Multimodal Literacies: Imagining Lives Through Korean Dramas

Grace MyHyun Kim, Delila Omerbašić

Multimodal literacy practices in Internet-mediated transnational spaces provide opportunities for adolescents to imagine lives that differ from what they experience in their local contexts.

"Around the world, people are being swept up by Korean culture—the Korean Wave," remarked President Barack Obama in a press conference with President Park Geun-hye on May 7, 2013 (Office of the Press Secretary, 2013, para. 4). The United States is one of many places where people have participated in *Hallyu*, the Korean wave (in this article, the use of *Korea* and *Korean* refers to South Korea). Among some *Hallyu*-related industries are films and television series (referred to as Korean dramas or K-dramas), popular music (referred to as K-pop), computer games, comic books, food, beauty, and sports. Although *Hallyu* has undergone various transformations over the past few decades, Korean dramas have always been and continue to be a major component of its success, especially as they are a medium that features other *Hallyu* products. The popularity of Korean media texts in countries outside of Korea reflects an increase in cultural flows facilitated by a proliferation of new technologies.

The transnational popular-culture texts featured in this article are Korean dramas. We examine how young people around the world accessed and developed connections to Korean dramas' images, sounds, and narratives through their use of multimodal literacy practices. These literacies that integrate textual, visual, and aural representations of meaning are important for understanding how transnational networks of media and interactions, or mediascapes (Appadurai, 1996), provide opportunities for individuals to participate in collective imagination. Internet-mediated multimodal literacies developed around transnational popular-culture texts such as Korean dramas can allow adolescents to imagine lives that differ from what they experience in their local contexts. In addition, multimodal literacies practiced outside of formal settings challenge rigid definitions of literacy that pervade many educational contexts

(Burnett & Merchant, 2015). Our findings call attention to how adolescents' interests in texts and communities constructed outside of their local contexts actively connect them to a globalized world.

In this article, we address the following question: How do young people participate in mediascapes through multimodal engagements with Korean dramas? From a theoretical framework of literacy as social practice, we present two qualitative studies with data collected in 2013. Our data examples focus on adolescents who did not live in Korea. These adolescents resided in various countries and engaged with Korean dramas through multimodal literacy practices. The two studies provide complementary perspectives on how adolescents practice multimodal literacies to engage with Korean dramas. The first study illustrated the global reach and breadth of adolescents' engagements with Korean dramas. The second study looked at the impact that these practices can have on an individual level. Both studies featured individuals who developed an affinity for Korean dramas on their own. Their practices took place in out-of-school settings and were not guided by formal instructors or researchers.

The first study was of literacy practices on DramaCrazy.net's (hereafter referred to as DramaCrazy)

GRACE MYHYUN KIM is a doctoral candidate in the Graduate School of Education at the University of California, Berkeley, USA; e-mail gracemkim@berkeley.edu.

DELILA OMERBAŠIĆ is a postdoctoral research fellow in literacy studies in the English Department at Tulane University, New Orleans, LA, USA; e-mail domerbas@tulane.edu.

Korean dramas forum, an online affinity space (Gee, 2003). The second study focused on Tete Pasta (pseudonym), a teenage girl who resettled as a refugee from Thailand, and her daily engagement with Korean dramas. In both studies, participants' literacy practices were multimodal and transnational. Participants composed written, oral, and visual interpretations of Korean dramas, such as names, images, and animations connected to the dramas. Their transnational engagements were twofold: connecting to Korean dramas even though they did not reside in Korea and connecting to other people around the world who watch Korean dramas.

Our findings illustrate how individuals in diverse places outside of Korea imagined lives using multimodal literacies to broaden their immediate experiences. We argue that multimodal literacy practices prompted by engagements with transnational popular-culture texts reflect and support imagined lives. Our study contributes to literacy scholarship on how educators might create meaningful learning opportunities that reflect students' out-of-school engagements with multimodal texts, such as fanfiction (Black, 2008) and video games (Gee, 2003). Learning experiences with transnational popular-culture texts in particular can support students' imaginations and examinations of their lives in relation to the global social world (Norton, 2000; Williams, 2011).

Multimodal Literacies and Imagined Identities

Theories that view literacy as a social practice, such as multiliteracies and New Literacy Studies, emphasize multiple modes for making meaning, such as written text, images, audio, and video (Gee, 2003; New London Group, 1996). New Literacy Studies researchers recognize multimodal practices as literacies that are increasingly digital and characterized by new creative possibilities (Knobel & Lankshear, 2008). We see our participants' written, oral, and visual composing as multimodal literacies that supported them in imagining identities for themselves.

