"I DON'T THINK OF MYSELF AS A NERD": A NARRATIVE INQUIRY OF KOREAN

IMMIGRANT STUDENTS' IDENTITY CONSTRUCTION

by

HYE YOUNG PARK

(Under the Direction of Bob Fecho)

ABSTRACT

This narrative inquiry explored the experiences of six Korean immigrant adolescents (KIAs) as learners in the United States. The purpose of this study was to understand KIAs' identity construction and literacy practices through their narratives in a short story club and interview. I sought to answer the overarching question: How do Korean immigrant adolescents see themselves within the socio-cultural context of the United States across school, home, and communities, and how do they construct their identities and practice literacy in those contexts? This study was conducted in a small town in the southern part of the United States. The participants were six high school students who emigrated from South Korea and used two languages, Korean and English. The researcher collected data by using the methods of participant observation and individual interview from January 2011 to May 2011. Guided by the works of Wortham (2000, 2001), Bamberg (1997, 2004), De Fine & Georgakopoulou (2008) and Riessman (2008), the researcher analyzed the KIAs'narratives.

Drawing on the works of Bakhtin (1981, 1984, 1986), Hermans and Kempen (1993, 1998), Bhatia and Ram (2001), and Jensen (2011), the researcher interpreted Korean immigrants'

identity construction and literacy practices across the intersecting spaces of home, school, and community. In the narratives of Brian and Jen, the participants on which this study focused, the researcher understood that KIAs continuously crafted their own hybridized identities/cultures by moving, mixing, hedging, and dialoguing with voices inside and outside them. For Brian and Jen, this was not a neutral but rather a power intervened process. In this way, two prominent features of their identity narratives were observed: Narrative as spatialization and ventriloquation. This study suggested the need for educators to view immigrant adolescents as having agency. Thus, this study calls for a more careful and nuanced investigation of immigrant adolescents' identities and literacy practices across cultural, geographic, and linguistic borders.

INDEX WORDS: Adolescent, book club, dialogical self, globalization, identity, identity construction, immigrant youth, Korean, literacy, narrative, narrative inquiry, othering, sociocultural, spatialization, storytelling, ventriloquation

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DEDICATION

In the memory of Hye Jin Park, my younger brother. You will be forever in my mind.

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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

Six Korean immigrant high school students, Brian, Jen, Lena, Alex, Chloe, and Whe, discussed a short story character as they interacted with each other in a Sunday short story club. After a few minutes of small talk initiated by Dan, the European American doctoral student facilitating the book club, the group settled into comfy wingback chairs in the lobby. They started discussing *Blonde*, a short story by Katherine Min that focuses on an Asian American adolescent girl's adjustment to American culture. As the discussion got underway, soon after Dan had shared his sentiments as a foreigner in Korea, students began to open up about their experiences and expressed how they felt as members of an ethnic minority group in the United States.

Lena: I didn't really understand why she wanted to be a blonde.

Dan: All right, well maybe we can go on that. Can anybody else think of why she might want to be a blonde?

Brian: The reason she wants to be a blonde is because where she lives is she's the only person that looks different and by that, the only Asian.

Dan: Okay. I was talking to *Park seonsangnim* [teacher Park] today, and when I moved to Korea, I told her the most comfortable I ever was was when it rained and I could have an umbrella to hide myself, because I really hated looking different. I wonder if you guys, think about it for a minute, in your own experiences have you ever felt, maybe you didn't want to be blonde but . . .

Jen: Okay. I'm going to a school that's like almost ninety-nine percent of the people are

    like White, so I'm like the stranger in that school, and everybody looks at me

    really weird, like bad, whenever I walk across the hallway and everything.

Chloe: (Nodding her head with a smile).

Brian: I can definitely relate to what she's feeling in the story, feeling like the people that

    you're around . . . .

Dan: Were there any things that you were conscious of that you said, "Oh, my god! I'm

    buying sneakers just like everybody else," or, "I'm . . . ."

Brian: Certainly, like not too much appearance-wise, but just in every behavior I kind

    of tried to imitate them, but I certainly did grow out of that stage. That's why I'm

    thinking right now, because I know that it's just not possible one and two, it's,

    I'm kind of proud of what I am. I'm not sure how to word this, and I'm just trying

    to make the best out of it. I don't really want to become something that I'm not. I

    don't want to put on a blonde wig to make myself look different.

Dan: You'd look damn good in a blonde wig

Brian: Thanks.

Lena, Jen, Alex, Chloe, Whe: (Laugh)

Seemingly prompted by Dan's "umbrella story," Jen revealed a vignette about an awkward experience in her school hallway. Chloe concurred with a knowing smile; it was not hard to guess she had undergone a similar experience. Brian's following comment elicited other members' interest. He spoke about how he felt more mature after getting through his identity juggling stage. After a while, Lena took the discussion in a new direction from *Blonde* to the

second story of our session, *Summer of My Korean Soldier*, a story about a Korean American adoptee's encounter with a Korean soldier while looking for her biological parents in Korea.

> Lena: I said that I could understand her. This is the sentence where I really agreed with her. The second paragraph where it says, "But it was hard to be in a room full of kids who looked just like you." Like my first interpretation of Korea was when I went to the airport. I like, it was my first time being in Korea, and then, I was in the airport, and there was all people with nice skin tone. It was weird, because I was never around people that looked like me. I was always around people that were . . .

> Dan: And was that comforting or it wasn't comforting?

> Lena: No. If I felt like . . . everyone looked like me and, . . .

> Alex: Felt like a stranger basically. I think I was in the same situation like you. But, I felt like I was somebody in a lower position than others [when I arrived at the airport in the United States]. In regard to social events, you know, because I cannot speak the language as fluent as they do and my pronunciation was not that good.

> Whe: Well, I felt kind of like I'm special. I felt better when I first came to America.

> Dan: Nice! Interesting, because you were unique?

Lena talked about how she felt connected with the Korean American female character when recalling her past feelings of discomfort around Koreans when she first went to Korea. Unlike the other members, she is a U.S. citizen by birth and was raised in the United States until the 2nd grade; however, her schooling from the 3rd to the 8th grade was in Korea. Following her five plus years in Korea, she finally settled in the United States, and now, she is a sophomore in an American public high school. Along with Lena, Alex and Whe, two Korean adolescents who

had immigrated to the United States about two years ago, also expressed in relatively different ways how they felt when they first came to the United States. Alex felt that he was inferior to others because of his limited English, but Whe perceived his differentness as special so that his experience was sort of "cool," although he confessed that, after encountering explicit and implicit racial discrimination in the United States three months later, his perception of his difference as unique shortly shifted to a feeling of difference as inferiority.

In the short story club meetings and the interviews, as the group conversed and narrated, each member enriched his or her story about who he/she was and who he/she was perceived to be by others by interpreting/re-interpreting what they had gone through as Korean immigrant learners. For instance, in the book club, each member could reflect on/in the text, share responses, debate different viewpoints, and negotiate shared meanings. They discussed a variety of topics and issues relevant to the short stories they read and experienced. I observed that they constructed meanings and identities of who they are, what they believe, and what they value by negotiating meanings and clarifying understandings. In this process, the interview, as a more private place, inspired members to nurture their own stories in a sort of in-depth conversation.

For members, narrating their own stories was a social-cultural literacy practice that fostered meaningful experiences. In this practice, each member sought to author his or her own story by reflecting on how others and American society viewed them and by voicing who they were. In this study, I attempt to examine those ongoing processes of identity construction and literacy practices of Korean American adolescents by analyzing their narratives gathered from the book club discussions and individual interviews. As a way of dialoguing between self and others, literacy practices, such as reading, discussing, and narrating in socio-cultural worlds, will

be a focal point to investigate how the self shapes these youths' identities and then, how those identities shape youths' literacy practices.

Statement of the Problem

In this study, I explore the identity construction of Korean American immigrant adolescents as they read and discussed American short stories in a book club and talked about themselves in individual interviews. Their narratives gathered through the book club as well as interviews suggested that they, as Korean immigrant learners, engaged in ongoing constructions of their identities. In the process of finding employment for their stories, others took significant roles as a way to render those adolescents' altered perspectives and make their stories nuanced. If we claim identity is an umbrella term for a discussion of understanding an individual, ethnic/racial identities would be one of the foci in this study. This is because I found that their cultural uniqueness and transnational experience as Korean immigrants would be conspicuous among other identities focusing on gender, sexuality, class, age, and other aspects, although intersections of those aspects might be examined to understand the phenomenon of identity construction and literacy practice. Also, as I am a Korean doctoral student who shared similar immigrant experiences with my primary participants, it would be reasonable to begin by my talking about my story.

Since I came to the United States, I too have been experiencing a "cultural shock" that resulted from my difference from others in everyday life, as described by Brian, Jen, Lena, Chloe, Alex, and Whe. As a member of an ethnic and racial minority group, it is true that a sense of difference from others gave me a precious opportunity to learn about heterogeneous perspectives. Of course, that was one of the goals I wanted to achieve in my study abroad. It is also true, however, that being a member of an ethnic and racial minority group in the United States is not

and has not always been pleasant for me. I have felt uncomfortable, because I felt as if I should intentionally or unintentionally maintain attention to my race and ethnicity identity, to be aware that I am an Asian or a Korean and, as such, a "foreigner." Unlike in Korea, before a backdrop of the European and African American majority, I kept asking what it means to live with the minority identity of Korean/Asian in the United States. For me, it was a somewhat painful as well as inspirational moment, because I felt that I became clearer about who I was when I encountered others different from me.

Globalization, Immigration, and Education

As multicultural educator Nieto (2010) has mentioned, the demographics of the United States are far more varied today than ever before, and the country is predicted to become even more diverse (p. 90). However, this phenomenon of increasing demographic diversity is not occurring solely in the United States. With today's compression of time and place caused by the development of technology and transportation, the global village is shrinking, and people living in distant countries from different cultures frequently encounter each other. Furthermore, these globalization meetings happen in many areas, such as in the economy, ecology, politics, and education. As a result, globalization, which results in interconnections between and among culturally and linguistically diverse citizens on various planes in the global village, causes us to wonder "Who am I?" and "How am I viewed by others?" As a result, many scholars have become interested in researching how this cosmopolitan climate impacts people's identities (Ang, 2000; Appadurai, 1999; Hermans & Dimaggio, 2007; Suárez-Orozco et al., 2007).

Within this globalization atmosphere, to be sure, people have more opportunities to choose where they live for bettering their lives. Opportunities for a better education, too, are not limited to local choices anymore. As a result, it is foreseeable that a growing number of new

non-western students who want to learn English and global cultural competency will come to America as the center of global marketing. In turn, the current phenomenon is an increase in the number of immigrant students who, in their early years, are defined as not quite the first or the second generation, because they are coming to a new country accompanied by their parents (Suárez-Orozco & Suárez-Orozco, 2001; U.S. Census Bureau, 2003). Additionally, the immigrant student population is calculated to be approximately 20% of the U.S. school-age population and is predicted to reach 40% by 2030 in the United States (U.S. Census Bureau 2003, cited in Fu & Graff, 2009, p. 400).

Several characteristics of the immigrant student group are distinctive from the majority of indigenous students. One feature is that they go through a drastic identity amalgamation, juggling between two or more cultures as a process of adapting themselves to a new environment. As such, for the adolescent, immigrant experiences can be stormy periods of identity formation that significantly impact their whole lives, sense of wellbeing, and their identity construction (Vyas, 2004). As such, they might experience a cultural hybridization by continuously exposing themselves to two cultures and languages, because many of them and their family members practice their heritage culture internally at home and in ethnic communities; however, they have to practice English and the American culture in school and in other settings.

Immigrant adolescents have come to be associated with frequent cross cultural experiences. One example is that they visit their home country to meet their relatives and friends across the ocean. Aside from their everyday face-to-face experiences, these students, mainly adolescents, tend to communicate through cyberspace with their old friends still living in their heritage country (Lam, 2004; Yi,Y., 2005). For instance, due to the frequent use of the Internet with a variety of media, such as Facebook or iPhones, Korean American students living in a

small town in Georgia can contact their Korean friends living in Seoul as easily as they can meet their American friends in a local restaurant, with the only obstacle perhaps being the 13 hour time difference between the two countries. For them, this is not an exceptional experience; rather, it is a part of their everyday lives. As such, their transnational or transcultural lives significantly impact their identity construction and their meaning making processes as readers, writers, and learners.

Consequently, teachers in the new globalized era have to recognize how these student populations are practicing different literacies, while avoiding an overly simplistic and universal notion of an acculturation model, as they seek to understand those literacies and their students. However, other than those of Latina/o students, little is known about Korean/Asian immigrant students' literacy practices, as well as about their identity construction in a new home country. For this reason, it is significant to examine not only English monolingual students' literacy practices and their identity construction but also those of new immigrant students whose literacy practices may develop differently. In order to examine a variety of situated literacy practices and, in turn, remap research areas in literacy education, it is significant to look at new immigrant students and their way of identity construction as a dialogue between their heritage and new home culture.

As Fu and Graff (2009) and Yi and Hirvela (2009) contended, among the study of ethnic minority students, in particular Asian immigrant adolescents, little has been asked about this new group of students; educational studies on minorities mainly focus on African American and second generation immigrant students as cases of English monolingual literacy practices, or those who use English as their first language. Korean immigrant students are one group belonging to the newly emergent student population. In particular, Korean immigrant students

who were born in Korea but moved to the U.S. at an early age with or without their parents tend to have very transcultural literacy practices due to their strong connections with their ethnic communities. Before starting to focus on their characteristics in regard to literacy practices, I will briefly outline the general information on Korean Americans, such as who they are and their immigrant histories relevant to Asian American immigrants.

Korean Immigrants in the United States

Korean Americans are largely categorized as Asian Americans and Pacific Islanders (AAPI) in U.S. demographic classifications. According to one reference (CARE, 2008), AAPI accounts for 4.4% of the U.S. population, up from 2.8% in 1990, and this number continues to grow and is predicted to double by 2020. In general, this group is geographically divided into four subgroups, including East Asians (i.e., Chinese, Taiwanese, Japanese, Korean), Southeast Asians (i.e., Vietnamese, Cambodian, Hmong, etc.), South Asians (i.e., Asian Indian), and Pacific Islanders (i.e., Hawaiians, Guam Islanders, etc.).

However, CARE (2008) reports that because AAPIs are composed of 48 ethnic groups, past categorizations of AAPIs should be described more specifically in order to better understand their identities according to their cultures, immigrant histories in the United States, and socioeconomic status. For example, previously in the United States, the AAPIs included ethnic groups with long histories as labor immigrants (e.g., Chinese and Japanese). However, as seen in the 2000 Census (CARE, 2008, p. 4-5), recent AAPI groups have been composed of new immigrants – i.e., 69% of Asian Americans were born outside of the United States, and 79% of Asians aged five and older speak a language other than English at home, with Korean Americans following a similar trend.

Since their immigrant histories and socioeconomic status in their home countries vary, their socioeconomic statuses in the United States also vary. In terms of educational achievement, although that of East Asian and South Asian groups is relatively high, that of Pacific Islanders and Southeast Asian groups tends to be low. In addition, unlike the general discourse of AAPI, the percentage of Southeast Asian Americans who have earned a Bachelor's degree is lower than the percentages for Black, Hispanic, and American Indian/Alaska Native adults (Lee, J. S. & Kumashiro, 2005). In a similar vein, research on Korean Americans calls for special attention not to overlook inter-diversity within the group in order to avoid failing to understand Korean Americans' unique identities (Palmer, 2007). Not only do Korean immigrant adults differ, but also, Korean immigrant adolescents may vary, depending on their immigrant histories, purposes for immigrating, and caregivers (e.g., parent, relative, or American guardian).

Historically, Koreans admitted to the United States from 1903 to 1949 were mainly laborers on the Hawaiian Islands. From 1949 until 1965, the second wave of Korean immigration, the Korean immigrant group was mainly composed of Korean women married to American servicemen, Korean war orphans adopted by American families, and a small number of elite students and professional workers. However, after the Immigration Act of 1965, Koreans in the U.S. have been middle class professionals due to a policy favoring family immigration and reunification (Zhou & Kim, 2006). As stated in past studies, most Korean Americans of the current Korean population in the United States are foreign-born or have had parents born in Korea, with the majority of them arriving after 1970 (Hurh, 1998; Kim, N., 2008). Aside from early immigrants mainly working as plantation labor in Hawaii, the Korean American population, by and large, belongs to a new immigrant group falling between first and second-generation immigrants in the United States.

It is interesting to see how Korean Americans, in particular Korean immigrants as a new immigrant group, seek to differentiate themselves by navigating their own terms, such as *1.5 generation*, i.e., the 1.5 Korean Americans who were born in South Korea and immigrated to the United States at young ages, *parachute kids*, i.e., children of upper or middle-class Asian families sent to study in the United States, typically unaccompanied by parents, *and kids from wild geese families* – i.e., a new Korean family situation in which the mothers and children live overseas while the fathers live and work in South Korea and fly over to visit a couple of times each year. What's more, it is interesting to note that the way Korean Americans differentiate themselves with the use of a variety of labels are opposed to the way others in the United States lump them into a group of pan-Asian Americans. Thus, in this research, I propose to interrogate identities of Korean immigrant adolescents in a nuanced way by considering their different immigrant histories and purposes.

Given this context, in this study, I explore the following overarching question and sub-questions:

How do Korean immigrant adolescents see themselves within the socio-cultural context of the United States across school, home, and communities, and how do they construct their identities and practice literacy in those contexts?

1.   How do KIAs narrate themselves and others in a short story club and interview?

2.   How do KIAs deal with their differences and respond to othering from American culture?

3.   How do socio-cultural discourses of America imposed on KIAs play out in their processes of identity construction and literacy practices?

How I Came to This Study

As a teacher of the Korean language and a doctoral student specializing in adolescent literacy education, I have been interested in the identity, culture, and literacy practices of Korean American adolescents and college students since I began my studies in the United States. In my academic journey, two experiences I have had in the United States seem to have inspired me to focus on the issues of identity construction and literacy practices of Korean American adolescents. One was teaching the Korean language to college students, and the other was a research apprenticeship for investigating the perceptions of Korean American high school students. These experiences heightened my curiosity about who Korean Americans are and how they construct their identity through dialogues between the American culture and their own.

During my three years of teaching Korean American college students, I intentionally or unintentionally have often had the opportunity to take a glimpse into their lives in the American culture, including how they dress and interact in class. The challenge I had as a teacher was that I felt different from them in that I perceived myself as a native Korean and them as Korean Americans. Obviously, my Korean American students and I shared a common ethnicity at some level; however, the culture of my students differed from mine, because their various immigrant histories and schooling experiences in the United States were different from my schooling as a native Korean. Thus, for me, teaching them always involved a process of understanding and negotiating the differences embedded in us while affirming the ethnic commonalities among us.

Most of all, as a teacher, I learned that understanding my students' culture was beneficial in planning for my class. I needed to adjust my teaching style to match their learning expectations. I first needed to acknowledge who these Korean American students were, what kind of culture they shared, and how they acted and thought in their learning of languages. As a

teacher from the same ethnic background, yet having different cultural experiences from my Korean American students, I could not help but be curious about the dynamic interplay of identities and culture across ethnicity, learning, gender, etc. Most importantly, these teaching experiences taught me how meaningful it is for a teacher to use "ethnographic eyes" to look into her students' cultures and identity, as much research has stated (Alvermann, 1996; Delpit, 2006; Fecho, 2004; Heath, 1983; Heath & Street, 2008; Nieto, 2010).

My research apprenticeship addressing the perception of Korean American adolescents as learners was another influential experience encouraging me to be curious about their identities, culture, and literacy practices. In the 18-month-long interview study, I came to recognize that Korean American students have a tendency to be silent and invisible in the mainstream school culture. They usually do not speak up in class (Lew, 2006; Marinari, 2006; Palmer & Jang, 2005; Palmer, 2007). And, to some extent, they are subject to cultivating this tendency because of a preference, as a minority, to feel safe in a silent place and, so, the silence of Korean students is a complicated phenomenon (Coombs, Park & Fecho, 2012). Research (Cheung, 1993) from the Asian perspective also disputed such interpretations of silence as a negative and passive form of communication. Rather, silence in the Asian cultural sense does not have a singular negative connotation but a variety of possible meanings, such as attentiveness, humility, or even provocation, depending on the context in which the communication occurs.

Based on the previous discussion of silence, I contend that the phenomenon of silence may be problematic for both interlocutors hoping for healthier conditions for teaching and learning. This is because there is little or no dialogue in which learners and teachers can engage and in which mutual understanding can occur (Bakhtin, 1981; Delpit, 2006; Freire & Macedo, 1987; Shor, 1996) so that the real learning can take place. For instance, if teachers pay little

attention to the silent students in classrooms and schools without inquiring about the reasons for their silence, Korean/Asian American students feel frustrated, because their silence is often misunderstood by teachers and peers.

Conversely, if Korean American students stubbornly stay silent without attempting to let teachers and peers know about their culture, those teachers and peers may lose opportunities to learn from their students and friends. In order to conduct research focusing on such students, a book club structure and interview setting would be interesting conditions. Not only would interviews serve well as places to explore lives and identity through conversation, but book clubs also become promising places in which, buffered by the short stories read by the group and the stories told by others in the club, members can talk about their own stories. In particular, as past research has reported (Alvermann et al., 1996; Williams, 2001; O'Donnell-Allen & Hunt 2001; Casey, 2009), readers from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds could gain more opportunities for their own speaking out in peer-led discussions (i.e., a book club setting) so that teachers can also learn more about the students. Therefore, a book club composed of new immigrant Korean American adolescents would be a likely place in which Korean American adolescents, who were generally silent and invisible in school, could be expected to speak more freely in their own voices.

Consequently, the personal experiences and knowledge previously mentioned inspired me to wonder what the voices of Korean American adolescents would be like if they spoke more in class. I also wondered how they might respond to literature using their own voices, particularly in English or Language Arts class, which has been shown to be one of the most difficult subjects for new immigrant Korean American students and so is probably one of the most silent classes for them. Furthermore, I raise this question: if adolescents told their stories in

a literature discussion, what kind of stories might they present and how would their own stories be (re)constructed by their experiences with the American short stories they were reading? Taken together, what I would investigate in this study would be the identity, culture, and literacy practices of Korean American adolescents, in particular the new immigrant students, through the backdrop of a literature club.

