2022, p. 877, emphasis original).

Varying purposes, diverse friendship networks, and platform-specific cultures of use invariably lead to differential modes of linguistic practices and self-presentation. Consequently, users are exposed to diverse communication in ELF contexts. Investigating various online platforms, in the continuously developing digital era, can enrich the comprehension of users’ digital literacies as they engage in ELF communication with different audiences and for purposes across varied platforms.

The present research has embarked on a journey to explore online ELF communication on SNS from the point of Japanese young individuals, unveiling their linguistic encounters and the ideologies that shape their English use and online self-presentation. As a closing remark to portray the findings in this research, I am inclined to use a simple Japanese phrase to fit into young people’s online lives: “takaga Instagram, saredo Instagram”, which translates to “it’s only Instagram, yet it’s taken seriously.” Language practices on SNS were once regarded as secondary and subcultural to offline and real-life communication (see Thurlow, 2012). However, SNS has evolved from being an emerging or peripheral realm of everyday language practices to becoming an integral

dimension of users' lives. SNS is a junction point of online and offline lives, and communication there is real. For many of young individuals today, SNS is only SNS but a serious matter; it transcends its utilitarian status and evolves into a significant facet of friendships and identity construction. Their language practices and self-presentation are not internal to them but influenced by their exposure to the social discourses of what English means. Continuing research into ELF communication aspires to investigate not only conventional high-stake and formal contexts such as business and academia but also traverse the domain of daily online communication. SNS serves as a unique lens to comprehend ELF and translanguaging through the eyes of the youth, unveiling valuable insights into the sociolinguistic reality of English, shaping their everyday language experiences.

Appendices

Appendix 1. Participation Information Sheet (Google Form)

ソーシャルメディアにおける言語使用調査 / The use of language in social media

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早稲田大学、博士後期課程所属田中藍渚と申します。博士課程研究へのご協力をよろしく
お願い申し上げます。調査研究にご参加いただく前に本紙をお読みください。ご参加いた
だける場合は3セクション目の同意書にご署名願います。 / My name is Aina Tanaka, Ph.D
student and research associate at Waseda University, Japan. I would like to ask you for
your help by participating in my Ph.D. research. Please read this information sheet before
deciding to take part in this project. If you agree with participation, you will be asked to
sign a consent form on the last section.

本研究概要

1. 本研究の概要・目的・意義 / The objectives and the significance of the research

本研究は、ソーシャルメディア（インスタグラム）における言語使用を探究することを目的とします。SNSでの投稿における言語使用やその他写真・絵文字などの表現方法の分析、またインタビューを用いて、SNSにおける言語使用の意図を探求、またその使用がどのように解釈され理解されるのか調査します。本研究はデジタル化に伴い新たな角度で国際コミュニケーション研究に貢献でき、日本の言語教育の方向性にも示唆を与える有意義な調査であると考えます。 / The present research aims to qualitatively investigate how online users use languages in social network sites (SNS), namely Instagram. It also investigates how the users' self-presentation is interpreted and perceived through their texts. By exploring international English usage in social media discourse, the research aims to contribute to pedagogical research in Japan as well as English communication research in transnational contexts against the backdrop of recent digital developments.

2. 研究者が参加を依頼する理由 / Why were you chosen for this study? /

本研究は、インスタグラムを使用する大学生及び20代の、日本語を背景とする参加者に主に依頼をしています。 / The present research involves participants ranges from 18 to 29 who are users of Instagram. The primary participants of the present research are participants who have Japanese language backgrounds. For participant readers, primary participants are those who have diverse lingua cultural backgrounds, not limited to Japanese.

3. 参加者にご協力いただくこと / What will happen to you when you take part?

参加者の皆様には、1) 研究者がインスタグラムの投稿を約3ヶ月分（必要な場合は延長させていただくことがあります）収集すること、2) 必要と判断されれば、約3ヶ月後に振り返りインタビュー（オンラインあるいは対面）に1度ご参加いただくこと、3) インタビューの際に言語背景に関する簡単なアンケートにご回答いただくこと、4) 研究者が投稿の一部（個人が特定される内容は除く）を、匿名あるいは仮名を用いて他の参加者に共有すること、について同意をしていただく必要があります。 / In this research, the researcher would like to ask you to 1) permit the researcher to observe and collect your Instagram posts for 3 months (or more if necessary), 2) if necessary, participate in one-time retrospective interview (online or face-to-face) after the three-month observation, 3) answer a brief demographic survey about your linguistic backgrounds during the interview, and 4) permit the researcher to share some of your posts (except the posts that could identify individuals) with participant readers anonymously or by using pseudo names.