Internet-mediated multimodal literacies have become an important part of young people's lives. Gee (2003) delineated multiple ways in which people use digital tools and platforms to project their values, desires, and fantasies onto a character. For example, video games offer storyworlds in which players participate through their imagined identities (Rowsell, Pederson, & Trueman, 2014). Constructing an online identity engages multimodal literacy practices that involve complex reflection and composition. Customizing one's profile page and constructing an online avatar are a few types of identity play that young people engage in with the use of digital tools (Gee & Hayes, 2011; Mahiri, 2011; Nardi, 2010). These literacy practices are individual and shared acts of imagination. Recognizing virtual game environments as "places where we are permitted to let our imaginations run free" (Thomas & Brown, 2011, p. 115) calls attention to the important connection between learning and playing.

Appiah (2006) explained more broadly that engagements with texts produced by places different from one's local context have the potential to open new ways of being: "Conversations across boundaries of identity… begin with the sort of imaginative engagement you get when you read a novel or watch a movie or attend to a work of art that speaks from some place other than your own" (p. 85). Cross-border connections in transnational online platforms can engender and support complex self-representations. These representations may challenge the fixed boundaries of identity assumed offline (Kim, 2016a).

Mediascapes and Imagined Lives

Our participants' multimodal literacy practices illustrate increased communication technologies in a globalized world. According to Appadurai's (1996) conceptualization of imagination as a social practice, transnational flows of media create mediascapes:

> Mediascapes…tend to be image-centered, narrative-based accounts of strips of reality, and what they offer to those who experience and transform them is a series of elements (such as characters, plots, and textual forms) out of which scripts can be formed of imagined lives, their own as well as those of others living in other places. (p. 35)

Engagement with transnational media texts can result in individuals producing their own texts that merge and signify belonging in diverse locations and cultures (Omerbašić, 2015).

Investments in imagined communities (Anderson, 1991) can provide an influential vision for our lives by expanding the range of possible selves (Kanno & Norton, 2003). In our findings, adolescents participated in mediascapes that reflected their lived experiences and imagined lives, as they did not live in Korea yet identified with Korea-produced media texts. Our participants used multimodal literacy practices to negotiate self-representations that reflected their transnational interests and expressed their identities as participants of the global social world.

Methodologies

This article features data from two qualitative studies that employed ethnographic methods. The first study focused on youth participation in an online affinity space, DramaCrazy. The second study focused on Tete Pasta's engagement with Korean dramas. These adolescents' enthusiastic engagements with Korean dramas led us to examine the meaning that these literacy practices held in their lives. In this section, we outline the participants and contexts, data collection, analysis for each study, and a comparative analysis of the studies.

DramaCrazy

The first study explored how adolescents' literacy and language practices in an online forum supported various kinds of learning. It features DramaCrazy, a free website on which people posted, watched, and discussed Asian dramas. Informal interviews with adolescents who watch Korean dramas coupled with a computer-mediated communication studies approach for identifying a core of websites related to a topic (Androutsopoulos, 2008) led to the selection of DramaCrazy. Quantcast, a Web traffic estimation site, reported that on the second day of the study's data collection, 52% of DramaCrazy's users were under 18 years old. Participants' geographic locations were diverse. DramaCrazy's top four traffic sources were the Philippines, the United States, Malaysia, and Indonesia. Some of the other locations that forum participants indicated in their individual profiles were France, Norway, Israel, England, and Iceland. This article includes a few of the forum's participants whose multimodal literacies constructed imagined identities.

Data collection included peripheral observations, Web traffic estimation data, over 200 screenshots, and eight printed discussion threads. In addition to these data, we analyzed participants' created profiles, albums, friend networks, and blogs. Through an unobtrusive method using publicly available data (Hine, 2015), data collection focused on DramaCrazy's Korean dramas forum. Data included forum participants' writing, visual images, and interactions. Rather than following individual participants, an inductive approach of conceptually driven sequential sampling (Miles, Huberman, & Saldaña, 2014) resulted in selection of eight discussion threads. Qualitative content analysis (Cho & Lee, 2014; Saldaña, 2011) involved examination of how participants' literacy practices related to cultural exchange and issues of identity and community. Data presented in this article focus on literacy practices that reflected participants' imaginations.

