Segyehwa, South Korea’s globalization drive, emphasizes the importance of learning foreign languages, particularly English. However, the desire to improve English does not necessarily lead to enhanced proficiency. Professional and academic domains continue to be intimidating contexts in which English is in high demand, which often contributes to English language anxiety (Lee 2014). When contexts are relatively informal, a variety of linguistic innovations occur along with English, the most desired yet most feared language. No sociolinguistic sphere is more promising than popular culture as a site where we observe contemporary, dynamic multilingualism in South Korea. In this talk, she will consider evidence from a range of pop culture domains including K-pop, talk shows, television dramas, sketch comedies, advertising, and the linguistic landscape (signage). Dr. Lee argues that Standard Korean, non-standard Korean dialects, Standard English, Konglish, African American Vernacular English (AAVE), Japanese, Chinese, and code-mixing are readily utilized as linguistic choices for entertainment and pleasure in contemporary South Korea.

JAMIE SHINHEE LEE IS ASSOCIATE PROFESSOR OF LINGUISTICS AT THE UNIVERSITY OF MICHIGAN-DEARBORN. SHE HAS CO-EDITED A BOOK ON ENGLISH IN ASIAN POPULAR CULTURE AND A SPECIAL ISSUE IN THE JOURNAL WORLD ENGLISHES ON A SIMILAR TOPIC. HER RESEARCH INTERESTS INCLUDE WORLD ENGLISHES, LANGUAGE AND POPULAR CULTURE, GLOBALIZATION AND LANGUAGE EDUCATION, BILINGUALISM, AND KOREAN PRAGMATS.

ANY QUESTIONS PLEASE EMAIL REMY.BALLEW@STONYBROOK.EDU