Theoretical Framework

Given the concentration of this study on immigrant adolescents' identity construction and literacy practice, I chose to explore the experiences of Korean immigrant high school students participating in a book club. Guided by identity and literacy studies from a socio-cultural perspective and immigrant identity studies from a post-colonial perspective, I constructed a theoretical framework derived from four focal points: 1) globalization and immigrant youth; 2) literacy and identity; 3) dialogical self and othering; and 4) narrative.

Globalization and Immigrant Youth

Korean immigrant adolescents who moved from Korea to the United States in adolescence are often in a process of negotiation between Korean and American cultures and identities. These identity processes occurring in-between borderlines are not only common to Korean immigrant youth but also to many immigrant youth in this globalization era. In particular, "Third World" immigrant youth, e.g., Korean immigrant adolescents, coming from non-Western/European countries to "First World" countries, such as the United States, might experience a greater difficulty in coping with large cultural differences than would immigrant youth with an English proficiency who come from other western countries. Also, power struggles historically embedded in relationships between the First and Third Worlds might act as another kind of "baggage" that those immigrant youth carry into living in their new home.

In the past, immigrant identity processes have been mainly studied under the concept of acculturation (Berry, 1997). However, the acculturation model, composed of the four strategies of integration, assimilation, separation, and marginalization, has been criticized as inadequate for explaining the current complexity of immigrant youth identity construction. Not all immigrants act according to this model. For example, mixed identities among four acculturation strategies could be present in the real world. Even a constant movement back and forth among those stages may be a feature of their ways of identity construction. As such, the acculturation model, which is grounded in universalism or homogeneity, such as a "one-size-fits-all" idea, is hard pressed to account for the current heterogeneity of immigrant identities and cultures.

The acculturation idea grapples with a Cartesian dualism – as immigrants acquire the values, practices, and beliefs of their new homelands, they are expected to discard those from their cultural heritage – and fails to explain the complexity of current immigrant youth identity construction. In other words, the notion of acculturation rejects diasporic identities (Bhatia & Ram, 2001) – i.e., maintaining connections and commitments to their heritage culture and simultaneously learning and adapting to new home cultures. Although distancing themselves from their cultural origins, immigrant (youth) frequently experience "hyphenated" identities intertwined with their heritage culture and that of the host culture that are required for negotiating those identities in a specific context.

Literacy and Identity

In a socio-cultural stance of literacy studies, it is always critical to examine where one's identity is constructed, for, as was pointed out by Gee (1999), skill-based reading, writing, and talking does not delimit literacy practices. Rather, the notion of literacy practices comes to enlarge its scope from the traditional notion of the use of language, i.e., skill-based literacy

activities, to the notion of *Discourse*, i.e., "ways of acting, interacting, feeling, believing, valuing, together with other people and with various sorts of characteristic objects, symbols, tools, and technologies--to recognize yourself and others as meaning and meaningful in certain ways" (p. 7). Accordingly, one's identity construction is keenly compatible with one's literacy practices. In other words, identity is shaped by literacy practices and vice versa (Moje & Luke, 2009).

In a socio-cultural turn, however, identity is not defined as simply the idea of who I am but also the idea of who I am perceived to be by others. As Holland, Skinner and Cain (1998) termed it, identity work is an ongoing process of socio-cultural "objectification of self-understanding" (p. 4). Holland, Skinner and Cain (1998) went on to say, "identity is a concept that figuratively combines the intimate or personal world with the collective space of cultural forms and social relations" (p. 5). As such, identities become important bases on and from which people create new activities, new worlds, and new ways of being. In this sense, the identity construction of Korean immigrant youth should be considered to include how they see themselves as well as how socio-cultural contexts shape their identities. So, their race/ethnicity, gender, class, and other structural indices should be taken into account in light of their identity construction. Discursive practices, similar to literacy practices mediated by human signs and symbolic systems representative of language, are focal points we will examine closely.

Bakhtin's dialogism implies a bidirectional relationships between identity and literacy. Bakhtin (1981, 1986), a Russian language and literary theorist, opened the way for understanding the dialogic nature of human existence. As a well-known Bakhtinian scholar, Holquist (1990) argued, for Bakhtin, dialogue is referred to not only as a general form of communication but also as a specific way of engagement with others' consciousness in the world in which one continues to make relationships with others in a given time and place. As such, in *Toward A Reworking of*

The Dostoevsky Book, Bakhtin (1984) stated that "to live means to participate in dialogue: to ask questions, to respond, to agree, and so forth" (p. 293). In the Bakhtin's dialogism, identity seems to be constructed by actively participating in dialogue between the one and the other and striving to adapt the other's words in one's own way.

Dialogical Self Theory and Theory of Othering

As mentioned above, recent research (Hermans & Kempen, 1998; Bhatia & Ram, 2001) has documented that the acculturation process does not always evolve in linear trajectories from culture/identity A to culture/identity B. More accurately, immigrants tend to construct their own *diasporas.* They attempt to keep alive a sense of home by continuously practicing their own ethnic cultures outside of their heritage country so to resist homogenization toward the host culture (Tölölyan, 1996). This identity construction process is referred to as diasporic identities (Bhatia & Ram, 2001). Espoused by Hermans and Kempen (1993; 1998) and post-colonial theory, Bhatia and Ram (2001) attempted to investigate the dialogical nature of diasporic identities in an effort to reconceptualize the acculturation model in cross-cultural psychology.

According to Bhatia and Ram (2001), immigrants construct their own unique identities in a dialogical movement back and forth between cultural positions in a given time and space. Two important elements in the dialogical understanding of immigrant identity construction are derived from Bhatia's work: 1) de-centered self/identity and 2) power struggle among identities.

First, de-centered self/identity is referred to as a self/identity always existing in relationship with others in certain socio-cultural contexts. Resisting the *cogito* rooted in Cartesian dualistic between self and other, the dialogical self is discovered in the middle of self and others. In other words, one's identity does not exist "out-there" as a core/essence but is justified in relationships with others. Hermans and Kempen (1993) said that identity was

manifested in I-positions. Each I-position or the speaker's personality is driven by the individual's own intention as presented at specific standpoints. For example, a person takes different identities according to situations, e.g., I-as-mother-researcher-teacher-daughter-feminist-a Korean daughter-in-law and others. The I-positions are not fixed but continuously moving, mixing, and hybridizing from one to the other.

As such, the self/identity is continuously constructed and reconstructed as it negotiates the heterogeneity and homogeneity of who the person is. Hence, the dialogic conception of identity construction is not always peaceful but is tension-filled among multiple I-positions or voices including agreement, disagreement, understanding, misunderstanding, opposition, contradiction, questioning, challenging, and contesting. Depending on the situated context or social structure, relationships with others and relevant positions of self are embodied differently. It is hard to agree that only one part of those embodied selves is the very identity/self. As such, identity/self is not a fixed, de-contextualized, and cored entity. Instead, self is a flexible and de-centered entity heavily influenced by social interactions and cultural contexts. That is what Hermans and Kempen (1993) termed self as manifested I-positions.

Through this lens of a dialogical/de-centered notion of self/identity, I explore the identity construction of Korean immigrant youth. More specifically, I attempt to examine their de-centered identities that are embodied differently in everyday life. However, it is worthwhile to note that historically and socio-culturally constituted identity, based on the structure of race/ethnicity, gender, class, etc., profoundly shape and intervene upon their identity. Thus, I will focus more on the socio-cultural mechanism involved in Korean immigrant youth identity construction rather than those youths' personal choices.

So, secondly, I delve into the power struggle, which becomes another prominent feature involved in Korean adolescent identity construction in the United States. As mentioned above, in a dialogical sense of identity, identity is manifested in positions in a specific time and space. According to Hermans and Kempen's notion of the dialogical self, not only *positions* within relationships with others but also *voice* is another useful concept for signifying one's consciousness related to others and to socio-cultural worlds. What Hermans and his colleagues highlighted was that each voice has a different power scale socio-culturally and historically embedded within. Thus, some voices have more power than other voices. In a dialogical situation, it happens that one voice dominates the other voice. As such, there is always a power struggle in the negotiation of voices in a dialogical formation of identity. For instance, it is as if a Korean voice has generally less power than an American voice in a typical American school context. It is not easy for an individual to free himself or herself from power structures constituted in a certain society; nonetheless, we can witness the agency of the individual in occasionally breaking down existing power structures.

The notion of power struggles explained in the theory of the dialogical self resonates with a post-colonial understanding of immigrant identity construction. In general, post-colonial theorists view power structure as asymmetrical between the dominant voice and the dominated voice that has historically been constituted. Simply put, although the imperial era has past, colonial voices representative of western culture are still alive in relationships between First World and Third World cultures. Furthermore, the imperial discourse that non-westerners might be inferior to their counterparts keeps a firm line drawn between the existing resident self and immigrant *other*. For instance, Korean immigrant youth, as well as second or third-generation Korean American youth, are still often perceived as *other* in the United States (Lee, 2009).

Additionally, their identities are profoundly intertwined in a larger discourse of "model minority" and "forever foreigner" in the United States.

In this vein, I agree with Jensen's (2011) argument from a post-colonialist standpoint that othering is a useful concept for delving into immigrant identity construction. When we consider that identity is constructed in a specific socio-cultural situation, wherein power struggles occur in negotiating among voices, othering is an appropriate concept to explain the phenomenon. This is because othering is the concept referred to in social practices that occur in relationships between the dominant and the dominated – e.g., the dominant members seek to distance Korean immigrant high school students from themselves by labeling and marginalizing them with specific labels, "model minority" or "forever foreigner." As a result, as Schwalbe et al. (2000) pointed out, members of the dominant groups unintentionally or intentionally help to maintain and reproduce those unequal power structures in a society. Perceived as others in the United States and articulated by differences with their American friends and neighborhoods, these are the most important conditions under which Korean American immigrant youths construct their identities.

Narrative

I found narratives as a useful lens through which to explore the identity construction and literacy practices of Korean immigrant adolescents in the United States. Hermans and Kempen (1993), while looking into Bakhtin's literary critique of Dostoyevsky's work, revealed how and in what way the self constructs identity. They give us a clue by using metaphor; one that is a dialogical self/identity is the *polyphonic novel.* For Bakhtin, one prominent feature of a "great" novel, such as Dostoyevsky's, is that each character speaks his or her own story in a heterogeneous way; yet, those stories are appropriated in a novel by the author. In this sense, for

the dialogical self theory of Hermans and Kempen (1993), narrative can be the place in which we are able to observe the dialogic condition of identity construction in which every voice in our minds is mixing, moving, and negotiated.

As such, for this study that explores Korean immigrant identity construction, my major work in analysis will be how to plot each voice as an event, i.e., *emplotment*, so that the stories each participant constructs reveals which position is taken or which voice stood out and which one was left out. In concert with those key concepts and theories, I explore Korean American identity construction and literacy practices by analyzing narratives collected in a short story club and through interviews as primary loci for this study.

Significance and Implications

The findings of this study will inform American teachers who want to know more about their Korean American students but have difficulty hearing their voices, usually silent in classrooms and schools, which could explain their identities, culture, and literacy practices. Also, this study will help teachers and administrators challenge their stereotyped images of Asian/Korean students. As mentioned above, knowing students give teachers many clues about how to teach them, in particular, those students coming from a different culture. Therefore, this study will also contribute to a design for curriculum and instruction for "culturally responsive teaching" (Gay, 2000). In particular, it is useful for English teachers to examine how Korean immigrant adolescents (KIAs) or a group of students coming from a different culture dialogue with American short stories. Additionally, in a broader sense, this study will contribute to an understanding of how East Asian students share commonalities in their learning (Zhou & Kim, 2006).

On the other hand, since primary participants in this study are KIAs, this research will help fill the gaps in literacy education in which little is known about the literacy practices of new immigrant students in the process of hybridizing their identities and cultures. Research (Fu & Graff, 2009; Nieto, 2010) has reported that new immigrant students currently account for 20% of the school-age population and are predicted to reach 40% by 2030 so that not only ESL teachers but also teachers in mainstream classes, as well as administrators, need to understand this group of students.

<h2 style="text-align:center">Organization of the Dissertation</h2>

In Chapter 1, I presented a vignette of the short Story club discussion and a rationale of the study. In addition, I outlined the research foci, research questions, and theoretical framework that guide this study.

In Chapter 2, I identify and discuss some of the key concepts and research that informed my approach to the study. In the globalization era, I review how some studies on new immigrants inspired my research. I situate my review of the literature within the research from a post-colonial stance along with focusing on theories of dialogical self and othering issues. I also examine previous studies of literacy-identity from a socio-cultural perspective. Secondly, I narrow the literature review to Korean/Asian immigrant adolescents. In this way, what has been previously mentioned or missed will be discussed. Lastly, I attempt to focus on narrative and storytelling. I discuss how studies of narrative/storytelling as primary units of analysis in this study provide implications for practice and research.

In Chapter 3, I theorize the methodological framework for this study and contextualized the process of this research. In this process, I discuss the research design by providing details of the selection of the participants and the research sites. Research methods and analytic procedures of

narrative analysis are also elaborated in that chapter.

In Chapter 4, I present three sections composed of the stories of two Korean immigrant adolescents (KIAs): Brian and Jen. The first two sections are stories of Brian and Jen. The last section includes flashbacks of those stories and some snapshots demonstrating their identity construction processes. Through narrating the stories of Brian and Jen, three storylines unfold: 1) each member's immigrant background; 2) the dialogical construction of identity; and 3) othering issues relevant to power struggles.

I expand on the narrative analysis in Chapter 5 by drawing on the works of Bakhtin (1981,1984, 1986), Hermans and Kempen (1993, 1998), Bhatia and Ram (2001), and Jensen (2011) as lenses for interpreting KIAs' identity and literacy across the intersecting spaces of home, school, and community. I use an overarching question and three sub-questions to ground the issues raised in the discussion. In addition, in the final section of this chapter, I discuss some key implications for practice and research and offer directions for future research. Lastly, I provide my reflection on what I have learned from this research and a final conclusion.

CHAPTER 2

REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE

In this chapter, I discuss some of the key concepts, theories, and previous research that guided me in my exploration of Korean immigrant adolescents' (KIAs) identity construction and literacy practices. More specifically, focusing on the issue of the dialogical features of immigrant identity construction as an overarching theme among members' narratives, I will point out some connections and disconnections between the existing research and this research study.

In the first section, I will look into literature dealing with immigrant identity formation; in particular, the centrality is on the immigrant youth who have immigrated from a non-western culture to the United States. In addition, I will pay attention to research relevant to the issue of the dialogical approach of identities and relevant power struggles in the process of non-western immigrants' identity formation. In the second section, I narrow the theme of immigrant youths' identity and literacy to Korean/Asian youths. In the last section, I discuss how previous research concerning narratives and storytelling, particular in a book club and interview setting, informed me in my investigation of KIAs' experiences as learners.

Immigrant Youth Identity and Literacy

In the increasingly globalized world, we frequently experience interactions with different cultures (Herman & Dimaggio, 2007, Hermans & Kempen, 1998, Jensen, L., 2003). As a result, people's traditional beliefs, ideology, and ways of being are rapidly and extensively changing. In particular, the influence of globalization is salient in the process of adolescent identity formation. According to Arnett (2002), adolescents have a tendency to pursue and be open to new and

different cultures, because they have not yet settled on particular cultural beliefs and behaviors. As such, adolescents contribute significantly to the rapid spread of diverse cultures by consuming media and popular culture from across the states and nations in the global village. In particular, adolescents who have immigrated are in the forefront of the cultural transaction of globalization. That is because they simultaneously experience "first-hand and indirect interactions" (Jensen, 2003, p. 189) with diverse cultures as they live within cultural, geographical, and linguistic borders.

Immigrant youth from non-western cultures show discernible multicultural literacy practices through these first-hand and virtual interactions that traverse borders. My case is one example of those globalized multiliteracies. I, as a Korean immigrant doctoral student, was one sort of global citizen, at one time residing in a small town in Georgia in the United States. On Monday morning, I would pop into a Korean TV show's fan fiction club's discussion group shortly after browsing the day's U.S. news section on Yahoo. In the afternoon, I would take classes and meet with my American friends, solely communicating in English at these times. However, after the class ended, I would hang out with my Korean friends in an off campus café where we would converse in Korean. During the summer break, I would fly from Atlanta to Seoul to do some research or visit my parents living in South Korea. While in Korea, I would email my American friends and professors in English.

Like me, for recent immigrant youth, physical/cyber border crossings between two/multiple cultures and identities happen often. Accordingly, for immigrant youth, the literacy practices illustrated above are not exceptional experiences but are part of their everyday lives (Yi & Hirvela, 2009). Thus, it is significant for educators and researchers to explore who these youth are, how the globalization climate impacts those people's literacy practices, how they navigate

within the socio-cultural context, and how literacy matters to their identities and vice versa. In the following section, I present key issues concerning immigrant youths' identity by reviewing the relevant literature.

Identity and Literacy Studies

In the 1980s, a socio-cultural transition in the United States led researchers of literacy studies to pay attention to the issue of identity. The traditional/autonomous notion of literacy largely defines it as a neutral process in which reading and writing is composed of an individual's set of cognitive skills and psychological functions (Alvermann, 2009). In contrast to the traditional notion of literacy, there is an ideological model of literacy. Studies from socio-cultural perspectives reveal that literacy does not follow this neutral process; rather, the ideological process of socio-cultural contexts created by an individual profoundly affects his or her literacy development (Street, 1984, 1995; Alvermann, 2009). Thus, the ideological model of literacy studies stresses that we should not fail to explore the socio-cultural contexts surrounded by and embodied in individual literacy practices, because socio-cultural contexts and interactions impact and construct an individual's literacy practice. In other words, a literacy practice is always situated within a specific socio-cultural context and interaction.

In this view, literacy is not only delimited by reading, talking, and writing in print-base resources. Rather, interest in the study of literacy came to encompass issues of one's way of being, because learning language or the use of language involves the process of mastering a way of existence in a certain society (Gee, 2000/2001). For example, the issue of learning English and American literacy for a Korean immigrant student is keenly linked to the issue of his or her racial/ethnic labels. Plus, it also relates to his or her identity construction process, such as how to adapt to the American way of dressing, eating, living, interacting, believing, and viewing (Gee,

2000/2001). As such, some identity-literacy researchers viewed on the relationship of identity-literacy is bidirectional(Gee, 2001; Lewis & del Velle, 2009). In this joint effort, identity-literacy researchers suggest the notion that identity matters in literacy practices and vice versa, because identity is shaped by and shapes literacy in important ways (McCarthey & Moje, 2002).

Adolescent Identity and Literacy

As Erickson (1968) highlights early on, adolescents are physically, intelligently, and psychologically at a critical stage during which they prepare to enter adulthood from childhood through maturation. Adolescent identity is a parameter by which we gauge an adolescent's developmental stages in light of maturation. From socio-cultural perspectives, identity is still a significant concept but with a different viewpoint from what Erickson proposed. The socio-cultural notion of identity refers to constructs produced by the negotiation process between/among views: how I see myself and how others see me. As such, in contrast to Erickson's notion of identity that is somewhat fixed and stable, the socio-cultural notion of identity is elusive, flexible, and dialogical. This is because the former is an identity mainly constructed from an adult's interpretation, but the latter is grounded in adolescents' own voices. In other words, the socio-cultural notion of adolescent identity stresses the importance of adolescents' actual self-understanding portrayed by themselves situated in an actual context.

Alvermann (2009) asserts that the term adolescent is a contested one. From an adult perspective, the image of adolescents is mainly associated with an immature entity and delinquency – i.e., "trouble-makers." However, if we see adolescents from their perspectives with a socio-cultural situatedness, those negative images could be cases allegedly created solely from an adult's point of view. So, it is imperative to re-examine adolescent identity through the "eyes" and "voices" of adolescents themselves. Empirical studies, such as the study that includes

the out-of-school literacy practices of adolescents (Hull & Shultz, 2001), situate identities within cyberspace (Guzzetti & Gamboa, 2005), and popular culture coupled with adolescent literacy studies (Alvermann & Hagood, 2000) are all endeavors to resist a homogenous and abstract understanding of adolescent identity.

In education studies, scholars advocate that adolescent identity studies from socio-cultural perspectives help educators see how adolescents view themselves through their own voices (Alvermann, 2009; Moje & Luck, 2009). In other words, the aim of adolescent literacy research is to provide opportunities for teachers, policy makers, and other pedagogues to listen to what adolescents really have to say. For the marginalized students – including struggling readers, African American youth, and other ethnic minority students from different cultures who struggle in a fixed school curriculum tailored for students from the dominant culture, this is significant, because marginalized students are scarcely allowed to project their own "voices" that are not covered in the dominant institutional system and curricula. So, adolescent literacy studies pursue presenting the voices of adolescents from their own viewpoints in their own contexts. Korean Asian immigrant youth are another marginalized group that deserves to have their voices heard in the field of adolescent literacy research. There are very few studies concentrating on these youths' counternarratives in contrast to studies on African American and Latina/o adolescents (Genesis et al., 2005).

Non-western Immigrant Identity Formation

In studies on the process of new immigrant identity formation, two theories stemming from each different paradigm are prominent. The model of acculturation (Berry, 1984, Berry et al, 1997) coined from universalism is one. The dialogical model of immigrant identity (Hermans & Kempen, 1998, Hermans & Dimaggio, 2007, Bhatia & Ram, 2001, Bhatia, 2002, Jensen,

2003) is another. This model of dialogical immigrant identity is an alternative approach to understanding the complexities of immigrant identity in a globalization climate.

The centrality of the concept of immigrant identity formation drawn from universalism lies in the idea that all immigrants are largely categorized into one of four modes of the acculturation process: integration, assimilation, separation and marginalization. On the basis of the Berry (1997)'s definition, assimilation occurs when individuals reject their minority culture and adopt the cultural norms of the dominant or host culture. Separation occurs when individuals reject the dominant or host culture in favor of preserving their culture of origin. Integration occurs when individuals are able to adopt the cultural norms of the dominant or host culture while maintaining their culture of origin. Marginalization occurs when individuals reject both their culture of origin and the dominant host culture. So, those four strategies of the acculturation model (Berry, 1997) does not account for individual peculiarities based on each cultural origin or socio/economic/politic context. Rather, it seeks to homogenize individual uniqueness by lumping all into a generalized category so as to negate the many individual diverse cases on the borderline between categories, borderline crossings among categories, or those existing simultaneously in multiple categories. As such, we see universalism reflecting the Cartesian logic of binary between one and the other, self and other, First world and Third world, or the dominant and the dominated.