Tete Pasta

The second study examined multimodal literacy practices of refugee-background youths in an urban community center in the United States. Delila (second author) was engaged in this community center as a volunteer for four years prior to conducting this study. The youths in the study had a broad range of interests and engagement in self-motivated multimodal literacy practices in online settings. Tete Pasta was selected for this article due to her strong affinity for Korean dramas. She was a high school junior who resettled to the United States in 2009 from the Umpiem refugee camp in Thailand. She identified as Karen, specifically as Po-Karen, which is one of the persecuted ethnic groups in Burma (Myanmar's former name as Burma is used in this article based on the participant's preference).

Data were gathered through ethnographic methods, including semistructured interviews, participant observation, and documents. Five hour-long interviews were conducted with Tete: three traditional, one multimodal (Omerbašić, 2015), and one follow-up for member-checking purposes. The interviews, which focused on personal and educational background and literacy practices were recorded and transcribed. The multimodal interview consisted of a simultaneous screen capture and audio recording of Tete's engagement with Korean dramas, which allowed her to demonstrate and explain the significance of these literacy practices. Field notes from participant observation focused on multimodal literacy events, such as instances of online interaction and engagement with Korean dramas. In addition, approximately 40 documents were collected, including screenshot recordings of Tete's multimodal literacy practices. Qualitative theme analysis was conducted to identify patterns, categories, and themes (Saldaña, 2011), and multimodal analysis (Jewitt, 2009) allowed for a deeper investigation of the relationships among multiple modes, including image, written text, and video.

Comparative Analysis

We examined the relationships among our participants' literacy practices through a comparative analysis of our two studies (Merriam & Tisdell, 2016). We began by identifying the data within our studies that informed our research question. In our purpose to understand how young people participate in mediascapes through multimodal engagements with Korean dramas, we developed analytical categories based on our theoretical framework of imagination as a form of social practice enacted through multimodal literacies. Through our

comparative analysis, we found that although our participants resided in different local contexts, there were similarities in self-representations, transnational connections, and lived and imagined experiences, which served as our analytical categories.
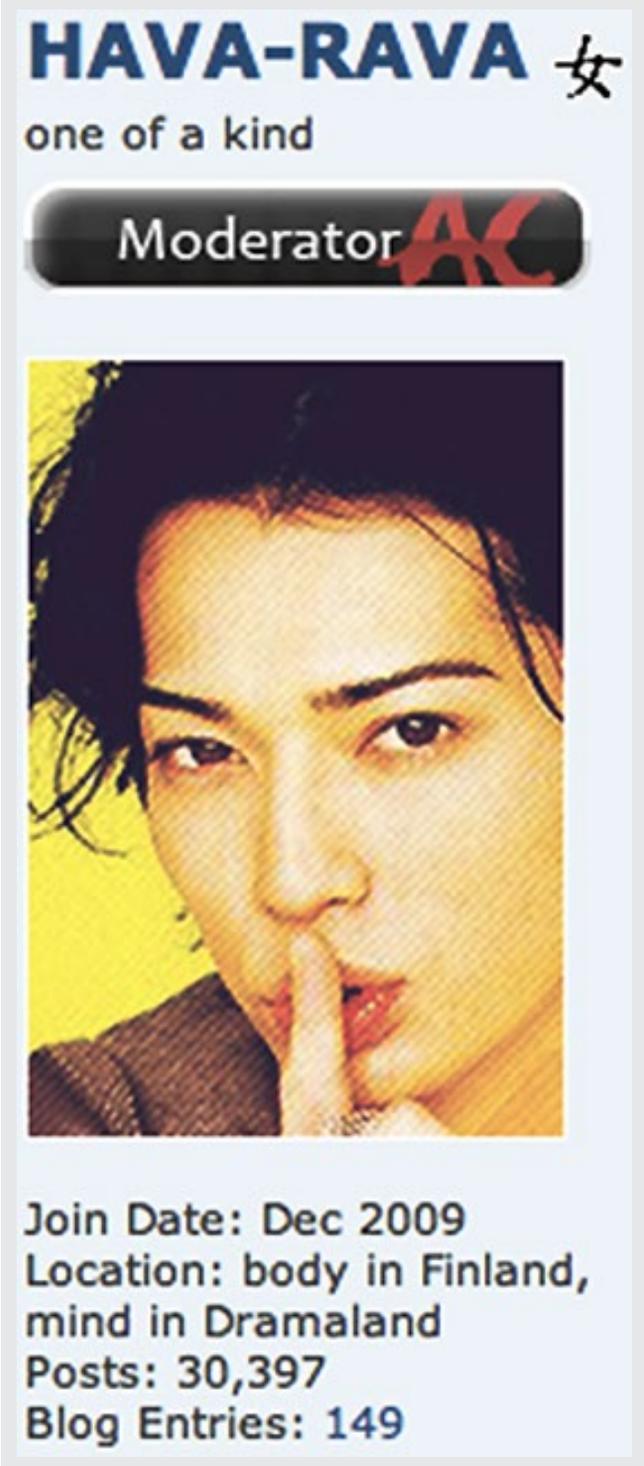
Findings and Discussion