4. 個人情報の取り扱いについて / Will your participation be ethically protected and confidential?

個人情報は保護され、本研究の目的のみに使用されます。発表・出版の際は匿名あるいは仮名を使用します。SNSの投稿、アンケートまたインタビューにおける全てのデータは、パスワードにより保護されたハードディスクドライブに電子的に保管され、博士研究終了後5年以内に削除されます。 / All your personal data from SNS posts, survey, and interview will remain confidential and only used for the purpose of this study. Any identifiable information will be either anonymized or replaced by pseudo names. The participants' data will be stored electronically on a password-protected hard disk drive and will be deleted permanently within five years after the doctoral research terminates.

5. 参加者の権利と辞退 / What are your rights, and what happens if you change your mind?

本研究への参加は任意です。研究に参加しないことによって、不利益（学業成績や単位取得を含め）な対応を受けることはありません。また、参加に同意を表明した後でもいつでも口頭で撤回の旨を伝えることで本研究の参加から辞退をすることが可能です。 / Participation in this study is voluntary. There is no effect on your academic career regarding grades and credits if you choose not to participate in this study. You will be able to withdraw from the research at any point by verbally communicating with the researcher even if you signed to agree to participate.

6. 調査分析・考察の出版等について / Publication of the research result

本調査の調査分析・考察は学術・学位論文あるいは学会発表にて出版、口頭発表される予定があります。参加者は断定できないように出版または発表されます。 / The combined result of the data of the study will be published in academic articles as well as the researcher's Ph.D. thesis and presented at academic conferences. No individual participant will be identified in any dissemination of the results.

7. 連絡先 / Where can I get more information?

質問、その他お問い合わせがございましたら、お気軽に以下の連絡先にご連絡ください。 / If you would like more information or have any further inquiries, please do not hesitate to contact Aina Tanaka, Waseda University.
Email: ainatanaka5@fuji.waseda.jp

調査研究への参加の同意書

以下の8項目を読み、チェックを入れてください。*

- 1. 研究の概要と目的、意義、参加を依頼された理由について理解し、質問があれば研究者に聞く機会がありました。I have understood the objectives, the significance of the research, and the reason I was chosen for the present research. I had an enough opportunity to ask questions about the study.
- 2. インスタグラムの投稿約3月間分以上が収集され、投稿内容について研究対象としてほしくない投稿があれば自由に研究者に問い合わせができることに同意します。/ I agree for my Instagram posts to be observed and stored for two or more months and that if my posts contain any content that I would not like the researcher to use, I can always share my inquiry with her
- 3. アンケートに回答し、そのデータが研究の目的に使用されることに同意します。/ I agree to answer a demographic survey and that the survey is used for the purpose of this study
- 4. インタビュー内容が録音され、そのデータが研究の目的に使用されることに同意します。/ I agree for my interviews (online / face-to-face) to be recorded.
- 5. 自分のインスタグラムの投稿を他の参加者が読むことに同意します。その際、名前は匿名か仮名表記され、その他の個人情報も分からないようにすることを理解しました。/ I agree that my posts will be read by participant readers. I have understood that my name will be appear only anonymously or with pseudo names, and any personal information will be closed.
- 6. 個人情報は保護され、本研究の目的のみに使用されることを理解しました。個人情報の取り扱いを読み、情報の保存方法など理解しました。/ I have understood that all my personal data will remain confidential and only used for the purpose of this study. I have also understood how my data will be protected and treated.
- 7. 研究者に伝えることでいつでも調査参加への同意が撤回出来ることを理解し、本研究が皆さんの学業成績とは関係ないことを理解しました。/ I have understood my participation is voluntary and I am able to withdraw at any time by verbally communicating my withdrawal to the researcher without my academic related career being affected.
- 8. 調査分析・考察の出版と発表の際は個人が断定できないようにすることを理解しました。/ I have understood about the publication and the presentation of the research result.