On the other hand, the dialogic notion of immigrant identity espoused by Bakhtin's notion of self/identity rejects Cartesian dualism. Herman and Kempen (1998) argue that, in the backdrop of globalization, increasing interconnections between cultures and related cultural complexities need an alternative way for understanding immigrant identity formation. In opposing the tradition of cultural dichotomies focusing on the center of cultures (e.g., western as

individualistic vs. non-western as collectivistic), the dialogical approach focuses on the contact zones of cultures. Therefore, it could provide useful implications for immigrant identity formation becoming more complex in this globalization context.

From the stance of Cartesian dualism and universalism, immigration is understood as a transnational process in which an individual living in a country moves to another country through a border crossing. Thus, this is acculturation – the individual should adopt a new culture to live in the new country. In Bakhtin's concept, however, immigration can be interpreted as a process of hybridization of identities by negotiating between the individual's original cultural origin and his or her new home culture. In this process, the individual becomes adept at appropriating and situating multiple identities within socio-cultural contexts.

Acculturation model Studies of immigrant identity formation are mainly concerned with issues of acculturation and acculturation stress (Berry, 1997) under universalism. However, since the 2000s, some research (Bhatia & Ram, 2001; Schwartz et al., 2010) criticizes Berry's model of acculturation, saying it should be revised or expanded (Schwartz et al., 2010) or reconceptualized (Bahtia & Ram, 2001). Because of increasing interactions among people from different cultures and the massive flow of migration in the global climate, the traditional notion of acculturation seems to fail to capture the complexities of immigrant identity formation.

The acculturation model proposed by Berry (1997) is one of the most influential models for understanding immigrant identity formation among those in cross-cultural psychology (Bhatia, 2002). This model of acculturation views ethnic or cultural identity as a fixed and stable concept. So, it considers the immigrant process as a cultural transformation from culture A to culture B (Bhatia & Ram, 2001, Schwartz et al., 2010). Originally, Berry's model was developed from a unidirectional model of acculturation in which retention of the heritage culture and

acquisition of the receiving culture were cast on opposing ends of a continuum (Gordon, 1964, cited in Schwartz et al., 2010). Revising this uni-dimensional model of acculturation, Berry and colleagues (1984) offer their model of acculturation. In their model, they place heritage culture retention and host culture adoption on independent continua from one another. It is implied that adopting the new system of the host culture does not necessarily mean discarding one's heritage culture. Thus, within Berry's model, there are four categories of acculturation strategies: assimilation, separation, integration, and marginalization.

More specifically, 1) assimilation is referred to as adopting the receiving culture and discarding the heritage culture; 2) separation occurs when individuals reject the receiving culture and maintain the heritage culture; 3) an integration strategy is present when individuals express an interest in maintaining strong ties with their ethnic group as well as with the dominant group; and 4) marginalization occurs when individuals lose contact with both their traditional culture and the dominant culture. In Berry's model of acculturation (1997), an integration strategy is assumed to be the optimal condition for immigrant identity formation.

However, there have been critiques of this model of acculturation (Berry, 1997). In the massive flux of interactions among different cultures and ethnic/racial migrations, the process of immigrant identity formation becomes more complex and complicated. For example, Weinreich (2009) calls for an alternative model to Berry's by reporting a case in which some immigrants selectively acquire or retain elements of their heritage cultures, while also selectively acquiring some elements from the receiving cultural context. This model implies that individuals do not always act as Berry's acculturation model would assume. In another effort, Schwartz et al. (2010) revise and expand the notion of Berry's acculturation model. However, the expanded

theory of acculturation does not introduce a completely different viewpoint simply by adding some variables.

        Dialogical model Drawing on Hermans and colleagues' dialogical self theory, Bhatia and Ram (2001) provide alternative viewpoints to elaborate on the complexities of the immigrant identity formation in a globalization ethos. First, Hermans and colleagues (Hermans & Kempen, 1993; 1998) contribute to establishing theoretical frameworks. Sequentially, grounded in the dialogical model from Hermans and colleagues, Bhatia and Ram (2001) draw on the dialogical approach to the identity and culture of a non-western immigrant identity in an increasingly interconnected world society.

        Hermans and Kempen (1998) highlight several features of culture and identity in a globalization context. According to Hermans and Kempen (1998), cultural connections among people from diverse cultures lead to cultural hybridization. As a result, the complexity of culture increases and the heterogeniosity of the societal system emerges in a world that had traditionally been divided into two, western and non-western. As such, in the "moving and mixing" cultural fashion of the globalization society, a fixed notion of culture is problematic. Instead, the dialogic approach to culture and identity pertains to scrutinizing the complexity and heterogeneity of culture and identity.

        In a further step, Hermans and Dimaggio (2007) note that people, living in the contact zone where diverse cultures continue to be intertwined and hybridized, readily feel anxiety and level of discomforts as a reaction to cultural complexities and ambiguities. One solution they suggest is that people take a dialogical stance in which their cultures and identities of "global" and "local" are negotiated/navigated. "Alterity" (alter ego) as "a central feature of well-developed dialogue" (p. 36) can be an articulated way of the dialogical stance between global

culture and local culture – i.e., referring to the speaker (the self or "local" culture) and listener's (the other or "global") willingness to recognize the perspective of the other, further enabling them to revise and shift their initial standpoints (Hermans & Dimaggio, 2007). They go on to stress that living with differences in a globalizing world requires a capacity to recognize and respond to the other person or group. In this process, a person may not initially understand the other's difference, but, with experience, these differences become comprehensible and may continuously create meanings for the individual.

By drawing on the dialogic self theory (Hermans & Kempen, 1993; 1998) and post-colonial scholarship, Bhatia and Ram (2001) theorize the phenomenon of non-western immigrant identity formation by using the concept of diasporic culture/identity. First, they seek to reexamine the concept of acculturation (Berry, 1997) and criticize its universalism ignoring the power asymmetry between the dominant and the immigrant culture. As such, Bhatia and Ram (2001) propose the concept of diasporic culture/identity. For Bhatia (2002), the concept of *diasporic,* traced from the term diaspora (See the historical review by Tölölyan, 1996), is useful for illustrating a current type of identity formation of non-western immigrants: immigrants living outside of their homeland and seeking to maintain real/ imagined connections and commitments to their homeland. In other words, like Korean American immigrants, they are geographically distanced from the Korean peninsula but recognize themselves and act as a "collective community" (p. 2). In this case, since they live in the United States, they might/should also practice American culture at the same time.

Second, taking the stance that the identity construction process is "dialogical" rather than "logical," Bhatia (2002) attempts to reexamine immigrant identity in an actual way, such as by listening to their voices as a primary research device. Rejecting the decontextualized, ahistorical,

apolitical ways of mainstream research for understanding immigrant identity formation, Bhatia (2002) seeks to understand how new immigrants and their families construct their hybrid identities by moving back and forth between their cultural origins and new cultures. This research presents a different story from previous notions of acculturation that undertake linear courses composed of a series of phases that culminate with successful incorporation into the host culture.

Research (Bell & Das, 2011; Jensen, 2003) investigates the multiple and collective identity and culture through the lens of the dialogical model. With a focus on adolescent cultural identity formation, Jensen (2003) explores implications of globalization increasingly impacting multicultural identities. By using ethnographical methods, Jensen (2003) illustrates how Inui and Indian adolescents were affected by western media and practiced collective western culture while still living in their homeland. For example, gaining access to western television, Inui adolescents and young men avidly took up the game of hockey after being exposed to pro hockey games on TV. Jensen's (2003) research implies that it is important to note whether evidence of a multicultural identity is based on first-hand versus indirect (media-based) interactions with diverse peoples.

In summary, within the backdrop of globalization and increasing cultural transactions among diverse cultures, researchers seek to reexamine and reconceptualize the classic concept of the acculturation model. In this way, the dialogical model of culture and identity is proposed as an alternative approach to investigate complexities, contradictions, and cultural specificities involved in the experiences of these non-western, diasporic immigrants communities. It is especially imperative to be attentive to the power asymmetry between the dominant and (non-western) immigrants when we examine immigrant identity formation. So, the process of

immigrant formation should always be considered as a negotiation among cultures/identities situated within a historical/political context.

Korean/Asian Immigrant's Culture, Identity and Literacy

In the United States, Koreans are generally perceived within the racial category of Asian Americans and Pacific Islanders (AAPI) in a pan-ethnic sense. Previous research on Koreans has mainly been conducted in East Asian countries – e.g., China, Thailand, Japan, and Korea – among the subgroups of the AAPI strand. Compared to the research on Indian and Chinese immigrants, little is known about Korean/Asian immigrants (Lee & Kurosima, 2005). Far less research has been done on the identity and literacy of Korean students who immigrated to the United States at an early age. In the following sections, I will review the past research relevant to issues of Korean/Asian immigrant's identity and literacy that emphasize three key concepts: 1) stereotype, 2) culture and identity and 3) literacy.

Stereotypes of Korean/Asian immigrants in the United States

Studies (CARE, 2008; Lee & Kurosima, 2005) report that there have been two distinctive views of Asian/Korean Americans among Asian Americans and Pacific Islanders (AAPI) in the U.S.: the permanent alien and the model minority.

Forever Foreigner Stereotype

As research on AAPIs states, the classic stereotype of AAPIs in the U.S. is that they are perceived as forever foreigners who are unable and unwilling to assimilate (CARE, 2008; Lee, S.J, 2009; Lee & Kumashiro, 2005). Based on her experience as a third generation Korean American, Lee (2009) confesses that, "while European immigrants are accepted as 'real' Americans soon after their arrival in the U.S., third, fourth, and even fifth generation AAPIs are often still perceived to be foreign" (p. 9). As a result, AAPIs often face hardships related to

racism and othering; there are cases in which non-AAPIs overtly or covertly affront AAPIs with words, such as "go back to where you came from."

Othering. This kind of racism faced by Asian/Korean Americans seems to be described by the theory of *othering*. In other words, a dominant group marks an ethnic minority group as inferior through the use of stereotypical discourses. For AAPIs, othering is associated with the social discourse of the forever foreigner as the *other* in the United States. Research suggests that the forever foreigner stereotype negatively affects interactions with other Americans as well as with Asian American youths (Lee, S.J., 2009; Palmers & Jang, 2005).

Also, studies (Palmer, 2007; Goldstein, 2008) elaborate on the negative impact of this stereotype with cases of U.S.-born students inclined to distance themselves from "the stigma of foreignness," who may reject their non-U.S. born peers or their heritage, such as their home language and culture (Palmer, 2007, p. 282). This case directly links with what Schwalbe et al. (2000) calls the concept of *defensive othering*. In contrast to the general othering performed by the dominant members, defensive othering is enacted by an ethnic minority member. An individual practices defensive othering when he/she seeks membership in the dominant culture in a way that he/she distances him/herself from co-ethnic members and so attempts to detach him/herself from the stigma with which the ethnic minority group is labeled.

As such, researchers (Schwalbe et al., 2000) describe defensive othering as a kind of internalized and reproduced form of (oppressive) othering. Pyke and Dang (2003) report that some Asian Americans practice defensive othering by using the negative labels "FOB" (Fresh off the boat) and "whitewashed" for Asian American ethnic community members. As such, Jensen (2011) examines the theory of othering as a critical process of ethnic minority identity formation. Examining ethnic minority identity formation among the Dutch, Jensen (2011)

defines *Othering* as a broader concept to give us a sense of the phenomenon in which the difference of an ethnic immigrant is considered "in inferior," but not "in fascination" (p. 65).

The stigma of the student at-risk. With respect to language difficulty issues for non-western immigrant youth, including Asian American students, Lee and Anderson (2009) and Fu and Graff (2009) contend that the term English Language Learner (ELL) works as a stigmatic label to new immigrant Asian youth (i.e., non-U.S. born) and potentially limits the ways that they are positioned. Under its guise, teachers and larger educational institutions consider them different from their other minority peers in terms of ability and need, in other words, an at-risk student. In particular, criticizing the ELL image of at-risk students, the researchers argue that schools and teachers unintentionally tend to ignore Asian ELLs' intellectual abilities, such as their content knowledge and literacy abilities, based on their use of a heritage language. Lee and Anderson (2009) go on to say that, "The label often overshadows the complex and rich sociocultural histories of students' identities and instead only makes salient their learning practices and abilities in relation to speaking or not speaking English" (p.191).

In short, the forever foreigner images of Asian/Korean immigrant youth can be understood to align with the other as "in inferior." It is tied to the deficit model (See the section on narratives for more information) for ethnic minority students in which their diversity is seen as a disadvantage and not a possible resource, so as to delimit the students' potential to be maximized. In this vein, calling for a shift in view from a deficit discourse to a more inclusive multicultural education for ethnic minority students, including Asian/Korean immigrant learners, research illustrating the complexities of Korean/Asian identities and cultures is needed first. In an effort to reveal Korean/Asian's "funds of knowledge" (Moll et al., 1992), past research pays attention to heritage language education as well as English language instruction in bilingual

education (Cho, 2000; Jeon, 2007; Jo, 2001; Lee & Shin, 2008; Lee J. S., 2002; Lee, Hill-Bonnet, & Gillispie, 2008).

Model Minority Stereotype

In contrast to the foreigner stereotype, another stereotype discourse is put upon AAPIs in the U.S.: the *model minority discourse.* In this discourse, AAPIs are positioned as a kind of "solution" model among "problem" minority groups (CARE, 2008, pp.1-2). In 1966, *U.S. News & World Report* first introduced the term: "At a time when Americans are awash in worry over the plight of racial minorities, one such minority is winning wealth and respect by dint of its own hard work – not from a welfare check" (cited in CARE, 2008, p. 2).

Accordingly, since 1966, this discourse has continually had an impact on AAPIs' lives in the U.S., as CARE (2008) exemplifies with this quotation from the *New York Times:* "stellar academic achievement has an Asian face" (p. 2). In comparison to the foreigner stereotype, for AAPIs, the model minority discourse works in a paradoxical way. On one hand, clearly it helps them move past the deficient minority images embedded in AAPIs and shift toward more positive images, such as hardworking, excelling in educational achievements, and being successful entrepreneurs. Along with this positive image, though, the model minority also implies the negative image of "nerdy," a person who is socially dull and culturally inept (Pyke & Dang, 2003, p. 150).

On the other hand, the model minority discourse lumps all-into-one so as to conceal disparities. Therefore, research complicates the model minority discourse on AAPIs and examines how AAPIs demonstrate their diversities based on their immigrant histories, modes of incorporation into U.S. society, and socioeconomic situations (CARE, 2008, Lee, S.J., 2009; Lee & Kumashiro, 2005; Lew, 2006). Sociologist Lew (2006) contends in a study of dropout-Korean

youths within urban areas in New York that the model minority discourse should be reconceptualized depending on the socioeconomic backgrounds from which Korean students emanate. Importantly, Lew (2006) documents how socioeconomic differences between working class and middle class Koreans affect parental support in the ways they provide their children with social networks to associate with the Korean American community.

Lew (2006) also reveals that parental support works to provide students with social capital in the U.S. CARE (2008) also reports the truth and falsity embedded in the model minority discourse about AAPIs by presenting reliable statistic data. Researchers on the CARE project strongly assert that it is imperative to look closely at the stereotype's impact on AAPIs' identities and its by-product effect on their identity construction. For example, as Lee and Kumashiro (2005) and Lew (2006) report, when encountering Asian/Korean American students, teachers unintentionally tend to expect them to have excellent math abilities and academic achievement; conversely, teachers are very disappointed once these students turn out not to meet their expectations. A stereotypical treatment of a specific group presents a binary point of view so as to blind oneself about other possibilities. Marinari (2006) explicitly describes this with the following quotation from a high school math teacher:

> Many of my Korean students do well, just as well as non-Koreans, but then again many do not. There is the other end of the spectrum where I see a lot of Korean students who just put their heads down in class as soon as they walk in. So it seems to be either one or the other. Either Korean students do really, really well, or not well at all. Not that there aren't students that don't fall in between. I am sure that there are, but I tend to see the extremes and I notice that the other students seem to expect those extremes. (p. 375)

Taken together, in regard to the model minority discourse, educators and policymakers easily lose sight of disparities that are less supported by ethnic communities and social relations. As a result, appropriate and equitable educational policies and curricula cannot be provided to poor and underprivileged students. Consequently, given empirical evidence drawn from past research, it is important to investigate in-depth the dynamics of AAPIs' identity negotiation. The lessons that the literature teaches us are not insignificant; there is no simple description that can characterize Asian American students or their communities as a whole.

Korean Immigrant's Identity and Culture

Studies document Asian/Korean immigrants' identity and culture through different foci, such as the labels identifying them (Jeon, 2007; Palmer & Jang, 2005; Palmer, 2007) and culturally specialized types of education, such as heritage language education (Cho, 2000; Jeon, 2007; Jo, 2001; Lee & Shin, 2008; Lee J. S., 2002; Lee, Hill-Bonnet, & Gillispie, 2008) and a kind of Korean academy, *Hagwon* (Zhou & Kim, 2006).

Labels identifying Korean immigrant students

ABKA vs. KBKA. Research delineates Korean American students into two groups: American born Korean American students (ABKA) and Korean born Korean American students (KBKA) (Palmer & Jang, 2005; Palmer, 2007; Jeon, 2007). As previously mentioned, Palmer (2005/ 2007) states that there is a clear line between the two groups. For example, Korean American students usually show two distinctive tendencies in associating with mainstream American students. The first is to actively assimilate with mainstream American culture and students, while rejecting connections to their heritage language, culture, and communities. The second is for Korean American students to oppose American culture, while insulating themselves in the Korean/Asian culture. In particular, according to Palmer (2007), Korean American

students' assimilation to American culture is found in some ABKAs but with few KBKAs. ABKAs become involved with mainstream students if they desire, despite their minority status, because they have grown up in the American culture. In contrast, it is almost impossible for KBKAs, who know little about how to associate with mainstream American students, to engage with mainstream students, because their language and culture act as barriers.

1.5 generation. A label applied to Korean immigrant students is *1.5 generation.* In general, this term tends to be used within Korea American communities in order to differentiate Korean American people who are not quite like those of the first generation or second generation. Generally, this 1.5 generation Korean American is defined as someone born in Korea but who moved to American at an early age with or without his or her parents (Danico, 2004). In addition, since they moved to America at an early age, the 1.5 generation is distinguished from the first generation immigrants who are generally adults learning and accepting a new culture more slowly than their counterparts. Instead, members of the 1.5 generation have more hybridized characteristics than do the first or second generation Korean Americans (Danico, 2004; Hurh, 1993; Kim, 2006).

According to Danico (2004) in a historical review of this expression, although the term is widely used, this 1.5 generation label was coined in the early 1970s by a Korean American reporter working for *Koreatown* (i.e. *Korean Times/Hankook Ilbo*) when he wrote an article describing people like himself who are neither first nor second generation – although there have been similar labels referring to people as in-between generations, e.g., such as "knee-high" for Japanese immigrants or the Chinese's concept of "*juk sing*" (Hurh, 1993, cited in Danico, 2004, p. 1). However, it is interesting to note that Korean Americans have used the decimal logic for the in-between people and are still producing new colloquial terms such as "1.2 generation" (i.e.,

people closer to the first generation) or "1.7 generation" (i.e., people closer to the second generation) by following the decimal logistics. It is also important to mention that terms, such as 1.5 generation, 1.2 generation, and 1.7 generation, are mainly perpetuated not by other Americans but by Korean Americans to differentiate among themselves (Kim, 2008).

Students from "wild geese families" There is yet another label to distinguish between the Korean immigrant students within Korean American communities: this is, Korean American students from "wild geese families." In fact, this term, *Gi-reo-gi-gajok,* was initially used in Korea. The Korean expression refers to wild geese, which fly long distances, often across oceans, to mate. This metaphor expresses an emergent phenomenon in which fathers travel long distances to visit their children and spouse who are living and attending school in English-speaking countries, such as the United States, Canada, Australia, or even the Philippines in Asia. Driven by a desire for better education coupled with a dissatisfaction with Korea's competitive and rigid, uniform educational system, Korean parents in expanding numbers – i.e., based on Korean statistical data, it is believed that more than 40,000 Korean students are living in the United States (Kim et al., 2005) – choose this new family situation.

In general, these wild geese families are classified in the middle or upper class and are single income families in Korea. And, some of the wild geese families end up living permanently in their host country, as the husband may quit his job in Korea because of the complexities of maintaining two households. In short, students from wild geese families are a Korean version of the term "parachute kids," a similar strategy practiced by parents from Hong Kong, Taiwan, China, and Japan, describing children who are dropped into the United States or Canada for educational purposes and also, as a link for subsequent family immigration (Hom, 2004; Zhou, 1998)

Culturally specialized types of education

Heritage language education. Past studies continuously asserted that heritage language maintenance helped immigrant students construct healthier identities, especially for the Korean Asian students among AAPIs (Lee, Hill-Bonnet, & Gillispie, 2008; Lee & Shin, 2008; Shin, 2010). As Zhou and Kim (2006) report, the Korean ethnic society specifically emphasizes cultivating bilingual skills as representing a crucial ethnic identity. According to Lee, Hill-Bonnet, and Gillispie (2008), heritage language education contributes to providing Korean American students not only with linguistic achievements in heritage language acquisition and maintenance but also with opportunities to regularly join in the ethnic community and gain access to ethnic teen networks. In the end, heritage language education as a resource enables students to acculturate (i.e., have a healthier dialogue between the heritage and host culture) as a preference to assimilating to the American culture.

In this vein, there is a new view in which the "code-switching" of bilingual students should be regarded as a conversational resource to prompt active bilingual conversation. Shin (2010) reports that the code-switching of Korean bilingual students in a Korean Sunday school at a Korean church, which usually plays a crucial role in linking to the immigrant culture, strengthens and reinforces a Korean ethnic identity. As supported by Lee and Kumashiro (2005), it is evident that children who learn the language and culture of their new country without losing those of the old have a much better understanding of their place in the world.