From our studies, we found that young people used multimodal literacies to engage with Korean dramas, constructing transnational spaces that supported their imagined lives. These multimodal practices included imagining different lives and engaging in multilingual mediascapes. Participants who did not reside in and had not traveled to Korea composed locations associated with their identification with Korean dramas, thereby expressing belonging to real and imagined locations. Literate activities that support imagination are not necessarily Internet mediated or multimodal, such as reading a novel set in a distant place, time, and culture, but we found that through Internet-mediated engagements with others about transnational texts, the adolescents in our studies constructed their own fictions that extended beyond the narratives of the dramas. These fictions incorporated reflections about their lived experiences, lives portrayed by the dramas, and the lives described by other fans of Korean dramas. Participants' interactions with Korean drama texts and also their interactions with others about the texts allowed them to engage with multilingual mediascapes.

Imagining Different Lives

DramaCrazy participants imagined different lives for themselves as they composed locations in their multimodal profiles. Although some participants indicated places such as "France, Near Marseille" and "Northern Wisconsin, USA" in their profiles; others composed inventive locations for themselves, such as "The Internet" and "Pure imagination." Still other participants composed their profile locations based on their identification with the dramas, such as "Inside an Asian drama," "Kdramaland," "KdramaMad," and "body in Finland, mind in Dramaland" (see Figure 1). These adolescents composed locations that imagined themselves in the world of Korean dramas, thereby projecting themselves as participants in the places and cultures portrayed by the dramas.

Participants composed imaginative profiles using both images and words. Green13 and Babii123, who resided in England, beebo in the Caribbean, jumbojer in the Netherlands, and perfect_world in Texas selected anime characters for their profile images. AyShanxT

Figure 1
Imagining Different Lives

designed an original sketch of an anime character for her profile image. Some participants linked their online profiles explicitly to Korean dramas. UglyDuckling345

in the United States, al25200 in France, and NanaChin in Germany chose actors from Korean dramas for their profile images.

Tete Pasta drew on Korean dramas to construct her pseudonym for the study. She based her first name on a character named Tete, who appears in one of her favorite Korean dramas, and combined it with the last name Pasta, which is based on the title of another of her favorites. In addition to imagining a character identity through her pseudonym creation, Tete wrote letters through which she imagined a different life, including dialogue with other characters from the Korean dramas. For example, she wrote to one drama actor,

> I just write the English, like to… His name is like Lee Min-ho. I just say, how are you, or I miss you, like that (laughing). Sometime I just do that, like "do you remember last time we been to… Korean place," like that.

In her letters, Tete lived an imaginary relationship with the Korean actor, referencing the imagined locations that she was able to explore with him through her written composition. Engaging with multimodal Korean drama texts enabled her to imagine herself in a location that she never experienced in her everyday life.

Composing imagined locations was one way that our participants envisioned and learned about lives in different contexts. Online, participants shared their imaginative views of the world that were based on Korean dramas. Iry20, who resided in the United States, described herself as someone who grew up watching U.S. television and dramas from Mexico, Colombia, Venezuela, and Cuba. She interpreted these other countries' dramas as presenting a "more commercial and unstable" view of love and Korean dramas as "cover[ing] the social ill with hope and love." She explained, "Every day when I come home the dramas make me dream and the others just make me ask where do the world go??" Humajaved, a participant in Ukraine who described herself as Pakistani, explained, "in my country urdu dramas are watched with craze….I watched urdu hindi english dramas a lot…but…soon I was bored…I wanted new story new style." After watching the Korean drama *Boys Over Flowers,* she "felt enchanted by korean drama's." Aryael similarly explained her attraction to Korean dramas: "Kdramas—culture, language, fashion (I actually find the Korean male and female modern clothes rather interesting), the glamour, the plots, and the 'alternate' world they take you to." Aryael imagined Korea through her engagement with its dramas, and this imagining went beyond a distanced viewing. Her descriptions of being taken to Korea expressed an embodied experience, albeit imagined. Viewing and reflecting on a social world

different from one's lived experiences have potential importance for identity development as an aspirational activity of imagining a different life for oneself.

