

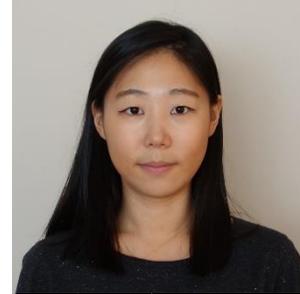


Title of Project:

Rethinking Post-Entry Language Assessment Policies in U.S.
Higher Education: A Socially Responsible Approach

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TIRF Research Topic Investigated:

Language Planning & Policy

Project Summary:

In the educational sphere, language tests have long been used as a powerful mechanism to deliver their declared, intended policy goals. One example is the use of post-entry language assessments (PELAs) that are part of whole policy systems designed with the stated aim to determine appropriate kinds of institutional support for international or English as an additional language (EAL) students after they have been admitted for degree study in higher education institutions. By now, PELAs are entrenched in universities in many English-speaking countries (Read, 2015, 2016).

Despite the wide array of research and development efforts for refining PELAs, the ways in which the use of PELAs achieves the stated policy goals of social equity remain underexplored. To that end, the research supported by this award asks: What are the prevalent PELA policies in post-graduate institutions in the U.S. context? What are the ideological orientations and assumptions that have shaped PELA policies? What are some key consequence and social implications of the PELA policies? By examining the discursive practices surrounding the policies (e.g., policy documents) and engaging with relevant stakeholders (e.g., policymakers, targeted students), the study will advance scholarly understanding of social consequences and implications of using language tests-as-policy, provide critical insights into the potential role of PELA policies have on (re)constructing inequitable reality for EAL or international graduate students, and inform language policies in higher education contexts.