Hagwon. Another recent study shows the complexity of Korean American students' identity by examining the interaction of culture and structure conducive to the academic achievement of Chinese and Korean American students. With a focus on the Los Angeles metropolitan area, Zhou and Kim (2006) also describe the cultural attributes of ethnic systems'

support as a community force acting as a mediating social environment between immigrant students' homes and formal schooling. For example, researchers reveal that attending supplementary institutions, such as a non-profit heritage Saturday school or for-profit *buxibans* (Chinese culture) and *hagwons* (Korean culture), is a commonly shared experience of Chinese/Korean American students.

Finally, researchers stress that culture and structure always interact so that culture is not static and requires structural support to constantly adapt to new situations. In this sense, they conclude that Chinese and Korean American students' disproportionate academic success affected their perceptions of and experience with the structural constraints on opportunities for upward mobility in the areas of politics, sports, and entertainment. Within a culture-structure interaction, Chinese and Korean American students strengthen and reinforce their experience with and perceptions of education and their academic achievement supported by community forces, such as supplementary institutions.

Korean Immigrant's Identity and Literacy

Research to investigate Korean immigrant adolescents' identity connected to the issue of their literacy practices is sparse and quite recent (Choi, 2009; Haneda & Monobe, 2009; Joo, 2009; Yi, Y.,2009 ;Yi & Hirvela, 2009). Except for a handful of studies (Yeh et al., 2005), most of the past research focuses on the second-generation Korean immigrant identity, and the emphasis is the issue of racialization/ethnicity (Abelmann, 2009; Kang et al., 2004; Min, 1999; Yoo & Kim, 2010) and gender (Kim, N., 2005). In this section, I focus on past literature concerned with Korean immigrants' literacy practices related to the issue of identity.

A special issue of *The Journal of Asian Pacific Communication* recently published studies on Korean/Asian immigrant adolescents' literacy practices (Choi, 2009; Haneda &

Monobe, 2009; Joo, 2009; Yi, Y., 2009 ;Yi & Hirvela, 2009). Demonstrating the importance of the contextual nature of literacy practices with an emphasis on out-of-school settings, these studies raise the question of how voluntary literacy experiences in which bilingual immigrant students use their heritage language and the English language affect their identity construction as learners and transnational beings.

In a discussion about bilingual and biliterate Asian students' in and out of school writing practices in both their heritage and second language, Yi and Hirvela (2009) argue that sociocultural literacy theories give valuable insights into the complexity and variability involved in becoming bilingual and biliterate learners across various contexts. They go on to say that, in the recent acceleration of globalization in which students have opportunities to interact with peers in other cultures and in various languages, there is a need to adopt a more inclusive view of literacy, including bilingual or biliterate students' practices. Although there has been a great deal of research in students' literacy practices, overwhelmingly the target population is English monolinguals with a small number of bilingual students. As a result, according to Yi and Hirvela (2009), literacy studies focusing on biliterate and bilingual students have remained on the fringes of such research.

Yi (2008) explores an online relay writing community composed of bilingual Korean American adolescents. In investigating the students' voluntary writing practices (e.g., novel or nonfiction writing, reflective commentaries, short replies, and others) which include the use of Korean as well as English, Yi (2008) reports how bilingual and biliterate students' identities shape and are shaped by situated literacy practices. Beyond the school context, biliterate students are exuberantly engaged in writing practices. Yi (2009) also elaborates on adolescent literacy and the identity construction of Korean American 1.5 generation students from a transnational

perspective. Focusing, in particular, on Korean-born Korean American students in the United States, she examines how two high school students negotiate their identities as bilingual and bicultural adolescents in their online, out of school literacy activities using both the Korean and English languages. Similarily, Joo (2009) investigates four 1.5 generation Korean students' literacy practices in Korean and English at home and in an ethnic community of a middle grades heritage language school in the United States.

Choi (2009) utilizes a literature club structure with multicultural books and stories in order to look into ethnic identity construction; the researcher as the discussion facilitator explores four Asian American adolescents' voluntary literacy practices occuring in a literature club setting similar to an afterschool program. Although they only use the English language to conduct their discussions, interestingly, the researcher cultivates multiple experiences for literacy practice in various modes, including face-to-face discussions, as well as providing a supplementary discussion site (e.g., Wiki). In line with out-of-school literacy practices, Haneda and Monobe (2009) also discuss four Japanese "sojourner adolescents" use of English and Japanese in their out-of-school literacy practices, as well as these adolescents' views about the development of their biliteracy skills while attending school in the United States. Identity construction and gender issues are examined, as well.

Through the use of a culture portfolio project in a Korean culture classroom in an American university setting, Byon (2007) also informs us about how Korean American college students increase their American and Korean cross-cultural awareness. Although not directly addressing the negotiation of their ethnic identities between the two cultures, this study implies that heritage students need opportunities in which they can dialogue between heritage and dominant cultures. In an attempt to promote a healthier identity construction for biliterate and

biculturate students, these students' heritage education is supported as *funds of knowledge*. In a study implemented by Gwak (2006), a four-year ethnographic research project explores the cultural practices of a group of Koreans in the United States pursuing the traditional Korean cultural art form of *pungmul* in exploring their ethnic identities. The researcher, as a U.S. born Korean American, negotiates her ethnic identity by taking part in the traditional troup and experiencing literacy practices through transnational semiotic processes.

In reviewing the past research which involves Korean immigrants, little is known about youth literacy practices being tied in with their culture and identity. In particular, few studies suggest that their identity and literacy are concerned with the power struggle they confront in the American socio-cultural context and how the globalization ethos impacts their experiences. Clearly, past studies contribute to shedding light on their situated identities within various contexts by illustrating their multiliteracies using new modalities in and out of school. The gap that I discovered, however, is that there is little research considering: 1) power struggles caused by the power differences between the Korean and American cultures they continuously negotiate as immigrants, 2) the navigation of their voices in a search for agency in which they reinforce as well as reinvent those power structures, and 3) their spatial negotiations across cultural, geographical, and linguistic borders.

Narrative and an Immigrant's Identity

Research documenting many student assumptions about social issues and literacy practices are often simplified, overgeneralized, and un-examined, although they have some sense of social issues, such as social justice and diversity (Cochran-Smith, 1995; Ladson-Billings, 1999). Critical literacy scholars argue that, when youth have the opportunity for narrating and reflecting on their experiences, they may gain insights into their own ways for enacting social

equity and justice (Campano, 2007; Enciso, 2011; Fecho, 2011; Janks, 2010; Medina, 2010; Duncan-Andrade & Morrell, 2008).

In particular, for immigrant youth navigating their identities across culture, space, and language in a globalized world, it is imperative to narrate how they define themselves, how others perceive them, and who they wish to be. Narratives can provide them with opportunities to ponder what matters to them, so as to speculate about what is possible through the process of explaining, expanding, and making meaning of the images of their experiences (Enciso, 2011). Most specifically, the narrative process helps ethnic minority youth author their own stories through the process of negotiating the varied voices between the self and others.

Identity and Narrative

Scholars assert that people's identity is represented as well as constructed in and through the stories people tell about themselves and others (Wortham, 2000; McAdam, 2006; Bamberg, 1997). Narrative is a part of human nature or a way of being in the world. First, through narrative, we can clarify the seeming disorder of our experiences in an ever-changing world by sequentially organizing events. Through narrative, we make sense of ourselves as having some awareness of temporal continuity for ourselves and distinct from others. In addition, we communicate with others by sharing our experiences through narrative.

A narrative can be defined as an organized interpretation of a sequence of events (De Fine, 2003). Identity shapes the process of narrative, including expressing, organizing, and interpreting events. Also, through the process of narrative, identity is shaped. Thus, narrative and identity are in a bidirectional relationship. Similar to the relationship between identity and literacy, identity is manifested in narrative, and the narrative tells and shapes who one is. As the

narrative identity theorist McAdams (2006) states, "We are all storytellers, and are the stories we tell…The I tells a story of the self, and that story becomes part of the Me" (p. 3).

McAdams (2006) reconceptualizes the theory of *narrative identity* as the nature of human identity formation by adapting the American psychologist William James's idea of "I" as the self-as-a knower and "Me" as the self-as-known. According to McAdams (2006), telling and sharing their experiences with others, people are constructing their own identities. During the telling of stories, people play doubling roles of the self-as-teller and simultaneously the self-as-the tale-told. By so doing, people see themselves through social interactions/relationships with others, and this acts in the construction of their identities. For McAdams (2006), narrative is referred to as a social means by which we make sense of our experiences in our ever-changing worlds.

In accordance with McAdams (2006), Hermans and Kempen (1993) also shed light on the relationship between identity and narrative. They further the dialogic nature of identity formation by drawing on the metaphor of a *polyphonic novel.* Combining the works of Bakhtin (1981, 1984, 1986) and James (1890), Hermans and Kempen (1993) assert that one's identity is constructed by negotiating social "Mes," multiple I-positions. Like McAdams, they see the socio-cultural process of identity formation through the lens of James' notion of "I-Me" relationships. For Hermans and Kempen (1993), one's identity is constructed when an individual's social "Is" are embodied and negotiated as conversing with actual/imaginary others.

A polyphonic novel is the metaphor that Hermans and Kempen (1993) employ to explain the process of identity formation in relation to narrative. In a Bakhtinian sense, voice is a person's consciousness, uttered and embodied in specific societal interactions and cultural contexts. As such, for Bakhtin, the voice always implies a dialogical nature of the self as situated

within an actual/imaginary communication with others in a specific context. As Bakhtin (1984) illustrates in his literacy critique of Dostoyevsky's novel, the way we interact and construct our identities through narrative seem to be a polyphonic novel in which each character's different voice co-exists, and the author speaks his/her voice through the voices of each character. It is as if the different voices of each character in a story are retained "as parts of a whole, their position of relative autonomy"(Hermans & Kempen, 1993, p. 59). In other words, we tell our stories in which others' stories are intertwined.

Importantly, the course of the negotiation of polyphony may be chaotic, because some voices create cacophonies, while other voices create harmony. So, the self/author seeks to organize those voices and make coherence of the voices; this is what Hermans and Kempen (1993) call *emplotment* (p. 22), suggested as a strategy for the dialogical self. Emplotment is an essential feature of crafting a narrative that constructs and interconnects events in such a way that meaningful structures are developed. In so doing, a story/novel is the combination of events. Similarly, the self/identity is a polyphonic novel crafted by organizing and negotiating each voice, putting the multiple voices/positions/perspectives from the self and others or the past and present into play with each other in order to produce an innovative voice/position/perspective.

Temporality of Narrative

As previously mentioned, one of the features of narrative is the temporal ordering of events. We seize and make sense of our experiences in an ever-changing world by our temporal ordering of events. Many narrative scholars argue that plot acts as a device enabling us to make coherence out of people's fluctuating and chaotic experiences. Although, some narrative theorists (e.g., Labov & Waletzky, 1967) sought to argue that narrative conventions such as how

to make a plot. It might be that people's experiences may vary and the ways they express, organize, and interpret their experiences may be different.

Scholars explain the uniqueness of people's narratives through the concept of the temporality of narrative (Burton, 1996). They see narrative is provided in the process of representing one's experiences by using a temporal ordering of events and profoundly rely on how the one experienced and interpreted time-space. Indeed, two types of time and space co-exist in narrative; one is a conventional time and space that people normatively share and structure. Another type is that in which, as a temporal ordering of events in narratives, we interpret our experiences through our own perceptions of time and space. In other words, our own perceptions of time and space as means to organize events of our experiences vary from individual to individual. Namely, our understanding of time and space shapes our language/narrative (Burton, 1996, p. 45). This idea suggests why narrative can illustrate the heterogeneity of identity in a nuance and layered way.

Bakhtin (1981) opens up ways for discussing assumptions about the time conditions narratives form by drawing on the concept of *chronotope*, referring to one's perception of the time-space described in language. For Bakhtin, because literary genres are not only aesthetic forms but also "profound forms of thinking" about human experience (Morson, "Bakhtin, Genres"1077), his concept of chronotope can give us implications of how multiple senses of time-space can link to the conception of the variety of heterogeneous narratives people tell.

Bakhtin (1981) elaborates on the heterogeniosity of people's perception of time-space by stating, "…[the] inseparability of space and time… [that] time, as it were, thickens, takes on flesh, becomes artistically visible; likewise, space becomes charged and responsive to the movements of time, plot and history" (p. 84). For Bakhtin, the time in narrative is not always

linear and absolute but recursive and heterogeneous. The space in narrative is also not always fixed but movable and historical like the notion of time. Let us suppose that I am in a dental clinic and experiencing a dental treatment from a doctor. In describing what the experience of the dental treatment is like in a narrative, I might have the feeling that five minutes of my dental treatment is like an hour, because I recall every painful experience in my life. In a similar way, I may imaginarily move (historical) spaces by recalling my memories relevant to painful dental treatments, while sitting (not being able to move) in a chair in the dental clinic. In this case, I could say I experienced time and space at the same time in my own way. In other words, time-space does not separately exist but is mutually inclusive in my experiences and through narrative.

In this way, narrative allows us to experience/re-experience the past and present by a back and forth movement. Narrative enables us to look forward to foreseeing what we can possibly attain, as well to reflect backward to see where we have been. In this manner, our identities are constructed through narrative, as Yancy (1998) articulates, "When we reflect, we thus project and review, often putting the projections and reviews in dialogue with each other, working dialectically as we seek to discover what we know, what we have learned, and what we might understand" (p. 6).

The Representational and Interactional Role of Narrative

In the study of narrative, there have been discussions of the function of narrative in people's lives. Two fashions are distinctive in regard to a larger discussion of how narrative functions in people's lives (Bamberg, 1997; De Fine, 2003; De Fine & Georgakopoulou, 2003).

First and most importantly, narrative represents people's experience. Labov and Waletzky's (1967) studies stresses this role of narrative. In this sense, narrative is defined as a

typical verbal technique for recapitulating past experiences and a kind of textual prototype composed of several elements as follows:

1. An abstract that summarized what the story is about;

2. An orientation that gives indications about the setting of the story and its protagonists;

3. A complicating action that presents the main action of the story;

4. An evaluation through which the narrator gives the point of the story;

5. A result that represents the resolution to the complicating action;

6. A coda that signals the closing of the story.

As scholars (Bamberg, 1997; De Fine, 2003; Wortham, 2000) have discussed, the representational model of narrative (Labov & Waletzky, 1967) mainly highlights the structural aspect as a canonical text or verbal form. Hence, it is a major contribution to what structural characteristics make a narrative distinct from a non-narrative in this model of narrative. Grounded in a monological standpoint, this model focuses on the storyteller and structural conventions, whereas the listener or audiences are invisible in narrative.

However, according to Bamberg (1997) and Wortham (2000), this model implies the role of the listener or audience, although they do not explicitly point it out. As seen in elements of Labov and Waletzky's (1967) narrative convention above, the evaluation and interpretation of the storyteller are highlighted. Bamberg (1997) and Wortham (2000) assert that those notions of evaluation and interpretation of the inherently embedded storyteller's point of view should elicit future listeners' responses, such as "So what?" From this perspective, people began to see narrative not only as a means of the representation of people's experiences but also as a means of interaction between the storyteller and the listeners/audiences.

A psychologist, Wortham (2000), proposes that narratives, in particular autobiographical stories, do more than represent one's re-existing experiences. Wortham (2000) finds that narrators construct their identities by telling stories about themselves, because autobiographical narratives have interactional as well as representational functions. While telling their stories, autobiographical narrators often *enact* a characteristic type of self through which the narrator implicitly becomes the kind of person the narrator wants to be or how the narrator wants to be perceived by the listener and others. Through such performances in narrative, they come to construct their identities.

Since Labov and Waletzky (1967), many scholars are mainly concerned with the representational role of narrative. However, Wortham (2000) is one of a few researchers who proposed that interactional positioning is central to narrative self-construction. Wortham (2000) describes an approach to analyzing interactional positioning by providing a systematic account of how narrative discourse functions to position the narrator and audience in the interactional event of an oral autobiographical narrative. Later on, Wortham (2004) expands his interactional positioning model of narrative to a classroom discussion setting and investigates how each interlocutor constructs multiple identities as talking-in-action by temporally positional shifting.

Meanwhile, some researchers focus on the interactional role of narrative by skewing their interest in *narrative as talk-in-action* (Bamberg, 1997, 2004; Georgakopoulou, 2006; De Fine & Georgakopoulou, 2008). They examine "small stories" that they propose as antidotes to "big stories" as canonical narrative studies. What they analyze are aspects of situated language use employed by speakers/narrators to position a display of situated contextualized identities. Since their identity analysis relies on an action orientation, daily interactional settings, such as peer talks (e.g., a moderated group discussion involving 10-year-old boys in an American school), are

analyzed to examine whether stories serve as kinds of local and situated accomplishments of identity displays. In these studies, they seek to answer questions about the teller's announcement of the story, the subsequent withdrawal, and the pre-telling negotiation with the interlocutors.

Narrative in Immigrants' Discussions of Literature

In the present research, a Korean co-ethnic short story club is the major research site in which I explore identity through narratives representing experiences of and interactions with Korean immigrant adolescent members. However, a few other studies have been conducted on the focus of immigrant identity and narrative in a literature discussion structure (Kong & Fitch, 2002; Kong & Pearson, 2003; Martínez-Roldán, 2003; McElvain, 2010; Median, 2010; Vyas, 2004).

Vyas (2004) reports that Asian high school students explored bicultural identities through transactional experiences with culturally selected literature in the naturalistic environment of book club settings. Vyas (2004) explores Asian Indian American students' literacy practices in an afterschool literature discussion club, with a focus on ethnic identity and psychological well-being. She points to the importance of encouraging students to make personal connections to the literature that they read, both within and outside of formal school settings, because literature can serve as a springboard or starting point for students to comfortably discuss issues relevant to their lives.

Researchers (Martínez-Roldán, 2003; Median, 2010) examine how Latino/a immigrant children respond to literature and storytelling practices in bilingual classrooms. Martínez-Roldán (2003) investigates how the representation and interactional roles of narratives came together to support an immigrant girl's construction of identity. In this study, it is highlighted that parents' perceptions of the value of reading and talking about books influence the immigrant children's

literacy practices in literature discussions in a bilingual classroom. Especially, Martinez-Roldan's (2003) case study demonstrates the role of narrative in bilingual literature discussions. This article investigates the use of oral narratives by a seven-year-old Mexican-born girl participating in small group literature discussions over a year in a bilingual 2nd grade classroom in the U.S., with an examination of the roles of narrative and context in shaping the speaker's talk.

Drawing on a post-colonialist perspective, Median (2010) explores two small literature discussion groups composed of bilingual students speaking Spanish and English. Median (2010) discusses how responses to literature are discursively produced among elementary school students who have recently moved to the United States. Especially, this study focuses on how the students' responses are embedded in "mapping their trajectories and movements across spaces, places, time, and people" (p. 40). This study illuminates these immigrant students' identities continuously moving and mapping trans-local discourses and cultural flows through these literature discussions.

In concert with past research, I have discussed how narrative in a literature discussion benefits me in examining the dynamic identities embodied in representational and interactional landscapes of narratives. Plus, from a critical literacy standpoint, for immigrant youths, a literature discussion as a "safe place," in particular, with co-ethnic members, may give them their own voices and opportunities to navigate their identities across cultural, linguistic, and geographic borders. Finally, through the course of narrative, including reflection and negotiation, they may author their own stories by situating themselves within the socio-cultural contexts in which they live.

Summary

In this chapter, I discussed the theories, concepts and past research linked to the issues of Korean immigrant identity, literacy, and narrative. Most importantly, I discussed those theories, concepts, and research studies that informed how I view this study and finally, how key concepts are linked together and how they guided my fieldwork implementation and the analysis of data. Additionally, details of participant selection, data collection methods, and analytical procedures were described.

In the following section, I will draw on the methodological frameworks and qualitative case study designs that guided the decisions and considerations of this study. In addition, specifically focusing on narrative inquiry, I will provide a brief philosophical argument in regard to the ethos of qualitative research.

CHAPTER 3

METHODOLOGICAL FRAMEWORK

In this chapter, I discuss the methodological framework of this research. The chapter focuses on the methodological considerations and decisions in narrative inquiry underpinning the qualitative case study structure. The centrality of this chapter is a discussion of how the methodology and relevant methods guided me in exploring Korean immigrant adolescent (KIA) identity and literacy. Thus, I also provide details about the research design, emphasizing the selection of the participants, research sites, and other factors. In addition, I discuss the observations of a book club and in-depth interviews as the qualitative research methods I used in this study, especially methodological issues in crossing theory, fieldwork, data, and writing. Afterwards, I discuss the data management procedures and some of the challenges I confronted during this study. Lastly, I describe the analytic procedures of the narrative analysis.

Qualitative Case Study

This narrative research was implemented in the structure of a qualitative case study design. Case study has been implemented as either a quantitative or qualitative approach, according to the purpose of each study (Stake, 2005). In a case study, however, quantitative researchers tend to be more interested in the generalization of a phenomenon in comparing and contrasting cases. On the other hand, qualitative researchers are more concerned with understanding the complexities of an individual case or collective cases of a single phenomenon through thick description and detailed contexts (Patton, 2002). It was in this sense that I chose a

qualitative case study design, because my purpose was to understand varied experiences of KIAs in the United States through the discrete case of each student.

According to Merriam (1997) and Stake (2005), one of the primary features of a qualitative case study is the "boundedness" of an individual case or a specific program, which is considered one of the salient characteristics by which a case study comes to be distinguished from others. This research was keenly associated with the case study design, because the study dealt with six individual cases of KIAs, as well as their experiences as bounded by their membership in a literature club. For this reason, I thought that this research was suitable for the structure of a qualitative case study. Case study, however, is not necessarily considered the methodological framework leading to a methodological decision. As noted by Stake (2005), a "[Case] study cannot be a choice of methodology but a choice of what is to be studied" (p. 443). In this sense, I employed narrative inquiry for the methodological framework in this research, which guided me to understanding the way KIAs craft meanings of their lived experiences through an analysis of their narratives.