DramaCrazy encouraged this interaction between individuals' lived and imagined experiences. Its homepage banners were "DramaCrazy: Move through Fantasy and Reality while watching Asian Drama!" and "Live and discuss the drama dream." DramaCrazy participants entered imagined lives through their multimodal composing practices on the forum—practices predicated on their watching, posting, and discussion of dramas. These practices linked their local contexts with the worlds portrayed in the dramas.

Tete similarly drew on Korean dramas to imagine new ways of being in the world (although Korean dramas include both movies and series, she referred to serialized dramas as "movies"). Resettled to the United States as a refugee, Tete faced complex challenges such as discrimination, financial difficulties, and pressure to assimilate. Like many teenagers, she also had occasional challenges with friendships, romantic relationships, and her parents. She used multimodal literacies to temporarily shift her location through imagination:

> Sometime when I have something wrong with me, or something like that, I just want to watch movie. It is better…. When I'm thinking something, or something wrong, or something like that, I think if I can watch movie, it's all, everything gone.

Although she watched South East Asian dramas during her childhood, including Karen and Burmese productions, she found that she preferred Korean dramas after resettling to the United States. She noted that Burmese and Karen movies did not have interesting plots: "like no good action, and what they talk, and what they're doing, it's not good action I think." Unlike Korean dramas, the available Karen and Burmese multimodal content did not support her imaginative location-shifting practices.

Participants in both studies identified with multiple locations. They resided in places outside of Korea, yet they identified strongly with Korea through their immersion in its popular culture. On DramaCrazy, s4msung posted, "I want to study in Korea, since Im from Korea, but dont know anything about the country and culture. The other reason is of course i love kpop and kdramas." As a self-described "Danish Korean," s4msung's literacy practices across various Internet-mediated platforms supported his connection to Korea without having lived experiences in Korea. His engagements with Korean popular culture

allowed him to imagine the language and culture of his ethnic ancestry and supported his participation in this heritage. Belonging to online communities like DramaCrazy supported an imagining and learning about Korea that connected to individualized learning goals that he pursued in his offline life. For example, in Dramacrazy's forum, he detailed his application process to study abroad at a university in Korea. Multimodal literacy practices supported s4msung's construction of an identity and life that expressed identifications with Denmark and Korea—simultaneous belonging to geographically disparate places. These practices supported his diasporic identity as someone who is him "from Korea" without residing in Korea or ever having been there.

During her everyday experiences and literacy practices, Tete sought to affirm her Po-Karen identity while also imagining different locations and lived experiences for herself through Korean dramas. She frequently shared photographs on her Facebook page of herself wearing traditional Karen clothing, posing next to a Karen flag, or expressing that she was a Karen student through a multimodal composition of text and images. In other sections of her Facebook page, she indicated that she was a fan of Korean dramas by "liking" pages dedicated to particular dramas and actors and sharing links to drama episodes. Being a Korean drama fan was only one of the many identities that she enacted as she imagined a different life in transnational mediascapes.

Engaging in Multilingual Mediascapes

The young people in both studies practiced imagined identities in transnational, multilingual mediascapes. On DramaCrazy, s4msung described a personal YouTube project: He translated K-pop videos from Korean to English. He explained, "It helps me getting used to hangul and different words, as well as making me becoming better to editing, which is kinda what I study." He requested feedback on his YouTube video production project from other DramaCrazy participants. His Internet-mediated project and dialogic exchanges on DramaCrazy extended his YouTube project, and he used multiple digital skills and spaces to practice Korean. The communicative flexibility that he practiced through these multimodal literacies further illustrate how his imagining of Korea and becoming a student at a Korean university encouraged his linguistic development.