これらの事項について確認した上で、私はこの研究に参加することに同意します。 / I understand the statements and I choose to participate in this research. *

はい / Yes

いいえ / No

日付 / Date : *

Date

年 / 月 / 日

インスタグラムアカウント / Instagram account : *

Your answer

署名 / Signature (お名前をフルネームで以下に入力いただければ幸いです / please type your full name below) : *

Your answer

ありがとうございました / Thank you

研究者の研究専用アカウントにてご提示頂いたインスタグラムのアカウントをフォローさせて頂き、インスタグラムのダイレクトメッセージにてご連絡させていただきます。何かございましたら、お気軽にこちらのメールアドレスにご連絡ください。 / I will follow your Instagram account via my account used for only research purpose. If you have any inquiry please feel free to email me: ainatanaka5@fuji.waseda.jp

Back

Submit

Clear form

Appendix 2. Questionnaire (Google Form)

Questionnaire on language use on social media - ソーシャルメディアにおける言語使用に関する調査

研究者氏名 / Name of researcher: 田中藍渚 / Aina Tanaka
連絡先 / Contact : ainatanaka5@fuji.waseda.jp

早稲田大学田中藍渚と申します。この度は、ソーシャルメディアにおける言語使用に関する研究における調査にご協力をいただきたく存じます。8問で構成されており、所要時間は5分ほどです。アンケートにご協力いただき、誠にありがとうございます。

XXXXXXXXXXXX@gmail.com [Switch account](#)



Not shared

Instagramでのご自身の言語使用などについてお聞かせください / Please tell me about your Instagram usage

1. フォロワーの中で、ご自身と異なる第一言語が日本語以外の方ほどのくらいいらっしゃいますか？（目安で構いません） / How much of your followers on Instagram are speakers of languages other than your first languages? (A rough estimate is fine)

- 100（全員）
- 60～90%（半数以上いるが全員ではない）
- 50%（半数ほど）
- 10～40%（いるが半数はいない）
- 0%（いない）

2. 何語を話す方がフォロワーにいらっしゃいますか？簡単にお答えください（例：英語、韓国語、フランス語 etc） / Which languages do your followers speak? (e.g., English, Korean, French etc)

Your answer



3. インスタグラムではどの言語を使用しますか？（複数回答可） / When you use Instagram, which languages do you use (you may select more than one)?

英語

日本語

Other: _____

4. 写真の載せ方として近いものは以下のうちどれでしょうか？（複数回答可） / When do you share posts on Instagram (you may select more than one)?

日記や備忘録のような記録用として載せる / I use Instagram like a journal. I post when I have special events to remember

自分の世界観が出るような写真を中心に載せる / Instagram is part of self-expression. My photos show my taste and my world

自分の仕事や活動などを宣伝・共有するために写真を載せる / I use Instagram to raise my voice or publicize my work. I share things related to my professions or any social/cultural activity I'm involved.

ペットや趣味など何か一つのテーマに沿って写真を載せる / Instagram is, for me, more thematic. I only post photos of, for instance, my pets, my hobbies, food etc.

Other: _____

ご自身の言語使用背景についてお聞かせください / Please tell me about your language background

5. 日本語と英語使用についてお聞かせください。 / Please tell me about your background regarding English and Japanese

- 日本語と英語が第一言語 / Japanese and English are my first languages
- 日本語が第一言語 / Japanese is my first language
- 英語が第一言語 / English is my first language
- 日本語と英語どちらも第一言語ではない（以下"Other"の箇所に第一言語をお答えください） / Neither is my first language (Please tell my your first language in the "Other" section)
- Other: _____

6. 英語使用の背景についてお聞かせください。 / Please tell me about your English background

- 海外経験はなく中学校高校で英語教育を受けた / I do not have oversea experience and I have only received English education in Japan
- 1年未満の海外留学をした / I did study abroad less than a year
- 1年以上の海外留学をした（1学年=9ヶ月の留学含む） / I did study abroad more than a year or an academic year
- 帰国生である / I am a returnee student
- 大学生になって初めて日本に来た / I have just moved and this is my first experience in Japan.
- Other: _____

6-I. 上記で「海外留学をした」あるいは「帰国生である」と答えた方は滞在国と期間をお教えください。 / Those who said you experienced study abroad or are returnee students, could you give more explanation about countries and duration of your residence?