Narrative Inquiry

I aimed at exploring KIAs' identity and literacy through the narratives KIAs related by using a qualitative case study design. Accordingly, in this research, for me, narrative is both methodology and method. Narrative is a methodology, because it functions as a theory of identity. Narrative lets me know how and in what ways I can inquire into one's identity. For instance, I think that a person's identity can be seen through the narrative he or she tells; narrative acts as a kind of window through which we look into who one is. In addition, I perceive that one's identity is constructed by the storytelling occurring within and without one's self. In this case, the theory of narrative suggests to me how I scrutinize (methodology) what I want to

know (knowledge of one's identity). In other words, I examine the phenomenon that I am exploring through a methodological framework grounded in the theory of narrative.

On the other hand, in this research, narrative also becomes a method, because narrative is a primary approach involving entire procedures or tools to generate, interpret, represent, and construct data (Riessman, 2008). For example, narrative is a primary unit to analyze. So, I strove to listen to the narratives of the participants. As such, in the interview, I mainly asked participants open-ended forms of questions and attempted to converse in a casual way. In addition, in the book club discussions, Dan, the book club facilitator, and I strove to avoid focusing on discovering the meaning of the short story. Rather, we created a dialogic atmosphere in which members mutually acted as receptive listeners who carefully and patiently listened to others' stories. In this case, narrative could be understood as a method, because it played a role as a primary unit and approach, procedure, or tool for collecting, analyzing, and interpreting data.

Narrative and Narrative Analysis

I began my discussion of the methodological framework of narrative and narrative analysis with a broad question, "What is narrative?" I cannot respond to this question with a single answer, and I feel quite sure that no one else can do so either. The question may be too abstract and all-encompassing unless it is situated within a specific context, and we assume there could be many thousands of definitions of a narrative. First, people's experiences with relating their narratives are manifold. Second, their ways of defining a narrative are also numerous. In explicating my definition, I have adapted Bamberg's explanation (1997). Bamberg used this approach to argue the need for an alternative approach to narrative analysis as opposed to the Labovian canonical notion of a narrative.

According to researchers (Bamberg, 1997; De Fine, 2003; De Fine & Georgakopoulou, 2008; Georgakopoulou, 2006; Riessman, 2008), in a broad sense, there have been two to three notions of narrative and narrative analysis: one is the structural model of narrative inspired by Labov and Waletzky (1967), and another is research conducted over approximately three decades focusing on the act of narration as performance – although some researchers (See De Fine & Georgakopoulou, 2008; Riessman, 2008) divide the latter into two distinct paradigms of "narrative as practice" (i.e., stressing narrative as both product and process) and "narrative as performance" (i.e., placing a greater stress on narrative as process).

In the former traditional approach, narrative was defined as a "personal experience in particular and to sense-making in general" (cited in Bamberg, 1997, p. 335), and character, setting, plot, and other structural components are prominently considered. However, Bamberg (1997) pointed out that the classic notion of narrative could be expanded and re-conceptualized. Not only defined as the representation of an experience that had once happened and what this past happening meant, narrative could also be defined as the act of telling (representing) between the actual experience and the story. In other words, this view asserted that researchers should question the content of what people told and how the story was performed by the narrator to audiences. That is the latter notion of narrative and narrative analysis, which perceives the intrinsic feature of narrating as a social action. In this sense, narrative is not structurally fixed but is modifiable as well as negotiable among interlocutors. So, narrative is defined as a flexible social construct.

It is noteworthy that the alternative approach that emphasized the performing aspect of narrative led to a closer attention of *positioning* as one of the dynamic aspects of *narrative talk-in-action* (Bamberg, 1997; Wortham, 2000). Positioning is referred to as the idea that people

situate themselves in relation to one another in any social interaction setting. Suppose the positioning involves a research setting; a researcher should be aware that he or she becomes a co-author of any stories the interviewees or participants tell. In interviewing or observing, the researcher as one interlocutor may participate in the course of the story constructed. In this case, where the research is positioned (or they position themselves) matters, because, the dynamics of positioning among interlocutors in conversations shape the narratives, events, and identities that are produced. As such, when a researcher considers the notion of positioning in narrative inquiry, he/she may ask questions, such as "How does the speaker position him/herself in regard to interlocutors and how does the speaker want to be understood by the interlocutors?"

Aware of these discussions in narrative inquiry, I situated this research somewhere within/between the notion of "narrative as product and process" and "narrative as positioning." In the context of the stories the KIAs produced, two different settings were employed: a short story club and interviews. The dynamics of the research settings allowed me to see the social interactions of the members. For example, in my research, depending on which setting was implemented, different narrative may be produced. In the interview setting, narratives were mainly constructed between a member and me. In contrast, in the discussion setting, all members took part in constructing the narrative. Therefore, I could see their narratives and acting of narratives as "product" and "process" as well as the social interaction of positioning themselves in a group discussion.

Research Design

Participants

The participants of the study were six Korean immigrant high school students who lived in a small town in the southeastern United States. All had emigrated from South Korea to the

United States after the ages of twelve to thirteen. Therefore, although their primary language was still Korean, they were fluent in English when expressing their experiences and related reflections. The participants were accustomed to speaking both Korean and English in daily life. However, they tend to mainly use Korean at home with their parents, but, obviously, they were accustomed to speaking English in school with their peers. On the other hand, they were accustomed to using Korean and English mixed together, or Konglish, when they conversed with their Korean friends.

A facilitator to lead a short story club was recruited from among the American doctoral students in the Language and Literacy Education department. Familiarity with Korean culture and Korean/Korean American students, along with related professional experiences of teaching, was considered in selecting the facilitator.

Selection and Access

The sampling method used to access KIA participants was purposive sampling rather than random sampling, which is preferred by quantitative research (Patten, 2002; Suzuki, 2008). Among the 16 strategies for a purposive sampling approach, this study used homogenous sampling. According to Suzuki (2008), homogenous sampling is defined as a sampling strategy based on similar or shared characteristics of the sample. In this study, I sought to listen to KIAs' stories in a co-ethnic short story club, and as I wanted students to talk and share their experiences in an active manner, I was determined to recruit participants sharing the characteristics mentioned above.

Informed Consent

In the consent process, after potential participants were identified, they met with the researchers. If a potential participant indicated an interest and gave his or her agreement to participate in this study, he or she began to take part after completing consent or assent forms.

The researchers explained in English and, if necessary, in Korean, the nature of the study and the implications of participation. The assent forms were also available in Korean as well as English. Participants were assured that they were able to withdraw without penalty at any time.

Site

In this cultural study, as an ethnic insider researcher (Banks, 1993; Liamputtong, 2010), I had known several KIAs attending two ethnic Korean churches. As noted by past research (Lee & Kumashiro, 2005; Lew, 2006), for the Korean immigrant society in the United States, churches act as the center of the ethnic community. In order to invite participants, the researcher identified a student who could play the role of a broker capable of linking me with participants. Subsequently, a snowballing strategy was used to gather KIA participants.

Short Story Club

The KIAs' short story club, which read American short stories, met in a location where members felt comfortable. The club meetings lasted one hour or more on a weekly basis. Fourteen sessions with the group members were implemented, with two ice breaking sessions. The first session began in January 2011 and the last finished in May 2011. A European American doctoral student in the Language and Literacy Education Department played the role of discussion facilitator. As a researcher, I became a participant observer in the discussions.

The short story club structure was composed of weekly face-to-face sessions. A single session was composed of three parts: 1) a short journal of what members felt and thought about the story they read (10 minutes), 2) small group discussions for members to freely exchange responses in a more private atmosphere (e.g., between two or among three members) and/or a whole group discussion led by the facilitator, and 3) a short reflection led by the researcher in

Korean. Students were asked to submit a response journal entry in English a week after the end of every session of the literature club.

Table 1. Overview of the Book Club Sessions

	Title	Author	Participants	Discussion topics
1	The Lottery (1948)	Shirley Jackson	Brian, Lena, Jen, Alex, Chloe, Whe	Cultural tradition
2	Barn Burning (1939)	William Faulkner	Lena, Jen, Whe	Conflicts with parents Family culture
3	The Gift of the Magi (1906)	O. Henry	Brian, Lena, Jen, Alex, Chloe	Image of female character What is a true gift to you?
4	The Lady or the Tiger (1882)	Frank Stockton	Lena, Jen, Whe	If you were the princess…
5	The Celebrated Jumping Frog of Calaveras County (1865)	Mark Twain	Brian, Lena, Jen, Whe, Alex, Chloe	Cultural differences of humor code
6	The Necklace (1884)	Guy de Maupassant	Brian, Lena, Jen, Alex	What is the theme of the story?

7	Blonde (1995)	Katherine Min	Brian, Lena, Jen, Alex, Chloe, Whe	Experiences as an immigrant
	Summer of My Korean Soldier (1995)	Marie G. Lee	Brian, Lena, Jen, Alex, Chloe, Whe	Experiences as an Korean American student
8	The House on Mango Street (1984)	Sandra Cisneros	Lena, Jen, Alex, Chloe	Transnational experiences
9	How It Feels to Be Colored Me (1928)	Zora Neale	Jen, Lena	Race & ethnicity issues
10	Recitatif (1983)	Tony Morrison	Brian, Lena, Jen, Whe	Racial stereotype & criticism
11	To Build a Fire (1902)	Jack London	Brian, Lena, Lena, Jen Alex, Chloe, Whe	Human, nature, & dog
12	A&P (1961)	John Updike	Brian, Lena, Jen, Whe	Adolescents' job ethos

| 13 | Gimpel the Fool (1945) | Isaac B. Singer | Brian, Jen, Alex, Chloe | Religious |
| 14 | Limits (2008) | Sung J. Woo | Brian, Lena, Jen, Alex, Chloe | Korean American model minority image & education |

The list of American short stories mentioned above in Table 2 was selected by discussions between the researcher and the facilitator. The stories on the list included literature by American authors from a variety of gendered, ethnic, and racial backgrounds, with Asian/ Korean Americans also included. The short stories on the list were texts that could be read in one week and were considered to be works appropriate to the English comprehension level of the members. In addition, the themes of the short stories were selected based on the interests of Korean high school students so as to encourage them to engage in reading them.

Data Collection

A qualitative researcher is one who always strives to understand our or others' experiences as expressed by language and the meaning making process, generally by language (Freeman, 2007). The hermeneutics philosopher, Gadamer (2004) gave qualitative researchers an insight. He stated that the tradition, prejudice, and expressed language that we use illuminate our multiple versions of understanding the other's world. Interpreting the other's life and relating our understanding to it by language is an in-depth inquiry in which a nuanced and layered structure of meanings is produced. Gadamer (2004) states we speak to understand, and it is because we are oriented to the world -- because we, as understanding beings, are always in dialogue with it (cited in Freeman, 2007, p. 925).

Qualitative research design as a naturalistic inquiry for the purpose of research contrasts with controlled experimental designs. To the extent that research takes place in real world settings and the researcher does not attempt to manipulate the phenomenon of interest, a qualitative researcher aims at understanding an interesting phenomenon, not at predicting or controlling the phenomenon's results (Patton, 2002). In this manner, among the many varieties of qualitative research methods, interviews and observations were employed as primary tools for this narrative inquiry to understand narrated lived-experiences. In this narrative inquiry, I took as its central and guiding assumption that the nature of human experience is expressed and communicated in narrative. Narrative is a way of being, one's understanding of others and one's self and a means of making sense of his/her lived experiences in ever-changing worlds.

Based on the above-mentioned features of qualitative research, in the following section, I briefly outline the interview and observation method used in this narrative inquiry. In general, an interview study has the benefit of the interviewee's perceptions and in-depth thoughts and of how an interviewee constructs his or her experience. On one hand, an observation becomes more powerful for looking into interactions among people and the ecology in which a specific phenomenon occurs. However, qualitative researchers (Dahlberg et al., 2008; Tjora, 2006 ; Patten, 2002) pointed out that both interview and observation approaches, as primary methods in qualitative research, tend to be complementary so as to create a kind of synergy once both methods are implemented in a study.

Methods

Using three methods, data were collected over a five-month period: 1) observations of literature club discussions; 2) individual interviews with each participant; and 3) documents and artifacts that include participants' weekly reading response journals.

       O bservation Due to the difficulty of managing relatively "fast-moving" data and the challenge to identify the "big picture" derived from a dynamic research field, researchers often avoid the observation method (Tjora, 2006, p. 430). Nevertheless, observation is a primary method in qualitative research, which powerfully complements the interview in such a way that a researcher can see the vivid interactions among people under a specific condition, not from the interviewee's perspective but from the researcher's own view. Thus, data coming from interviews and observations mutually act as supplementary in a qualitative study.

       According to Patten (2002), observation has several values in qualitative research. First, the researcher is better able to understand and capture the context within which people interact. Understanding a context is essential to ontologically interpreting the field as the text wherein the observation takes place. Second, another value of observational participation is that the researcher can have the opportunity to see people's interactions, not with taken-for-granted eyes, but with fresh eyes. By moving his or her stance to and fro between observing people in their daily routines and being a researcher in a study, the researcher can look into the place that he or she could not capture in everyday life. In addition, it is also an advantage of observation for a researcher to be able to have opportunities to view scenes participants may be unwilling to discuss in an interview.

       Another advantage of observation is that the researcher is able to see behavior in a natural context, thereby providing a greater opportunity to identify aspects of behavior that may not be obtained from simply interviewing participants. In particular, observers can attain "multisensorial" (Patton, 2002, p. 307) information. Additionally, researchers should remember the goals of observation: 1) to engage in activities appropriate to the situation and 2) to observe

the activities, people, and physical aspects of the situation (Spradley, 1980, p. 54, cited in Suzuki et al, 2008).

In this research, listening to participants' narratives through observing a group discussion is acknowledged to be one of the more important methods. Not only was I listening to a narrative, but I observed the contexts in which the narratives were generated. Observing the literacy practices of students in a literature book club provided me with the concrete contexts in which students' identities and culture are negotiated (Riessman, 2008). As a result, I was able to gain a better understanding and interpretation of the literacy practices of members through seeing, listening to, and sensing events in the literature club.

Traditionally, a qualitative researcher should place him or herself in the research site and explore the contexts in which the targeted phenomenon occurs and with which the researcher is concerned. In this study, I attempted to observe the culture and practice of short story members by participating in the club activity and taking an insider's point of view within the culture as an outsider. At the same time, I was aware that I became a group insider, to some degree, because as a Korean immigrant, I shared the same status with KIA members. In this case, I needed to take an outsider view from a more objective standpoint.

However, recently, the notion that there is no longer a pure outsider stance derives from a post-colonialist perspective and affects the traditional qualitative researcher's point of view as an outsider. To some extent, any researcher going into a research site is on a continuum between an insider's perspective and an outsider's perspective (Patton, 2002, p.277; Spradley, 1980, cited in Suzuki et al., p. 304). From this model, I observed the short story club in a manner that moves back and forth between an insider and an outsider's perspective. Most importantly, I attempted to alternate between stances as an academic researcher and a participant. It allowed me to avoid a

taken-for-granted perspective at one end of the spectrum so as to permit me to look into new horizons. From the dynamic movement between the two stances, my ethnic insider's perspective shared with the Korean American students could be challenged by an academic researcher's perspective (Denzin, 1997; Liamputtong, 2010; Patton, 2002).

Interviews   Kvale and Brinkmann (2009) contended that the interview is a task requiring abundant preparation and accumulated professional experiences, such that a simple and spontaneous interview is an illusion. Moreover, a one way oriented interview in which an interviewer mainly attempts to gain fresh information and experiences from the interviewee delimits the potential of the interviewing method as a true dialogue. As we have seen, not only the interview but also other methods in qualitative inquiry have few standard rules or common methodological conventions. As the researcher is an instrument himself or herself, there are only familiar methodological conventions. Therefore, it is acknowledged that interview research is not a universal work with mechnical conventions -- rather, "Interview research is a craft that, if well carried out, can become an art" (Kvale & Brinkmann, 2009, p. 15).

In general, however, the interview method has several stages, although not sequential but rather more recursive movements. According to Kvale and Brinkmann (2009) and Patten (2002), some stages are accompanied by interview methods: thematizing, designing, interviewing, transcribing, analyzing, and verifying. First, discovering a theoretical frame is important, because that frame is closely related to determining the most appropriate method for collecting data. Based on the theoretical framework and condition allowed for investigating the research, a researcher delineates a picture that represents elements, such as the participant sampling and the research site choice. This stage in interview research is designing. Then, the researcher should meet with interviewees.

I cautioned myself to keep two factors in mind during the interviews. First, I should remember that "the interview is not a reciprocal interaction of two equal partners" (Kvale, 1996, cited in Suzuki, 2008). The caution about the unequal power relations between interviewees and the researcher indicates that I as interviewer should always be aware that there is a power relationship between participants and me from the start of the interview. Hence, I was cognizant of the interviewees' levels of comfort while being recorded as well as the sensitivity levels of the topics discussed. Also, I bore in mind the confidentiality of all interviewees.

In summary, each method has its own strength. Thus, an ideal condition in qualitative research is to implement both interviews and observations. Erlandson et al. (1993) assert that

> through interview, the researcher gains a first insight into the constructed realities that are wrapped up in the jargon of the respondent. Through observations, however, the researcher gains a partially independent view of the experience on which the respondent's language has constructed those realities. (p. 99)

Hence, interviews and observations should be interactive. The interview provides leads for a researcher's observations, while an observation suggests probes for interviews. I attempted to keep this in mind during the research.

For this study, audiorecorded interviews were the main approach to collecting data, unlike the videorecorded observations. At least three in-depth and open-ended individual interviews with the six KIA members and the American facilitator teacher were conducted. Each interview was conducted based on the interview protocols and general interview guide that I had prepared in advance. The interview protocols included questions about experiences, behaviors, opinions, values, feelings, knowledge, sensory factors, and background demographics presented according to a chronological order (present, past, and future) (Glesne, 1999).

During the interviews, two cautions replayed in my mind. First, an interview is a process of co-constructing knowledge between the researcher and the researched. Second, I should be aware of the unequal power relations between the researcher and the researched, and the researcher should try to act as if he or she is in a reciprocal interaction between two equal participants (Kvale & Brinkmann, 2008). Hence, I was always cognizant of the interviewees' levels of comfort while being recorded, as well as the sensitivity levels of the topics. It was also helpful for me to strive to maintain continual rapport between the interviewees and myself (Dahlberg, Dahlberg & Nystrom, 2008).

Documents   The documents and artifacts students completed were used for data triangulation. Data collection lasted for five months and took place for the most part in the literature club and related places.

Journals as a way of responding to the short stories discussed in a literature club were investigated to delve into the literacy practices of each student. Students were asked to write about and share their experiences, thoughts, feeling, and opinions related to the short stories. As writing is considered a meaning making process through reflection on lived experiences, it was expected that the journal entries would illuminate how each student interpreted his/her world according to his or her senses. At least ten journal entries by each student were generated, each entry having been written after the reading and discussion of a short story in each of the literature club sessions. Other personal documents and artifacts -- e.g., school assignments, projects, flyers, and reports – were included as sources of data.

Assessing Data Quality

Regarding data and evidence, the qualitative data and information are always already interpreted. Thus, I looked closely at which information was picked up and which information

was left (Freeman et al., 2007). In light of assessing data quality, a variety of terms are used in qualitative studies, such as "validity," "trustworthiness," "authenticity," and "credibility." If I introduced one of the concepts for data quality, "trustworthiness" (Lincoln & Guba, 1986), it could be assessed by the following criteria:

(a) Credibility: prolonged engagement, persistent observation, triangulation, peer debriefing, negative case analysis, and member checks should be considered.

(b) Transferability: thick descriptive data is required. "Thick description" (or sufficient data) as the "naturalistic inquirer's obligation" should be cited in the reports to support each claim (Freeman et al., 2007; Lincon & Guba, 1986).

(c) Dependability and conformability: an external audit requiring both the establishment of an audit trail and the carrying out of an audit by a competent external disinterested auditor.

In addition, authenticity was considered in regard to data quality (Lincon & Guba, 1986). Authenticity is defined as the notion of how meaningful the research is to the researcher and why the researcher did this study. Cohesiveness was also considered as an important criterion for assessing the quality of data. It meant that each element among the following -- the theoretical position of the study, its methodology and methods, the strategies to establish rigor, and its analytic lens (i.e., epistemology, a theoretical framework, methodology, and methods) -- were considered (Caelli, Ray, & Mill, 2003).

Data Management

I was committed to the confidentiality of the data. Most importantly, all participants involved in this research were referred to with pseudonyms. No information by which people could identify these participants was used. In all public accounts of the study, participants were

identified using the aliases they chose, and all descriptors used were of a general nature. Additionally, only the researcher could access the raw data. The electronic data was stored on a locked, password-protected external drive. Audio digital recordings were also stored on a secure external drive. The recorded data was not publically presented.

Data Analysis

Narrative Analysis

In this study, narrative analysis was used as the approach for interpreting the narratives participants told in the short story club and interviews. Narrative analysis in this study primarily followed an *inductive data analysis*, which involved discovering patterns, themes, and categories in the data (Patten, 2002). Bearing in mind a dialogic stance, the perspectives of qualitative inquiry and the narratives as empirical data were mutually transacted in the process of analysis in this study.

Narratives were used as foundational units for interpretation of the KIAs' identities, cultures, and educational experiences. This was because of the unique features of narratives that allowed us to access tellers' contextually rich stories so as to better understand who they are and why/how they acted. According to Riessman (1993, 2003), and Strand, (2009) a narrative may be considered the narration of experiences emotionally and/or socially evaluated/ interpreted by the storyteller. Also, Cortazzi (2001) pointed out four aspects of the usefulness of narrative analysis in a qualitative study: 1) a narrative shares the meaning of experience with others by directly and indirectly interpreting and explaining events, because time order and plots are constructed/reconstructed by a storyteller in his/her own terms and view; 2) a narrative represents individual voices and the experience of particular groups; 3) a narrative is the act of

publicizing particular voices; and 4) narrated stories are the ethnographic study itself, because ethnographic study is the journey from outsider to insider.