Like s4msung, other DramaCrazy participants practiced Korean in the forum. They initiated discussion threads with titles such as "Let's learn Korean" and "what are the korean words u learn." These discussions included Korean vocabulary lists, questions and responses regarding Korean pronunciation, and explanations of the sociocultural considerations for Korean language use (e.g., honorifics). HAVA-RAVA, an 18-year-old who lived in Finland, began the "Let's learn Korean" discussion with an extensive vocabulary list. Vocabulary list exchanges and other Korean language queries suggested language-learning aspirations beyond merely viewing Korean dramas. Leesa, a university student in Malaysia, requested pronunciation clarification for romanized Korean names that begin with a *G* or a *K*. In this same discussion, kranju explained, "I also started to learn how to write in korean. I wrote down all the alphabets and with the help of that i framed up some words like mool, chingu, pap, oppa, noona, unni etc." Participants' posts included English, Korean (sometimes romanized), and other languages. Amrita28, who lived in Malaysia, explained that the Korean word "Pisang = expensive" is similar to "how Malay/Indonesians call bananas."

In a discussion thread titled "parents and your asian dramas," ThatCrazyOtaku, who was 22 years old, explained that she translated Korean dramas while watching them with her mother because her mother did not speak English. Similarly, Vermouth23, who described herself and her family as Portuguese, explained that her mother did not understand English, but her father, who could read English, watched Korean dramas occasionally with her. These and other participants' posts included multiple written languages, such as Korean, English, and languages that the authors of these posts described as their local languages (e.g., Dutch, Japanese). Engagement with Korean dramas facilitated DramaCrazy participants' imagined and actual experiences with using Korean, a language they may not encounter in their local contexts (Kim, 2016b).

Tete Pasta's engagement with Korean dramas began after she resettled to the United States. During this time, she began learning English while seeking to maintain her fluency in Po-Karen, Karen, and Burmese through daily interactions and literacy practices. Reflecting a deep personal interest, Korean dramas became a meaningful language-learning resource for Tete, supporting an imagining of a broadened multilingualism. However, it was through engaging in multilingual mediascapes that she was able to develop a new language by exploring her personal interests. Tete interacted with Korean dramas in Internet-mediated settings while also demonstrating her knowledge of the drama narratives. Figure 2 shows

Figure 2
Engaging in Multilingual Mediascapes

T: It is 11, I just... I have to translate all this one. I have to wait like ... night. Then it's 100%, you can watch.

D: ohh... so... is it gonna be in English?

T: Yea, but just only some of it. It just only had like one... (fast forwards the clip)

T: Yea, like here...

You know, the first time, this girl, she don't have any friend. Like, her boyfriend, went to the United States. In America. Then her friend talk about, her boyfriend is kiss to another girl, and have another girlfriend, like that. And then she broke up with him.

a multimodal interview excerpt and screenshots from the Korean drama *The Queen's Classroom*, following the release of the 11th episode. Here, Tete explained that she was awaiting all of the subtitles to be entered. They enabled her to follow and understand the plotlines through her developing English literacy, as explained in the following interview excerpt:

Delila: How do you understand what's going on?

Tete: It is, they have like English subject [subtitles]....If they don't have it, I don't understand it. Sometime, I just understand a little word, like that. Just understand little little, like that. I just watch it with the English subject, that why.

Delila: And do you feel like that helps your English reading?

Tete: I think yeah, like that, too. Sometime, like the first time, if I don't understand, I copy the word and put in the dictionary. That way I just do it.

Because the content held significance, Tete sought out digital tools, such as dictionaries, to better understand the plotlines. She imagined and practiced her identity as a multilingual individual through multimodal practices in Korean and English.

Although she was not a DramaCrazy participant, Tete frequented another online community, Viki, which offered links to dramas and discussion forums. Like many others, she participated in the forums by reading the discussions and not posting any comments (Preece, Nonnecke, & Andrews, 2004). She described her participation in the following exchange:

Tete: And you can comment on Viki. They have comment. They have comment. They say like, I don't agree with you. And that guy and you shouldn't kill that girl. Sometime I don't look at the subject. I just look at the comment and read it.

Delila: Do you ever write on there?

Tete: No, I don't write.

Delila: You just read it?

Tete: Yea. I just read. If I write it, maybe something wrong. People are gonna tell me again and again.

Partially, her reason for not posting on Viki was that she was not comfortable with how this unknown audience would respond to her written English. Instead, she was more comfortable interacting with a known audience that included her friends on Facebook. She posted comments on Facebook in response to Korean dramas

while also sharing written text about the dramas with her friends. For s4msung and Tete, composing various texts about Korean dramas expanded their multilingual lives.