Your answer _____

7. TOEIC/TOEFL/IELTS/英検/の受験経験がある場合は、目安で構いませんので最新の点数をお教えください。 / If you have taken any official language tests before, could you share your score with me?

Your answer _____

8. 日本語と英語以外の言語で使用している言語や身近にある言語などがありましたらお聞かせください。（例：スペイン語を勉強中、韓国語を家庭内言語として使用する等） / Do you speak or are you studying languages other than Japanese or English? (e.g., I speak Korean at home with my family, I am learning Spanish currently etc)

Your answer _____

ありがとうございました。謝礼支払いに必要なため、以下に1) お名前を漢字でフルネーム、2) 学籍番号、3) 学部と学年をお教えいただければ幸いです。

（例：田中藍渚/A12345678/早稲田大学国際教養学部2年） / Thank you very much for your time!! Lastly, please kindly provide me with your 1) Name, 2) Student number, and 3) your faculty and year

※氏名、学籍番号、学部学年は謝礼支払い目的のみに使用し、調査結果は全て匿名扱いとなります。 / Your personal information is collected only the purpose of gratitude.

Your answer _____

Appendix 3. Interview guide used for the first round of interview sessions

Make sure:

1. 氏名確認
2. 録音許可・録音確認

Ice breaker:

- Q. 最新写真・投稿など
- Q. 投稿の様子・どういう時にインスタに投稿するか

Individual questions on language use:

- Q. ○月○日の投稿から、一つずつ振り返ってもらう。エピソード、言葉（と絵文字）についても、どのようにして考えたりしましたか？
- Q. ここでは英語の中に日本語が入っていますが、なんか理由とかありますか？
- Q. 英語と日本語どちらを先に考えましたか？

General questions on SNS:

- Q. 日本語で書く、英語で書く、他の言語で書くというのはどのように選択
- Q. 英語で書く時に、気をつけていること、工夫していることなど
- Q. 文法などは気にしますか？（気にする場合、気にしない場合、理由）
- Q. 誰かに向けて書いていることが多いですか？
- Q. 写真、絵文字やハッシュタグは普段どのように選んでいますか？
- Q. SNS で使用する英語と普段の生活で使用する英語は違いますか？
- Q. SNS で日常的に英語使用とするのと、学校で英語習ってききましたけど、何か、違いますか。使うときの意識とか英語そのものとか、あるいは別に違いますか。
- Q. SNS を使う中で学校でこういう英語の練習もした方が良いのではないかなどもしご自分の意見がございましたらお聞かせください。

Confirmation / Final comment:

- Q. 投稿の中で調査対象から除外することを希望する投稿があるかについて確認
- Q. 何か質問やその他付け足したいことなどはありますか？

Appendix 4. Transcript Convention

[] : overlapping utterances

= : latched comments

[words] : words supplemented by the author

[...] : omitted texts

@ : laughter

Appendix 5. Research ethics approval

2022年3月18日

国際学術院 飯野 公一 殿
国際学術院 田中 藍渚 殿

早稲田大学
総長 田中 愛治

人を対象とする研究に関する実施承認書

貴殿より申請のあった下記の研究計画（申請番号：2021-458）について、人を対象とする研究に関する倫理審査委員会の審査結果（承認）に基づき、実施を承認します。

■承認番号 : 2021-458

■研究計画名 : ソーシャルメディアにおける自己表現媒体としての国際共通語としての英語(ELF)使用

■研究責任者

所属 : 国際学術院
氏名 : 飯野 公一
資格 : 教授

■研究実施者

所属 : 国際学術院
氏名 : 田中 藍渚
資格 : 助手

■実施承認日 : 2022年3月17日

【対象者と直接対面して行う研究や対象者を集合させて行う研究】新型コロナウイルス感染拡大防止への最大限の配慮（体調管理、3密回避、マスク着用、手洗い・手指消毒、飛沫飛散下での飲食禁止などの基本的な感染予防対策）をしたうえで研究活動を行ってください。また、今後、状況に応じて新型コロナウイルス感染症対策本部からの通知が変更されることも想定されますので、必ず研究開始時点でご確認ください。

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