Analytical Procedures

Data analysis in this study followed the analytic steps created by past research (Josselson 2006; Riessman 2003; Strand, 2009):

(1) Examining students' narratives to find the characters, settings, events, conflicts, incidents, themes and outcomes;

(2) Examining narratives to discover how the storytellers identify themselves within the narratives; how they evaluated the events; how they represented other characters; and how their views of themselves and others have been transformed;

(3) Coding the episodes, with the contextual stories given as examples, and then creating themes that were organized and expanded.

(4) Examining the evaluative statements, including the storyteller's intention, with a focus on verbs such as 'would' or 'should'; struggling and overcoming; comparatives such as 'changed' and 'differently'; questioned futures; assignment of praise, blame, and complain helped me find how they make sense of the narrated experiences and their roles therein (Katherine, 2009);

(5) Throughout data collection and analysis, strategies of continually doing memos and drawing diagrams were utilized for an ongoing analysis of narratives.

Ethics

Holloway and Todres (2007) assert, "the purpose of qualitative research is not just a scientific concern with truth but also an aesthetic and ethical one that might reflect Plato's characterization of the three realms of 'the good, the true and the beautiful' " (p. 12). In this

manner, I took an empathetic stance to participants. As noted by Fontana and Frey (2005), the empathetic approach is not merely a "method of friendship" (p. 697); rather, it is a method of morality, because it attempts to restore the sacredness of humans before addressing any theoretical or methodological concerns. In this study, I considered the interviewer as an "advocate and partner" (Fontana & Frey, 2005, p. 696). In addition, I considered the participants' "voices," because the questions (i.e., how the researcher expresses and writes participants' stories, which data to include and exclude, whose voices are chosen to represent and not to represent, etc.) were very important concerns from a critical inquiry perspective that undergirds this research as a theoretical perspective.

Summary

In this section, I discussed the methodological framework and key ideas related to the research design for this study. In particular, I argued that I chose narrative inquiry as a tool and a way to look into the phenomenon of how KIAs' identity and literacy are constructed. Then, I discussed the research design and approach for the data analysis procedures. In the following chapter, I present the stories of Brian and Jen, two members of the short story club, showing these participants' experiences as immigrant learners across school, home, and communities in the United States.

CHAPTER 4

UNDERSTANDING

I will begin with Brian and Jen's stories to discuss the experiences of Korean immigrant adolescents (KIA) living in the United States, especially in regard to discussing dialogical notions of identity construction, literacy practices, and relevant othering issues. Given the power asymmetry between the dominant culture and the Korean culture in the United States, identity construction and literacy practices of KIAs are not simply associated with old conceptions of acculturation or overt racial discrimination. Additionally, KIAs' relationships with Americans and American culture do not occur in set interactions between the dominant and the subordinate. Rather, identity construction and literacy practices of KIAs are considered a socio-cultural hybridity constructed by on-going negotiating, border crossing, and dialoging between their Korean culture and the American culture. As such, the fixed notion of the essential self and other notions rooted in Cartesian dualism should be challenged and contested.

Also, KIAs' adaptation process is not always fixed in one of these psychological stages of acculturation, i.e., assimilation, integration, separation, or marginalization. Rather than remaining stable in a neutral way, their identities show a "moving and mixing" (Hermans & Kempten, 1998) among those stages and thus, are dialogical. What is meant by this statement is that the power asymmetry between the American culture as a first world culture and the Korean culture as a third world culture, a situation already existing in the United States, is heavily involved in the process. In this study, this practice will be called othering as one of the prevalent features of the identity construction and literacy practices of KIAs.

In the follow section, I focus on the narratives of Brian and Jen and how each member is perceived as "too Americanized" and "too Korean." In the model of acculturation, the former is a case of assimilation, while the latter is a case of marginalization for KIAs. Carefully listening to and analyzing each student's narrative, I attempt to challenge and contest the overly simplistic notion of acculturation embedded in the labels of "too Americanized" and "too Korean" with regard to the experiences of these KIAs. In this sense, first, the dialogical process of identity construction in each of Brian and Jen's stories is illustrated. Second, KIAs' othering issues relevant to the power struggle that non-western immigrants confront in the United States are delineated. Lastly, I describe and address how the experiences of Brian and Jen as KIAs are connected or disconnected by combining both stories.

Brian's Story

It was on the orientation day of our book club sessions. A young man was working diligently on his laptop in the lobby of the student-learning center. His black hair and Asian features were quite distinctive among the other college students around him; I quickly sensed that this was probably Brian. Wearing a green T-shirt and jeans, Brian looked informally neat. When I asked if he was Brian, he answered in Korean with a strong English accent, "Ne [Yes] Jeo-ye-yo [It's me]." After talking with him for a while, due to his amalgamated accent, I suspected he was an immigrant Korean American student who had moved to the United States several years before. Since his mother had informed me that he had come to America during his 6th grade year, by my calculations, he was now in the 11th grade and had lived in the United States for about five years. However, the manner in which he spoke Korean, using accented speech and some non-Korean syntactical structures, was quite distinguished from the way native Koreans speak. His Korean sounded as if it had likely been translated from English. He appeared

to be a second generation Korean American who was born and raised in the United States, although he was actually a 1.5 generation Korean immigrant who had come to the United States in the 6th grade.

Brian was a Korean immigrant boy from "a wild geese family." His mother came alone with him and his younger sister to care of them while his father stayed behind to work in Korea. Like a goose that willingly travels long distances to meet his spouse, Brian's father regularly visited his wife, son, and daughter living in the United States. His strong belief that Brian could have better educational opportunities and gain college degrees in the United States probably helped him endure his loneliness. In Korea, Brian's family was from the upper-middle class, and his father owed a small trading business. Two years ago, however, Brian's father decided to close his business in Korea and came to the United States to reunite with his family. Brian confessed that his family had some difficulties when his father reassumed the paternal role, after having vacated it for four years. As a result of his father's absence, the upside down power structure between his mother and father was problematic for the whole family.

Especially for his father, it was difficult for him to accept this power shift and relinquish his authoritative role to his wife. After going through this hard time, however, Brian's father finally succumbed to this reality in the United States. Brian, who had matured during this rocky adjustment period, acted as mediator between his father and mother. After experiencing these challenging times, Brian's family began again with a new life in the United States. Presently, his mother is the official "boss" in the family and directs the family members more than his father does. Unlike in the past, when she was a housewife in Korea, she leads the whole family, because she has more experience than his father with life in the United States. Currently, they

work in different stores. Brian's father opened a small pick-up station for dry cleaning, while his mother continues to manage a larger business than his father's.

Meanwhile, this new life in the United States, combined with the initial absence of his father, pushed Brian to feel a greater responsibility, as he was the oldest son raised according to the customs of Korean culture. "It was a huge pressure and it's still . . . a huge pressure for me." Once, when Brian and I were discussing how he felt about his responsibility, he did not hesitate to express the burden that was on his shoulders. He clearly acknowledged his parents' expectations for his future success and academic excellence. Most of all, he definitely knew why his family was here in the United States and why his father decided to permanently move to the United States, despite the complicated process of immigration. Therefore, like other Korean immigrant adolescents, Brian, a smart and mature Korean boy, had the ambitious goal to obtain a college degree from a prestigious Ivy League university in order to compensate for his parents' sacrifices.

"For Me, the Meaning of Korean-American is Not Clear."

When I asked Brian in our first interview, "Are you Korean, American, or Korean-American?" Brian hesitated in answering my question. Brian seemed to experience difficulty in identifying himself as either Korean or American and even as a Korean-American. "That's a good question. But, for me, the meaning of Korean-American is not clear." He went on to say that his membership depends on varying conditions in specific situations and is constantly contested in certain contexts.

For example, he tended to define himself as a Korean because of his love for Korea and the Korean culture, including its food, his relationships with family and relatives, and his responsibilities as a son, brother, neighbor, and immigrant student. However, Brian began to

claim membership as an American, because he spent most of his time in school studying or playing with his American friends and sometimes hanging out with them outside of school. In light of his ethnicity, his membership was occasionally contested and challenged in certain socio-cultural contexts. I could understand why Brian had difficulty identifying his membership between the either/or categorizations of Korean and American. For Brian, even the hyphenated label of Korean-American was not enough to explain his memberships, because his memberships fluctuated event-by-event. So, Brian often seesawed back and forth across the hyphen to suit his situational identity.

In the following interview transcripts, Brian provides us with the idea that he has positioned himself in the dominant group by directly marking his memberships as seemingly more mainstream-culture oriented. Although affirming his Korean-ness as an ethnic identity forever, Brian does other the ethnic culture-oriented members of the book club in the way in which he highlights his confidence in his American cultural competency.

> [I am] a lot . . . definitely Korean, *physically speaking*. And, that is my heritage forever. But, the thing is, I almost completely understand American culture. And, what an American life is like, what American philosophy is like, how a *typical* American mind works, and that is not something that most Korean Americans can attain.

Based on Brian's remark, I found that his voice was filled with pride about his knowledge of how an American mind works. He stated that his cultural capacities were not something that most Korean Americans could attain. This voice maintained a distance from other typical Korean students, while his other voice affirmed his Korean heritage. Nevertheless, to be sure, Brian's essence was attached to an American rather than a Korean culture, and his voice from an American stance seemed to project much more than the other voice. I suspected that the unequal

power balance between the two cultures was the reason why Brian attempted to place himself within the American community rather than finding his membership with the Korean culture. On the other hand, he accounted for his American cultural competence in a way that positioned himself as superior to other Koreans, because his considered his capacities to be rare in that they are "not something that most Korean Americans can attain." His remark perpetuated the line between the dominant culture and the subordinate culture in which the existing hierarchy was legitimated.

"He's Completely a Part of It, But Once He Comes Back Home, He's in Another World."

In a book club discussion, Brian discussed his life, his frequent border crossings between the Korean and American cultures, and his concern about how to cope with this vacillation as an immigrant boy living in the United States. The day's short story, *Limits* – which deals with the agitation of a Korean American, Joe, who is tricked by a fake acceptance letter from Harvard sent by Joe's American friend, Chuck – inspirited Brian inwardly and outwardly to take his time in reflecting on and expressing how he can juggle two worlds wisely. Analyzing the main character, Brian commented on Joe's way of living through the lens of a reader as well as the lens of a Korean American student, who, similar to Joe, manages to combine both worlds.

Dan: Anything else about Joe?

Brian: Kind of got the best of both worlds.

Dan: How so?

Brian: He's well aware that he's different. He lives in a poor, kind of, not so
   presentable home. So, he has that side, and he has the other side, which sounds
   like a pretty preppy school. And, his completely American friends and American
   parents accept him. He seems to be in that circle. He's completely a part of it, but

once he comes back home, he's in another world. I think he manages to combine

these two and juggle these two different spheres pretty well and apply things he

knows from this one to the other, and that's something that's always been

fascinating to me.

Dan: Sure, you guys are living Joe's experience to some, it seems, to some extent.

Brian's comment on Joe in the short story, *Limits*, reflected his considerable confusion in

juggling his two compartmentalized worlds, Korean and American. Brian altered his view about

Joe's way of being by taking the role of reader/observer to appreciate Joe's story of a Korean

American student striving to advantageously combine both worlds. Brian might have seen

himself through the character, Joe. For instance, both Brian and Joe strove to be in the circle of

the dominant group with a clear awareness of their difference. Their differences from other

American peers and neighbors became clearer when they returned home. In the short story, Joe

encountered his role and responsibility as a son from a Korean immigrant family, and his

admission to Harvard University might be a way for upward mobility in American society. Brian,

too, accepted his Korean identity at home, including being the oldest Korean son, a brother, and

a neighbor as well as a member of the Korean community. Similar to Joe, Brian was attentive to

his role as a KIA. Brian described:

I am largely in charge of minor things in the house, like the gas, electricity, water,

phone bills, and the TV. If there's a problem, my mother will either come to an employee

or me at her store that she trusts a lot, and she helps her out a lot, too. But, when she's not

available, I'm always there, and I mean you can go through my phone history—it's a

lot…going to Charter, and AT&T or whatnot—Verizon. And, well, mainly, because I'm

fluent in English, and I'm not shy when I'm talking to those agents. If there's a problem

or if there's something that I know how to cut to the chase, I know how to make the point…be assertive, at times. If you're a little *shy* from pointing that out, it takes a longer time to fix the problem or whatnot.

Not only taking on a variety of house chores, Brian acted as a middleman to help his mother and younger sister communicate with each other, because he was the only person who could fluently communicate in both Korean and English. However, in comparison to Eun, his younger sister, he found his ethnic membership within a Korean circle. When talking about his younger sister's Korean heritage, Brian elaborated:

My younger sister doesn't know a lot of Korean words, and that's a problem a lot, because my mom wouldn't know the American word for the Korean word…. She [Eun, Brian's younger sister] has been here since the third grade. So, she *really* doesn't remember much Korean stuff and is a more Americanized Korean-American than I am.

Brian's voice represented his position of being a KIA located on the borderlines between the Korean and American cultures, and his experiences with regard to his responsibility and roles as being the family's linguistic and cultural broker and problem-solver are very different from his American peers. Brian's narrative supports what some researchers (Fu & Graff, 2009; Rimbaud, 1994; Suarez-Orozco, 1991) have discussed as the particular circumstances that immigrant adolescents tended to encounter that differentiate their needs and talents from those of many teenagers who have grown up in the United States. Plus, in many non-western cultures, there is a strong reliance on and sense of obligation toward family members. In a study about Asian and South-American immigrant youths in the United States, it was indeed found that there is a far stronger sense of family obligations among immigrant adolescents than among national adolescents (Fuligni et al. 1999).

"I Have My Own Expectations for My Education."

Throughout the narratives, I acknowledged two significant discourses, "model minority" and "forever foreigner", were deployed in Brian's experience. Additionally, this encouraged Brian to seek assimilation with the American culture and endeavor to become accepted in mainstream communities. Accordingly, those discourses heavily affected Brian's identity construction. The model minority discourse was embodied in Brian's statement; "I know what my parents want me to do . . . representing family by going to a prestigious college like an Ivy League university."

Returning to the story of Joe in *Limits*, the fundamental reason why Joe was in conflict and trouble was because he had failed to author who he was while being oppressed by the socio-cultural discourse of the model minority that manipulated his real identity; he was incapable of meeting his parents' expectations and of freeing himself from social-cultural expectations, so he pretended to be a Harvard student. I assumed that the fake admissions letter from Harvard forged by Joe's American friend might become the metaphor for the dominant voice that forcedly imposed the model minority image on Joe. As a result, Joe pretended to be a Harvard student and be complicit with the model minority discourse of the fake letter. Joe probably in part portrays what Brian was experiencing as a KIA adolescent trapped in the image of a model minority and in the cultural expectations of his Korean parents.

However, at the same time, I was privy to Brian's own way of responding to the model minority discourse. With regard to his future plans for education, Brian seemed to find his own way by negotiating his autonomy with the model minority discourse. Brian asserted:

> I have my own expectations for my education. My parents wanted me to go to Harvard
>
> and…actually still want it. But, my mother trusts me, because I have my own goals, and

she wouldn't mind even if I don't go to a school that she wants. My dad, too. I have been raised in Korean communities where the parents' expectations for their children are so high, but I kept trying to persuade my parents by telling them that doing it my way offers more of a chance for getting a better job. I want to go to this school, which is less famous than Harvard, but still renowned. So, the competition is less fierce and better for my future career. So, as of now, I don't have any conflicts with my parents, because my parents have faith in me. I will get a great opportunity and succeed.

Brian was clearly a smart and promising Korean immigrant boy. However, like Joe in the story *Limits*, his academic achievements and dispositions were not "Harvard material," as Brian asserted in an interview with me. Most of all, Brian did not want to make the effort to apply to an Ivy League university, because he already had his mind set on another university of his own choosing. On one hand, Brian was not free from the model minority discourse and relevant expectations of his parents and the Korean community. That is because he pursued being successful and gaining better opportunities in the United States in order to attain upward mobility according to what others wanted him to do.

Given the socio-cultural pressures from the Korean community and at the same time, the American community, what I heard in Brian's narrative, however, was that Brian was seeking his own way with regard to his future college choice and career by negotiating between what he wanted to be/do and what others wanted him to be/do. As a result, he was already determined to apply to a college in a Midwestern city to study applied mathematics, believing that this would guarantee his family's upward social mobility as well as achieve what he really wanted to be/do in the future. By building his own expectations for his education and persuading his parents, Brian was becoming the author of his own story. Of course, in this process, Brian's socio-

cultural status regarding ethnicity and race as a Korean/Asian immigrant interacted strongly in his negotiations.

"Others First Perceived Me as a Foreigner …"

In addition to the model minority discourse, ascribing "forever foreigner" to the fixed image of Korean/Asian immigrant adolescents in the United States affects their identity. Enabled by the historically constituted Asian American's image as "inassimilable foreigner," differences of skin color, strong Korean accent, and highly flavored ethnic culture easily let Americans assess Korean/Asians as "forever foreigner." Thus, KIAs have commonly shared the story of "forever foreigner" as a sort of "collective memory" since they moved to America. As an immigrant, I too could hear a variety of "I" stories about "how I or someone was mistreated by Americans." Brian also added his unpleasant memories to the "forever foreigner" story.

Brian painfully recalled,

Others first perceived me as a foreigner because my skin color and English

with a strong accent . . . I often felt mistreated when my mother and I went to

grocery stores, and the cashier was being rude to us, because we weren't good

at English and we are Asian.

So, one way he could improve his English and change his ways of acting was just to become similar to Americans by "mimicking" his American peers who were mostly of European descent. Wikipedia and the TV show, *The Simpsons,* were two useful resources through which he could enhance his American cultural knowledge to become part of the dominant group.

For Brian, these "agonizing memories" forcefully pushed him to quickly and seamlessly acclimate himself to the American culture, although it was gained at the cost of disconnecting from the Korean culture and communities. Indeed, Brian confessed that he intentionally

discarded and rejected his connection to the Korean culture and communities to spend all his time immersed in American culture and practicing his English. For instance, after Brian had determined to become accepted in the dominant culture, he no longer listened to Korean popular songs or watched Korean TV shows. Also, he stopped attending the Korean ethnic church or mingling with co-ethnic peers, including new Korean students (I will address this issue in detail in later sections). As a result, he discovered that one day he acted and spoke like his American peers. Brian stated,

> They [American classmates and teachers] perceive me as an American student after a couple of months. Other than skin colors and first languages, an international student, I am in class just like other American students. I don't think there is much cultural difference. There is no communication barrier. So, the teachers who are close to me don't think that I'm Korean. Actually, they don't think of me as a foreigner.

Although he never become a student with "white skin," discarding his Korean heritage and shifting his position from American to Korean or shuttling between the Korean and American sides when he went home again, at least he felt he was not being mistreated by Americans anymore. By and large, Brian had overcome some distinctive indices of immigrants, such as stammering English and awkward reactions when socializing with other Americans. I wondered about this and asked when and how he came to this realization. He responded, "Maybe, from the way they treated me. For example, when some cities in America come up, they might ask me if I know where that city is or when they ask me what the meaning of certain word is. Just like when Dan asked me if I know about who Jimmy Hendrix is. Well . . .but I've never felt that [teachers treating him as a foreigner] after around 8th grade."

"I Tried to Get Korea out of My Mind."

Fortunately, while analyzing his transcripts, I realized that Brian had unintentionally provided me with a great deal of discussion in regard to othering issues. He had dropped portions of his othering experiences, such as being othered by the dominant culture and simultaneously othering his co-ethnic peers here and there in his interviews and book club discussions. I endeavored to pick up the pieces of the puzzle and put them together. In interviews and short story club discussions, I saw his feeling of exclusion from the dominant culture was reproduced in his relationships with co-ethnic members. Similar to the agent of the dominant culture drawing a clear line between the self and the other, Brian distanced himself from other Korean students. He stressed that he was different from Korean students by highlighting his strengths in regard to his knowledge of American culture.

I wondered about the moment when he found his membership in the dominant culture and asked him this question in an interview. Interestingly, from 8th grade, after his spring break trip, he began to consider himself a part of the mainstream group by establishing close relationships with his American friends through hanging out with them and taking part in sleepovers. On the other hand, however, it was also around this time that Brian started to attempt to jettison his Korean-ness. He confessed in an interview with me:

> When I first came here, I was just a Korean boy. I missed Korea and my friends so much. I spent all my time watching Korean TV shows and listening to Korean music after school. I went back during summer break, around the end of 8th grade, and saw all my friends and family in Korea. After that, I never watched any Korean TV shows and music anymore. Actually, I didn't know any Korean TV shows or any Korean pop songs after Big-Bang [a Korean musical group]. I tried to get Korea out of my mind.

In 8th grade, when he had become more included in mainstream peer groups through sharing cultural events with them, Brian overtly started to demonstrate his distance from his Korean peers and culture by trying to get Korea out of his mind. At this time, he begins practicing *defensive othering*, i.e., a form of othering, reproduced and internalized from what he experienced as an ethnic minority member from the dominant culture as Schwalbe et al., (2000) described. In particular, Brian defined his membership by signs, indicating he was more associated with the American culture than the Korean culture. For example, as seen above, he did not enjoy Korean popular culture anymore whereas he preoccupied with watching the American television show, *The Simpsons.*

Although expressed in this excerpt, Brian frequently mentioned the *Simpsons* as his iconic American cultural reference, not only in book club discussions but also in interviews, and listening to American music instead of watching Korean TV and listening to Korean pop songs were ways in which Brian increased his English language skills and cultural competencies. In addition, Brian established more intimate relationships with his American peers by endeavoring to participate in out of school events. In so doing, Brian became acquainted with American popular culture as a possible common point of interest to share with his American peers so as to connect with them in important and personal ways.

What I question, however, is why he so forcefully rejected his Korean heritage and connections in order to gain sufficient English fluency and cultural knowledge so as to be included in the mainstream. It is suspected that social structures, such as the neighborhood and school that saturated Brian's life in the United States, did not validate his Korean culture. In other words, his Korean heritage may not have required him to be a part of the mainstream society in the United States. Brian's differences because of his Korean heritage might not have

benefited him. Rather, they could have worked as disadvantages for him in becoming a member of the dominant group. At any rate, his recognition of social realities prompted him to dilute his Korean-ness with American-ness to make his Korean-ness less pervasive. As a result, Brian, a member of an ethnic group who desired to be a part of the mainstream, attempted to separate himself from his co-ethnic peers who shared with him some of the cultural codes and Korean popular culture he now disregarded.