As Korean drama fans who did not live in Korea, participants imagined and practiced belonging to communities beyond their immediate contexts through multimodal and multilingual engagements in transnational mediascapes (Anderson, 1991; Appadurai, 1996; Gee, 2012; Kanno & Norton, 2003). Through these practices, they were "constantly organizing and reorganizing a sense of who they are and how they relate to the social world" (Norton, 2000, p. 11). Engagement with Korean, English, and participants' home languages reflected the value of multilingual identity development for the participants in our studies. DramaCrazy participants and Tete Pasta connected to the characters of the Korean dramas and to other people who shared their interest in Korean dramas by listening to, reading, and posting in multiple languages on DramaCrazy, Viki, and Facebook. These literacy practices illustrate the potential for adolescents to use multimodal tools for imaginative identity development, including multilingualism.

In both studies, participants' literacy practices reflected the lives portrayed in the dramas: how these lives related and did not relate to their own lived experiences. Reflecting on their locations, sometimes creating imagined ones, or inventing locations and lives that linked the fantasy of the Korean dramas with the reality of their actual places of residence, participants in both studies imagined and interacted with social worlds beyond their local contexts. These literacy practices with Korean drama mediascapes expressed imagined lives. The participants' practices reflected multiple dimensions of life, including language, identity, and experiences in real and imagined global locations.

Conclusions and Implications

We have presented findings from two studies of individuals who electively developed their affinity for Korean dramas. The first study offered a broad illustration of the global reach and breadth of adolescents' engagements with Korean dramas. The second study provided a look into the impact that these practices can have on an individual level. In both studies, individuals developed their affinity for Korean dramas through multimodal literacy practices, including imagining different lives and engaging in multilingual mediascapes. We have presented the importance

of these practices in transnational networks of media for enhancing individuals' experiences, especially for expressing a sense of belonging not exclusive to their places of residence.

Elective engagement in out-of-school literacy practices demonstrates the value of educators designing curricula that incorporate transnational texts. Adolescents' engagement with these texts in Internet-mediated spaces can inspire discussions of how experiences in their local contexts intersect with geographically distant places (Hull, Stornaiuolo, & Sahni, 2010). Schools might also construct transnational collaborations by connecting students in different parts of the world to compose multimedia products based on their authentic, shared interests. For example, educators might invite students to share popular-culture texts that relate to literature, essential questions, and key themes being studied in their classes.

Our participants' literacy practices also highlight the value of multimodal literacies for adolescents' developing identities. Affirming what students may already know and practice in their out-of-school lives supports them in school as agents of their learning. Educators may build on languages that students speak at home and languages that they engage with online by designing assignments and assessments that value these languages and literacies. Video, stop-motion animation, audio, written text, and visuals are examples of how multimodality may be incorporated into assignments, assessment, and instructional practices. Teachers and students practicing literacies that use digital and nondigital domains is a way to bridge students' out-of-school and in-school lives (Abrams & Russo, 2015). School experiences that value students' out-of-school interests, knowledge, and skills may foster greater student accessibility to and engagement with school curriculum.

We recognize important limits of these literacies. Participants in our studies come from geographically diverse places with varied histories, economies, and societies. We do not contend that imagining lives necessarily transforms individuals' local and material conditions, but the multimodal literacy practices that we have presented illustrate a possibility for these literacies to support adolescents' identity development. Identity imagination and articulation with new media have now become integral to adolescents' offline identities (Williams, 2011). Incorporating multimodal literacy skills and transnational popular-culture texts into school experiences can provide adolescents with opportunities to build on the imagined identities that they practice in transnational mediascapes. These

TAKE ACTION!

1. Build on a class's literacy and language resources. Ask students what languages and literacies they know, such as world languages that they are studying in school, languages that they speak at home, and languages that they engage with online. Design small-group assignments that ask students to use a minimum of two languages.

2. Select literature that includes multiple languages and non-Western settings.

3. Gather information about students' engagement with transnational popular-culture texts and about the peer networks and tools that they use to interact with this content. Provide opportunities for students to use these texts and tools in their assignments.

4. Have students create an imaginary character based on the literature that they are studying. Then, have them write in the first person as that character to develop a story based on the literature that they are studying.

5. Engage students in guided critical discussions about transnational cultural and media flows.

experiences can affirm and further develop literacies and languages that are important in students' lives.

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