"Koreans Only Hang out with Other Koreans. I Didn't Like That."

In one interview, Brian took an evaluative standpoint toward his co-ethnic peers, identifying them as "too ethnic" by voicing the opinions of the dominant discourse.

There are many people who come here to study like me. They only talk among themselves and don't even try to use English. They were no use, and I couldn't talk with them. There are many Korean Americans in Atlanta. Their first language is English, but the Koreans only hang out with other Koreans. I didn't like that. I'd rather go up to American people and talk to them. When I go to Atlanta and see guys who have pierced ears and wear skinny jeans, it's weird. I feel like I could never get along with them. If I stayed in Korea, I wouldn't think this is weird . . . Honestly, I wanted to be an American. I wanted my parents to be good at English and live like other Americans.

In this statement, I heard Brian's voices resonating with social discourses; his wish to have less dialogue with ethnic minorities was his way of practicing a (defensive) othering. Brian attempted to separate himself from Koreans by taking the stance of viewing other Korean students only from the dominant perspective rather than from dual or multiple standpoints. He condemned Koreans who are reluctant to integrate with American people and speak English.

On one hand, Brian was expressing a thoughtful opinion about Korean segregation. It is not problematic to criticize ethnic segregation caused by insufficient cooperation between Koreans and Americans. On the other, it is problematic that Brian took the issue into account only from dominant perspectives. As a member of a group of Korean students, Brian did not employ the lens of an ethnic minority student to detect the issues apparent in his statement. I wondered why he did not raise the question of why Korean Americans, even second generation Koreans with English fluency, acted in that manner. Also, his voice seemed to attribute the isolation of Korean Americans solely to Koreans' thoughtlessness, as Brian showed little reflection on the unequal social structures in America that might contribute to this segregation. Brian became the agent of Korean segregation by ventriloquizing Korean immigrants' oppression through his own oppression. Thus, he agreed with the dominant voice and perpetuated it. That is, Brian's defensive othering is a reproduction of how the dominant culture denigrates the *other*.

Also, in this narrative, he expressed his alienation from the Korean adolescent community by establishing an adverse voice to some specific cultural codes, such as fashion trends among Korean students, including their adopting "piercings" and "skinny jeans." He distinguished himself as not being in that Korean circle, because he did not affiliate with the cultural repertories that other Korean students willingly practiced. Furthermore, it is important to note that those repertories, such as "piercings" and "skinny jeans," are not associated with the elite images that the middle class pursue. Rather, those adornments tend to symbolize the image of liberal and even delinquent students, particularly in the case of "piercings." In this sense, it is likely that Brian's voices employed the dominant group's voices that were not only Caucasian White-ness in terms of ethnicity/race but were also middle or upper-middle class.

"I Never Hung out with Them During the Weekends."

In analyzing the transcripts, I discovered some clues as to why Brian utilized defensive othering. I was interested in hearing his narrative about times when he felt like an outsider and associated his differences with negative emotions. In an interview, he laid out his discomfort in feeling like an outsider; Brian talked about a time before he had ever hung out with his American peers outside of school, even though he had "made a lot of [American] friends in school."

> I made a lot of friends in school, because I was pretty outgoing. But, I never hung out with them during the weekend. I only saw them in school. I went on my first spring break trip in the 8th grade. I didn't have any friends [who could have slept over with me] until then … You know, they've been in the same school since they were young, and their parents knew each other … there were existing connections among them. I felt like an outsider. That's why I couldn't fit into the group. But, kids usually mature by the end of 8th grade. So, that's when I started to change, too. It's me who makes friends, not my parents. When you're an adult, you can become friends with anyone you want to be friends with, as long as you get along well with them. So, when I felt that I could hang out with them, I didn't stay at home on Fridays and Saturdays. I always slept over at my friends' houses.

It took Brian approximately two years before he could make "real buddies" by sharing out of school cultural practices, such as hanging out or having sleepovers with his American friends. Brian elucidated his experience of othering through his feelings of being an outsider as acknowledged by his reality as a student from an immigrant family that inhibited him from proactive participation in cultural events. In Brian's story, two points he mentioned stood out. First, Brian felt like an outsider although he was fluent in English and had relationships with

American peers in school. For Brian, those characteristics, which would usually suppose inclusion, did not fully work for his gaining membership in the mainstream group. On a more private level, through sharing out of school cultural practices and more intimate social interactions, such as hanging out and having sleepovers, Brian eventually established his membership in the mainstream group.

Second, in general, a child inevitably needs parental support and the connections required to keep friends. However, a child from an ethnic group has difficulty with parental support in according with American norms; Brian, as an immigrant adolescent, might have experienced this, too. As discussed earlier, Brian's mother might have those kinds of difficulty making these connections with other parents because of her lack of English communication skills and cultural differences. Plus, if there were no welcoming atmosphere, it could amplify the difficulty an ethnic minority adolescent might experience in taking part in some cultural events.

It is uncertain why Brian could not easily take part in out of school cultural events. It is unclear whether his American friends did not invite him or, conversely, if he might not have chosen to hang out with them or go to sleepovers; both scenarios are possible. One theory is that, in the traditional Korean culture, a sleepover – an event most commonly held by children or teenagers during which a guest or guests are invited to stay overnight at the home of a friend – is not decent behavior, not only for a child but also even for an adult. Thus, in general, Korean parents tend to be overprotective of their children and do not allow them to attend sleepovers. Regardless of whether Brian's mother exhibited overprotective behavior or not, Brian might feel uncomfortable in taking part in a sleepover so that he did not respond to his friends' invitations.

Brian, however, did acquire knowledge of how to surmount the obstacles that prevented him from entering into the private circle of Americans when experiencing his first spring break

trip with friends – during which he probably had sufficient familiarity with and understanding of to take part in typical participant activities, including staying up late, talking, eating, and playing until falling asleep. I assumed that by so doing, he eventually learned that it was necessary to participate in those private events to establish more "real" relationships with his friends.

In this narrative, on one hand, I saw his ability for agency, such as being proactive, which allowed him to approach American peers when he became aware that his problems stemmed from not attending out of school cultural events. On the other, it prompted Brian to distance himself from or even pulled him out of Korean circles to protect him from seemingly negative traits with which immigrant students are associated, such as limited parental support. Perhaps, in adolescence, when socialization becomes imperative to one's wellbeing, Brian chose an extreme way to react in that he refused his Korean culture, although it should not have been necessary for him to abandon his entire Korean culture. By so doing, his level of discomfort gradually decreased as an outsider, and he gained a greater sense of belonging to the group as he gradually separated from and intentionally disconnected from his Korean community. At this point, as a member of his American peers' circle, Brian might have thought that this relationship took precedence over associating with the Korean community.

Jen's Story

In my first meeting with Jen and her mother at a small coffee shop, my first impression was of a typical Korean girl. With black bobbed hair and horn-rimmed glasses, she looked very studious. Like typical Korean students, she was polite and submissive. Also, she was very shy. During the meeting in which I was recruiting Jen as a member of our short story club, what caught my attention above everything else was the unusual scarf she was wearing. It was a replica of the red and yellow scarf worn by Harry Potter and Hogwarts' Gryffindor students. I

asked her in Korean, "Have you ever read Harry Potter in English?" She answered in Korean, "Yes, I've loved it."

In the meeting with Jen's mother, Jen's mother expressed her pride in Jen. Her mother, who worked as a teacher in an elementary school in Seoul, called Jen a good reader and writer. I remembered that Lena's mother, who had introduced Jen and Jen's mother to me, also remarked on these things about Jen: she is an elite student identified by her marks of academic excellence, a hard working reader, and a great clarinet player. In fact, when Jen and Lena were little, they lived in the same neighborhood for five years while their fathers were working on doctoral degrees at the same university. However, Lena was an American citizen, born in the college town, but Jen was not, because she had come to the United States at the age of one. From the ages of six, when they had a farewell party, until about 10 years later, Jen and Lena did not see each other until they met again in the same college town as high school students.

In fact, I discovered that Jen and Lena were not close friends, because they were very different and even opposite in some ways. Lena grew up in the United States and moved back to Korea when she was in 2nd grade and then, returned to America before high school. In contrast, Jen moved back to Korea when she was six; she grew up there and was now visiting the United States for the third time to attend high school and college. Two years ago, Jen spent the 9th grade in Colorado as an exchange student before she was determined to study abroad in the United States to prepare for college. When I interviewed Jen, her family, except for her older sister who was studying at a college in Washington D.C., lived together in the small town. Fortunately, Jen's father, a Korean professor, was allowed to temporarily work as a visiting scholar to help Jen settle into the town and into school as an international student.

Jen was drawn to people who displayed any one of several ethnic identifiers, such as speaking accented English, speaking Korean with peers, engaging in behavior associated with relatively new Korean immigrant adolescents, and dressing in styles associated with Korea. She was from a middle class family in Korea who had high expectations for her education and success. However, when she first wanted to study in a high school in the United States, her parents did not willingly send her. As Jen's older sister had been studying in the United States, Jen's parents did not want their second daughter to live far away from them, as well. However, after one successful year of being an exchange student in Colorado, Jen was determined to study in the United States, so her parents finally consented to her studying abroad in America.

"I Don't Think of Myself as a Nerd. I Never Heard That in My Life."

Throughout the interviews and observations of the book club discussions, I acknowledged that Jen had been struggling, because her identity as perceived by her American peers and teachers was different from what she considered herself to be in Korea. On one particular day, during a book club session, Jen became angry with Lena, because Lena had once again called Jen a "nerd". As usual, Jen became annoyed whenever Lena jokingly called Jen a "nerd." But, on that day, Jen expressed her angry with Lena, which was unusual. I was curious as to why Jen was so angry with Lena and asked her after the session. She said with a deep sigh, "Even Lena, my friend, thinks I am a nerd, to say nothing of others in my school." This notion seemed to be at odds with me, because typically Korean students who have attended Korean schools recognize the term nerd as a positive label for an elite student striving for academic excellence. In my understanding, Lena had called Jen a nerd, because Lena was jealous of Jen's academic achievement. When I probed further into her frustration at being regarded as a "nerd," Jen answered:

I don't like being called a nerd. People [who knew me in Korea] knew me as someone who could hang out in a nerdy group and a group of slackers. I don't think of myself as a nerd. I never heard that in my life, but people keep calling me a nerd here. … In Korea, I was really active. I was like the most popular kid in the school, and now, here, nobody knows me, and that was really hard for me, because I had to change my entire personality to blend in . . . And I was kind of scared to change, to be changed.

Following Jen's narrative, Jen felt uncomfortable with the label of nerd, because her current contextual identification of a nerd conflicted with her past Korean identity of an "active and popular" girl. For Jen, her active and popular image were continuously contested and challenged by the label of nerd in the United States. Jen resisted the label, because she did not endorse her nerd identity, although others perceived her in that way. Accordingly, her anger with the label of nerd, to some degree, represented her current confusion and conflict as a Korean immigrant adolescent in the United States.

On the other hand, I saw that Jen's difficulty with the label of nerd apparently related to the issue of the model minority stereotype commonly associated with the image of Asian American students in the United States. In general, dominant voices use the model minority label as a compliment for studious characteristics applied to Asian Americans, which includes such traits as academic excellence, math success, ability to play instruments, Ivy League degrees, etc. By contrast and at the same time, it is also thought that the model minority label encompasses an image of social ineptness (Kibria, 2002), too. The label nerd directly bolstered the image of model minority applied to Asian American students.

In the narrative, Jen expressed her irritation that her American classmates and teachers did not know who she was and how active and popular she was. Thus, Jen had to begin to build

her identity from point zero. For Jen, because socio-cultural norms were different from Korean ones, she might need to embark on a kind of forceful and entire identity change in order to blend into her American school system. As Jen articulated, that might frighten her. However, I wondered whether Jen would still be scared if she had opportunities to let her classmates and teachers know about her active and social identity in school. Furthermore, I questioned whether discourses that relegated a Korean immigrant student to be labeled as a nerd were taken-for-granted in American schools. With regard to these issues, Jen gave me some answers:

> Before I found a Korean American student to eat lunch with, it was a nightmare, because I didn't have any friends to eat with. I only thought that this happened in movies. I even went to the bathroom during lunch. I felt bad for myself, so I went to the library instead. Lunch was only for like 25 minutes, but it felt like forever to me.

Unlike when she was an exchange student, Jen struggled to have opportunities to show who she really was. That resulted in her troubles with making friends who could help her adapt in school. Consequently, "nobody knew Jen," and she was isolated in school. In Colorado, as she recalled, a host sister who willingly invited and allowed Jen to stay at her home played the role of "broker" between Jen and her American peers. So, Jen had made many American friends at her former school. However, in her new school, Jen had to make American friends independently. It was a rare stroke of fortune that Jen met a second-generation Korean American peer and finally could have lunch with her, a year after she had been suffering from loneliness.

Nonetheless, Jen was still "unhappy" at school, as she explained her feelings in an interview with me. When I asked what she thought the reason was for her having no friends in school, she mainly blamed it on her shyness, "I was supposed to not be shy with others when I first came to the school . . . so, they just automatically assumed the kind of person I am. . . . I am

Asian, and they commonly thought an Asian is shy and cannot speak in English." I asked her to tell me more about her last remark, "What do you mean by that?" Jen responded, "In my school, there aren't that many Asians, so the teachers are not used to Asians, too. They don't really know about Asians and what to do with people like me." For Jen, the issue that she had no friends in school connected strongly with the issue that she was a member of the group of Asian/Korean immigrants. Additionally, her struggles with an identity discrepancy regarding the label of nerd keenly linked to the issue of the ethnic/racial discourse imposed on Korean/Asian immigrant adolescents in the United States.

"Study Hard! That's the Only Way You Can Get Attention . . ."

Even though Jen denied her identity as a nerd, a part of her narratives indicated that she had practiced, at least on some level, the identity of a studious-shy-socially inept Korean student. In other words, she partly tended to reinforce the nerd identity perceived by other American classmates and teachers in school. She expended her entire effort on getting higher grades and spent most of her time on homework and SAT preparation. Interestingly, as reported in the last interview, thanks to her efforts for academic excellence, she had the feeling that she had become more included and had gained attention from her American classmates and teachers in school.

Last semester, I was like an outsider; I used to feel like a loner. But, I feel more intimate with the students, now. It got better, because other students remembered my name and talked to me. They knew my grades, and I explained whenever they didn't understand something, and there were many students who asked me. Actually, I can say that there were more students who asked me than I had friends. So, I felt more intimate with the students, now.

Jen pointed out that her academic achievement gave her opportunities to talk with American classmates, although she still considered that it did not mean they all were her friends.

However, at least, because of her image as a nerd in particular, this academic elite image gave her a feeling of inclusion in the dominant circle. She might clearly know this and was "actively" responding to what others expected of her, so she became and reinforced the image of a nerd. She proudly described another example: "Presentation. I can do it now, but back then, I avoided eye contact with the teacher, because I wanted to avoid presenting if possible so that I didn't have to present. But, now, I just do it." I also heard Jen's narrative of an endeavor to carve out a hybrid identity in which she attempts to blend herself in American culture and negotiate her identities in it. Her practice of being an academic elite was also present in the following statement. When I asked, "What would you advise for a Korean female newcomer in terms of how to make American friends in school?" She answered:

> I cannot tell how to make friends, because I'm not an expert in that field here in America. But, I can say you [new immigrant students, like her] have to study hard. Your grade is crucial, because that's the only way that you can get attention when you are just a Korean. That's the way I can show who I am. That's the only way that you can be in the spotlight in school I guess.

> As assumed, for Jen, the only option a Korean immigrant girl could choose in order to be included in school was to study hard and get excellent grades. That was the reason she described her daily routine as,

> After school, I work on my homework again until midnight and study for the SAT, I wake the next morning and do the same thing. During the weekend, I do my homework and study for the SAT, too. I used to hang out with my friends over the weekend when I was in Korea, but now, I always stay home.

I understood that she did her best in her own way to blend in but was concerned that she followed exactly what the model minority discourse expected of her. To be sure, the more time she spent studying hard and spending most of her time only on studying, the less she might gain opportunities to mingle with other American peers. Otherwise, the more she became an academic elite student, the more she made American friends and teachers could get to know who she was. It is complex, and I do not yet know the exact answers. However, one thing that is clear to me is that it is unfair that she should have only one option for showing who she was in class. And, it is scary that an individual student would have to take on the entire responsibility for blending into school.

"They May Think It's Fair to Treat Me Like Other Students"

In one interview with Jen, I could hear in her voice the issue of fairness for an immigrant student. If the issue of "nerd" produced difficulties for her in relationships with her American peers, the issue of "blindness of race/ethnicity" implied another difficulty in relationships with some of her teachers. Not only as a result of the issue of her identity as a nerd, Jen also struggled in school because of mistreatment by some of her American peers, teachers, and school personnel due to her difference as a Korean student. In particular, some of her American teachers were not trained to treat her in culturally responsive ways. They could have thought that, like "blindness of difference," treating a Korean immigrant girl in the same way as other American students, or in a way that they perceived to be equal, was best. However, she expressed her frustrations as an immigrant student from a non-western culture with few friends and struggled in adjusting herself to a new American school:

I really want to transfer to another school, because I feel lonely. The students in this school are mostly white, and even the teachers are mostly white. I'm the stranger around

here, because they are not used to seeing Asians. They should take extra care of me. But, they treat me just like other students. The teachers don't know what to do with me, and they are very inconsiderate. They may think it's fair to treat me like other students, but for the small ethnic group which I'm in, it is really unfair. I can't take notes, because the teachers talk so fast and don't wait for me at all. So, I asked the teacher if he could go over something, because I didn't understand. But, he told me that it wasn't possible. In the other students' perspectives, it's nothing bad. But, for me, this is the worst thing that slows me down from getting used to the school.

Jen understood that her school was a predominately white public school, "ninety-nine percent of the people are White, and even the teachers are mostly white." From a Korean student's standpoint as a newcomer, Jen said that some of the teachers did not know what to do with a student from a different culture. Jen explained that the teachers were mistreating her with the somewhat terse line: "they are very inconsiderate." In fact, I saw her remark, "inconsiderate," to be criticizing the manner of blindness of difference under the alleged assumption that equality means treating all students in the same way. So, Jen expressed the teachers' manner toward her as apparently "unfair." Furthermore, in a larger sense, her criticism is likely toward the pervasive "great American melting pot," grounded in universalism, which still lingers in school environments.

"I Felt Like… We Were Like Monkeys Or Something"

Meanwhile, I also wondered what her experiences were like outside school. Since Jen's identity construction as an immigrant learner was not delimited within school relationships but in the communities in which she was living, I was also interested in listening to the story. Throughout the interview and observation, I acknowledged that Jen was partly aware that the

difficulties she encountered related to her being a stranger, a Korean/Asian immigrant girl. Most of all, she was experiencing how racially different she was by her dissimilarity from the dominant culture. The following excerpt from an interview is another statement that evidences how the American racialization process as a specific socio-cultural context affected her identity construction in an important way. Jen articulated:

> In Korea, I was the majority race. When I came here, it like all changed, because I was the minority, and I felt like, oh, I'm Asian. I never thought about that when I was back in Korea. I am just like recognizing my [racial] identity.

> For Jen, the heterogeneous racial/ethnic context of America prompted her to consider that her race/ethnicity was hardly recognized in the homogeneous context of Korea. To be sure, a feeling of difference inspired Jen to see herself, particularly in terms of her racial/ethnic identity, in a novel way. Conversely, it is worth noting that she was intimidated by her feelings of difference from the dominant members and cultures in the United States. So, for Jen, her feelings of difference were not a neutral process of identifying her race/ethnicity. Rather, it was a process in which she struggled with power differences historically constituted between American as a First World culture and Korean as a Third World culture. Accordingly, like Brian, Jen was clearly aware that her differences were perceived as disadvantages and were discomforting in the United States. In a larger sense, the feeling of difference Jen experienced as a non-western, Third World immigrant was drawn from what Jensen (2011) named "othering." Jen illustrated how she was aware of her difference of being othered by the dominant culture through her experience.

> I went to Waffle House with my family. And there were like old people and white people but whatever and they like…as soon as we walked like in the door, they were like staring

at us, like literally staring. Like that, and I felt like we were like monkeys or something. I didn't like that.

Without outwardly performed discrimination, Jen felt distressed because of her racial difference from other Americans. Her memory was related to othering issues, in response to which Jen gradually internalized the idea that her Korean-ness was a disadvantage for her living in the United States. In one vignette Jen mentioned in a book club discussion, she was in a Waffle House when others stared at her and her family members as if they were "monkeys." Although she and her family made no immediate responses when they were in the Waffle House, later on Jen verbalized, "I didn't like that," in our book club discussion.

Closely looking into her narrative, we can see that no one verbalized the idea as "I don't like to be with you, because you are a stranger and Asian" or "Go back to Korea!" However, Jen received tacit signs of othering, as if they were saying, "There is an Asian girl. She is so racially different from us." Jen became intimidated by unspoken voices and memorized those experiences, associating them with uncomfortable feelings. For Jen, those "significant others," such as her American peers and people in her neighborhood, unintentionally forced her to identify her racial/ethnic identities. Jen, a new-immigrant-adolescent-Asian/Korean girl, was powerless to resist the racialization process through the internalization of her difference as uncomfortable feelings. In a sense, Jen's voice resonated with what Kaufka (2009) named internalized oppression, the process of reproducing the dominant ideology of the "monster inside" (p. 137) us. For Jen, racial/ethnic difference is a kind of fear that she is distinguished from other Americans

In a Bakhtinian sense, Americans as addressees were prompted by how Jen expressed herself. On one hand, the Americans Jen encountered inside and outside of school played (past)

addressees, facilitating Jen's acknowledging her racial/ethnic identity, although some of them did it in unpleasant ways. On the other hand, Dan, in the book club discussion, also acted as another (present) addressee, helping Jen articulate her past experiences of racialization, yet in an inclusive manner. However, I saw there was a meaningful difference between the past and present addressee. The latter, being a friendly listener, induced Jen to tell and construct her story to give her time to reflect on it. In this dialogue, Jen became an author, telling her stories by externalizing her voice, such as "I don't like that." In contrast, the former addressees were not. After sharing her vignette regarding othering practices, I hoped that Jen could have an opportunity to ponder what those experiences meant to her.

"Four of Us Are Straight up Korean. Lena and Brian Are Not"

In one of the book club discussions, I observed how Jen's sense of racial difference, in particular the difference in power between Korean and American cultures, affected her ways of positioning book club members. Jen mainly positioned herself more on the Korean side, powerless, than on the dominant side, more powerful. Jen identified herself as a "too Korean-centered" girl," as articulated in the following interview transcript:

> Four of us are straight up [solely or native] Korean. Lena and Brian are not, I guess. Four of us [Jen, Whe, Alex, Chloe] tend to wait our turns to talk. But, when the other two [Lena, Brian] are here, it gets awkward. They are really different from us . . . Lena and Brian talk a lot . . . Brian as well as Lena are almost like Americans. The only thing different about Lena [from Brian] is that she has citizenship, but Brian does not. The last time, when Lena said that she will never be Korean and even that she goes to Korea for vacation, the other students, including me, thought she should think more carefully before she said that.

As can be seen, Jen externalized her identity positioned on the Korean side by expressing her distance from Brian's and Lena's Americanized ways of acting and their perspectives. Jen categorized book club members as belonging to one of two groups based on whether each member belonged to "the more ethnic-centered" or "the more American-centered" group. In the sense of an acculturation model, as well as of what Jen articulated, she might be classified in "the marginalized" group that is distancing/ distanced by the dominant culture while committing and connecting to her ethnic culture.

For example, Jen described a membership in which someone is seeking his or her culture as the way in which members interact with each other. For Jen, a member was signified and defined by other members based on how he or she acted and spoke. Thus, Jen identified and ascribed Brian and Lena as being "too Americanized" based on relationships and interactions among members. According to Jen, four students tended to talk very little and waited their turns until authorized by Dan's calling on them in order to avoid being identified by others as show-offs. However, Lena and Brian tended to speak whenever they wanted to do so. I understood that Jen did not mean that Lena and Brian ignored the others, but they seemed to enjoy the freedom to speak without the pressure of being considered show-offs. In contrast, Brian and Lena tended to be freer from this cultural (i.e., show-offs) taboo to some degree. In particular, Jen expressed her and other members' feelings of discomfort when Lena remarked that she was never going to be Korean. Jen, on behalf of three other members – possibly Chloe, Alex, and Whe – indirectly explained her feelings of dissociation from Lena.

"I Don't Understand Why Americans Like It.**"**

In my observations, another way Jen reacted to othering – i.e., a form of the racialization process of a non-western immigrant — was that Jen made a binary depiction of the American

culture. Jen reacted to othering by positioning herself in a more ethnic-centered way. As a result, Jen occasionally adopted a binary point of view of Americans and American culture from a Korean essentialist point of view, while not attempting to examine the issues from a negotiated perspective. In analyzing one scenario, her enactment of othering was that Jen was attempting to recover her pride, because she was deeply associated with her Korean heritage. For this reason, Jen dissociated herself from the American culture.

The following remark of Jen's about the role of comedy in a book club discussion of the story *The Celebrated Jumping Frog of Calaveras County* by Mark Twain was evidence of how Jen employed a Korean centralized-perspective to interpret the story.

> Jen: Yea . . . When I watched like TV in America, American Funniest Home Videos, I found it kind of ironic, because it was different, like funny instances are really different in Korea and America.
>
> Dan: How so?
>
> Jen: Americans . . . they laugh like when people get hurt.
>
> Dan: That's interesting.
>
> Jen: They like tumbling. I don't understand why they like it. But, like people in Korea have more intellectual tastes when it comes to humor.
>
> Dan: Well, I think it's dangerous though when we start to make generalizations. I really do. Not all Americans love to see people fall inside a hole and break their neck.

As appreciated by Dan, Jen's assessment seemed to be dangerous, because her point of view was oriented toward a far more ethnic centered perspective. As a result, she provided an invalid generalization that could induce unpleasant feelings from Americans, just as Dan noted.

To interpret the issue of comic codes, Jen tended to only pick up on the Korean perspectives and completely left out some American perspectives. It is problematic for Jen as a Korean American living in America not to consider Americans' perceptions. In so doing, less negotiating between two perspectives occurred. Similar to Brian when he strove to get Korea out of his mind, Jen also attempted to dissociate herself from American culture and get America out of her mind. As such, similar to Brian, I saw Jen also had difficulty making a dialogical relationship between her Korean-ness and American-ness. In other words, she endeavored to make her Korean culture less compatible with her American culture. Rather, Jen was separated or was separating herself from her cultural hybridizing processes in the United States.

In Jen's narrative, another issue that I observed was that Jen's identity was not fixed. In other words, as assumed by the model of acculturation (Berry, 1997), Jen was not always set in the stage of separation among the four static stages of the acculturation process. Rather, Jen's identity was more flexible and dialogical by her moving, mixing, and hybridizing between the Korean and American cultures, as established by Hermans and Kempen (1998) in regard to immigrant identity. For example, Jen took her position on the American side in regard to some issues, such as education, literature preferences, and some aspects of individual liberty. In contrast, in some book club discussions, Jen even placed herself in a counter position toward the Korean side by criticizing Korean cultural elements. As such, I doubt that it was adequate for Jen to be firmly classified in one of the categories of separation based on the model of acculturation (Berry, 1997). The following vignette is an example that showed how Jen placed herself on an American side although she mainly found her membership on the Korean side. By viewing American culture in a positive way while criticizing Korean culture, in particular on the issue of education, Jen demonstrated how her positions were multifaceted based on the context.

"For Me, America Is Like the Place That I Get a Global View And Job."

One day, the book club members discussed *The House on Mango Street*, the story of a Latina immigrant girl, Esperanza. Members actively verbalized their opinions, because they as immigrant adolescents felt readily connected to the protagonist and her stories filled with experiences of immigrants in the United States. Dan was questioning what each member identified as Korean-American or just Korean. Other than Brian – he was absent from the day's discussion — and Lena who answered, "I identify myself as Lena," the rest of the members, Jen, Alex, Chloe, and Whe, all identified themselves as "Korean." As an observer who was well aware of how members acted as "Korean-Americans" but not "solely" Korean, I wondered why the four Korean students identified themselves as "solely" Koreans. Shortly thereafter, Jen proved that the four members' ethnic identities were not fixed as "solely" but navigating between Korean and American.

Dan continued by asking the members, "By the way, do you guys plan on going back to Korea?" Jen said, "No. I want to get a global job so I need to be here, although my parents want me not to do so." She went on to say:

> Actually, I first decided to come here, because everything was stressful in Korea. I lived in the capital, Seoul, and everybody was like so competitive. It was like killing me. Like, I really didn't like to be competitive towards my friends. I would rather go with them rather than like going against them. I didn't like that. So, I decided to come here, and I thought it would be easier. Also, I want like a global job. I thought America was like the one place that you could really study all worlds because everybody, every nations' people are in America, definitely. So, for me, America is like the place that I get a global view and job.

As can be seen above, on the issue of education, Jen described her preference for American culture. Jen viewed American ideology positively, in particular with regard to American diversity, individual liberty, and education, while critiquing those of Koreans. As mentioned in the introductory section of Jen's story, it was understandable that she partly affiliated with American culture and ideology, although she mainly found her affinity and membership in the Korean culture. In fact, Jen was a voluntary immigrant adolescent who was determined to move to America by herself to pursue a better education and a global job. In Korea, she was an avid reader of English stories, such as the Harry Potter series, as I mentioned above. Although she seemed to be skewed toward the Korean side and seemingly separated from American culture, Jen pursued American culture and found her identity in the dominant culture when in specific contexts. Furthermore, it was rare, but there were times when I could see Jen attempting to negotiate the two cultures in the discussion of the adolescent job culture after members read *A & P* by John Updike.

> Dan: So, how do you guys perceive this kind of American system? When I was sixteen, Oh I knew it was coming. The big sentence, so Dan what are you going to do this summer? I dreaded it, because I had to get work, and I think that's relatively typical here. So, I think, you know, how do you guys view that?

> Jen: Working part time job as a student. It's like half positive and half negative, because it's like, when you're like a high-schooler, it's like the only time you can really study in your life, I think. And, you need time to like really work, and you need time to study, but if you do it together, that really doesn't work like. But, in a positive way, you get like many social experiences and when you get to college you already have some work experiences, and it's like easy to get a job and stuff.

And, you might be somewhat financially independent from your parents. Yeah,

it's up to you, what you choose. But for me, I prefer to study.

As seen above, Jen made her point on the ways an adolescent takes advantage/disadvantage of his or her part time job. The issue of the adolescent's job ethos, a different culture in Korea from that of America, was drawn from the middle of the discussion of *A & P*. Unlike American parents, Korean parents tend to prevent adolescents from having part-time jobs instead of studying. In the discussion, each member gave a different opinion on the issue. For example, Brian agreed with the American belief that an adolescent is at least partly financially independent by having a part-time job. What was impressive for me was that Jen, in contrast to her former Korean-centered viewpoint on American comic codes, attempted to consider the issue of the adolescent part time job ethos by negotiating her viewpoints in a hybridized way. Although Jen externalized her preference for Korean principles in this case, the way that she reached her final decision was the very process of a negotiation of her positions through border crossing between the two cultural worlds.

Flashbacks and Snapshots

The stories of Brian and Jen illustrated the experiences of Korean immigrant adolescents who are typically perceived as cases of "too Americanized" or "too Korean" respectively. In the colloquial terms used in Korean communities, the former may be an "ABC" -- i.e., American born C/Korean, although this was not exactly the case with Brian, because he was Korean born but acted like an American born Korean. The latter may be an "FOB" -- i.e., fresh off the boat. So, in an acculturation model (Berry, 1997), the ABC is likely to be categorized in the assimilation group, and the FOB is in the separation group. However, as seen in Brian and Jen's stories, the universal concepts of assimilation and separation are insufficient to explain the

complexity and heterogeneity of their experiences as KIAs. Instead, each story demonstrating their movement, mixture, and even hybridity by crossing identities and cultures was dynamic. And, the historically situated power difference between the Korean and American cultures profoundly affected each student's experience with his or her identity construction.

In the last section of this chapter, I flashback to stories of Brian and Jen to investigate how similar/dissimilar and connected/ disconnected their experiences were. Then, I add two snapshots that show critical moments when Brian and Jen were making their own meanings by dialoguing with varied perspectives from others in the short story club discussions.

Flashbacks

When listening to Brian and Jen's stories, what fascinated me was that both students were telling/doing similar things, while at the same time, they were sharing dynamic stories about their experiences as KIAs. They shared similarities in terms of the themes of their stories about how Korean immigrant adolescents as learners live and deal with two worlds. In their stories, their voices, positions, or perspectives were not fixed at one point between Korean and American identities/cultures. Rather, their identities/culture through which they made their KIAs' experiences make sense were moving, mixing, and hybridizing by frequent border crossings. I am not arguing that there was no boundary between the two cultures/identities. I am arguing that their boundaries were likely so permeable and complicated that it would be difficult to pinpoint the exact boundaries.

In school and community, Brian's culture and identity were mainly incorporated in American ways of being. For example, based on his fluency in English and a great deal of American cultural knowledge, Brian freely enjoyed hanging out with his American friends and did not feel any level of discomfort in taking part in dominant cultural events and pop-culture.

His friends, teachers, and neighbors accepted Brian in their American cultural circles. In contrast, when he returned home, he shifted his identity to such a Korean boy as to ungrudgingly assume his family obligations, although he never purged his identity, which was oriented toward the American culture. His stories showed us how his identity/culture, seemingly fixed, continued to be challenged and contested, because as a KIA, he lived in a hyphenated "moving and mixing" (Hermans & Kempen, 1998) world placed on the borderline of Korean and American cultures.

Like Brian, Jen's story was filled with a series of agreements, disagreements, confusions, and conflicts by moving back and forth through the present/past, here/there, and American/Korean identities/cultures. In regard to the events that transpired after denouncing the label of nerd, Jen demonstrated how a Korean immigrant girl was constructing her own meaningful identity by resisting and reinforcing the identity ascribed to her by others. Thus, Jen's story was mainly associated with the story about a separated-Korean-immigrant-girl living in the United States. However, it illustrated the complexity of the concept of separation in the model of acculturation (Berry, 1997) so that it called for an alternative manner for which Jen's experience as a KIA was confined by the one category of "separation" and should be delved into in a nuanced way.

Another similarity in the stories of Brian and Jen was that both students experienced othering and relevant feelings of exclusion from the dominant culture. Furthermore, while being othered by the dominant culture, they internalized the ideology of the dominant culture and even reproduced it within their co-ethnic group. For instance, Brian and Jen identified their co-ethnic members of the short story club in a Cartesian dualism stance by which members were perceived as either "whitewash" or as "FOB." In fact, I witnessed that their identities and cultures were not fixed in the two categories but shifted across the borderlines.

Stories of Brian and Jen also proved that their identities were affected by the model minority discourse pervasive in the United States. As (Zhou & Kim, 2006) asserted, their stories relevant to the model minority stereotype were not composed of a single voice from the dominant culture. Those were integrated voices not only from the dominant culture but also from the Korean immigrant culture of high expectations and upward social mobility. Most importantly, both stories of Brian and Jen's were not simply dominated by the socio-cultural voices of a model minority. It is true that Brian and Jen tended to oblige the command of the model minority discourse, but at the same time, they attempted to negotiate the socio-cultural voice of the model minority stereotype in their own way. As such, I can say they participated in the process of their identity construction by reinforcing as well as reinventing the socio-cultural discourse imposed on them. Of course, in this process, because of the power difference between Korean and American cultures, Brian and Jen had been struggling. However, each member's level of struggle and approach to responding to the socio-cultural discourse were heterogeneous.

For example, Brian was more proactive than Jen was, especially in his joining in the dominant culture. Perhaps, I assumed that his gender, as the oldest son in a Korean family living in a situation in which his whole family was determined to live a new life, significantly influenced his endeavor to be closer to the dominant culture for upward social mobility. On the other hand, Jen was relatively free from family responsibility, because she, as the second daughter, was less pressured to assume the responsibility of "representing family." This is the reason that individual characteristics, such as gender, age, class, or family history, should be considered in understanding immigrant identity construction. Thus, the identities of Brian and Jen could not be solely justified as separated from the contexts, interactions, and power struggles in which they were situated.

To sum up, the stories of Brian and Jen implied that immigrant identity is "shuttling" (Bhatia, 2002) or "moving and mixing" (Hermans & Kempen, 1998) between/among cultures, and those are their ways of identity construction and the ways they made sense of their experiences as KIAs living in the United States. In addition, their ethnic/racial status as members of KIAs in the United States and the related socio-cultural discourses profoundly organized their identity construction and literacy practices. In this sense, as Bhatia (2002) asserted, both Brian and Jen stories also demonstrated an overly simplistic notion of an acculturation process that should be reconceptualized. Thus, the complexities of the experiences of KIAs should be considered by not omitting individual contexts.

Snapshots

As is known, identity construction is an on-going process. That means identity research has limitations. Thus, metaphorically explained that the process is like a movie; what we as researchers can investigate is some part of its streaming process – that is, by examining some snapshots of individual identity in the movie. I thoroughly agree with this concept of the movie and snapshot metaphor, with regard to researching identity construction, of what we investigate and what we process and produce, which is constantly constructed. The limitation of identity research is that we cannot grasp the whole process through language. Under this restriction, what I attempt to take hold of is the meaningful moment in which identity construction occurs, as if taking a "snapshot" (Sfard & Prusak, 2005, p. 16). So, I return to two scenes that allow us to examine how Brian and Jen were making meaning in light of their lived immigrant experiences in a short story book club discussion. For me, it was impressive to witness part of the "becoming" of Brian and Jen from two scenes in which they constructed their own voices, positions, or perspectives by negotiating those of others.

Brian's snapshot. Once the discussion of the Asian American short story, *Blond*, got underway, a worthwhile moment illustrated how members, particularly Brian, were making meanings of their identity journeys by hybridizing other voices in book club discussions. As mentioned in the introduction in Chapter 1, *Blond* is a story dealing with an Asian girl's assimilation issues of wanting to be a white girl. Because the main issue and characters were very connected to our members' experiences as Asian immigrants living in the United States, their discussions and interpretations were more animated than when we had talked about other short stories. The book club facilitators were especially fascinated, because we had heard a very intimate, interesting story from Brian. In his narrative, I got a glimpse at how Brian interpreted the story by connecting his own lived experiences to the story we discussed.

> Brian: I don't know how to interpret the theme of the story, but they all look at . . .
>
> with a wig on . . . I thought they found it comical. So, you are never going to be blonde. You're meant to be Asian and to have black hair. And, that's kind of how I felt when I realized that I was never going to completely conform to what I wanted to be a part of. You know, I thought that was ridiculous; that's not gonna happen, and I'm meant to be what I shouldn't try to change. It would just look really awkward.

In telling the story, Brian was even demonstrating how he was creating his own viewpoint by hybridizing varied perspectives from others. Brian interpreted the theme of the story through the lens of the Asian girl's experience. In a Bakhtinian sense, Brian brought three distinct voices into the conversation, and these three different voices were interwoven within Brian's narrative. First is Brian's voice as the speaker; the second is the Asian girl wanting to be a white girl as the listener. The last is the other as a third party. His interpretation of the story

demonstrated the concept of a dialogical self as "multifaceted I-positions" (Hermans & Kempen, 1993) and, in particular, hybridized immigrant identities which were "moving and mixing" (Hermans & Kempen, 1998) between/among cultures through frequent border crossing experiences.

Most specifically, the three different pronouns indicated how Brian hybridized the other voices of the interlocutors on the topic. An imaginary dialogue with the "girl" character and others "out there" was occurring in his narrative. First, Brian's own voice appeared in the "I" pronouncement. As the speaker, Brian laid out his reflection on what he had read in the story and how he related it to his lived experience by using those first person expressions, "I thought . . . I felt . . . I realized . . . ." Brian interpreted the assimilation issue of the fictional Asian immigrant adolescent through his own perspective by looking back and forth at his experience as a Korean immigrant boy. Next, Brian attempted to engage in an imaginary dialogue with the listener, the girl in the story. In this way, I observed that another perspective was added to the existing layer as a way of inviting the listener to the dialogue. As a result, another pronoun, "you" appeared in his narrative. So, Brian said, "You are never going to be blond. You're meant to be Asian and to have black hair." He seemed to be speaking not only to the girl but also to himself, dually and simultaneously. So, it was ambiguous whether the voice was coming from Brian or the dominant culture, because several voices were intertwined in his message.

Lastly, he brought in a third perspective from others, which Bakhtin named a *third party* or a *super addressee* in the dialogue. Given the pronoun "they," Brian added this third person perspective of others who may think that an Asian in a blond wig is "comical." He created his own interpretation through the process of this hybridity of voices, positions, or perspectives. Although he did not explicitly mention the girl, Brian may have wanted to talk to the girl, "Don't

try to change what you shouldn't change. It would look really awkward. Be yourself." As demonstrated by the use of different pronouns, his interpretation resulted from negotiating between different voices. In other words, moving, mixing, and hybridizing positions or perspectives were ways by which he constructed his own way of interpreting the theme or world.

    Jen's snapshot. I took a similar snapshot of Jen's case. In comparison to Brian, Jen's meaningful moment occurred in an actual dialogue with a book club member, Lena, who had found her membership in an American circle. Lena, as an actual audience member in the following book club discussion, challenged and contested Jen's thoughts in regard to the Korean traditional issue of familial relationships and, in particular, the relationships between parents and their children. It also occurred in a discussion of Asian short stories as we were talking about the differences between the Korean and American cultures in light of parental issues.

Lena: In Korea, it's like you don't have a life. Your life is mine. I control you. Until you're like a grown adult that I trust, I control you, and you're my property.

Jen: It was like that way before. Like, there are still some parents that do this; like, they control like what they want . . . they had a dream, but they couldn't do it because of their situation at the time. So, they're trying to give their dream to the child, so the child can achieve their dreams. But, now, it's kind of changing because . . .

Lena: Didn't really change a lot.

Jen: It didn't, not a lot, but it's changing. It's like definitely changing, because like students are really more like . . .

Lena: It's changing now because of us, because we're not like them.

Jen: Okay, so, it changed, because they're viewing our big pictures instead of small

pictures, and their parents are supporting them. And, even though the money is

like the problem, their parents are like believing them, and they're kind of letting

her children to go and step out into the world, instead of being

just in Korea. Because Korea is like too small of a country and competitive.

In this scene, we see Jen and Lena arguing about the Korean parental issue and the relationships between Korean parents and children, because they shared their different voices from different perspectives and positions. Jen interpreted the issue from a defensive position in which she aligned more with the Korean ideology. In contrast, Lena criticized the relationships between parents and children in Korean culture as exhibiting roles of the possessor and the possessed by positioning herself outside the Korean circle. Jen advocated the Korean traditional culture Lena criticized by pointing out "it's changing now."

For instance, Lena inspired Jen by condemning a Korean culture in which relationships between parents and children work as controller over controlee. Jen disputed Lena's opinion and promoted her belief that, although the Korean approach to parenting has not changed, Korean children's perspectives have changed. Subsequently, Jen pointed out the pitfall of Lena's logic by making a point that the change in Korean youths inevitably will induce a change in parenting so that the relationship between parents and children will also change. In a sense, Lena challenged parental authority, so unintentionally she was offending a Korean taboo by criticizing the established order between parents and children. From a youth's standpoint, Lena interpreted the issue far more independently and Americanized.

In opposition to Lena, Jen attempted to take a defensive position toward the Korean tradition that good children never shrink from their parents' authority but rather they respect it.

She tended to select some positive facets of her multifaceted reality. On one hand, it could be understood that Jen unwittingly echoed an authoritative voice from the Korean tradition. On the other, although partly accepting Lena's opinion, Jen contested Lena with a somewhat firm assertion that there are some parents who do not control their children but rather let their children "go and step out into the world, instead of being just in Korea." There seemed to be rigid lines between Lena and Jen at the commencement of the discussion, but they became more flexible through the negotiation processes of their perspectives.

In the above excerpt, both Lena and Jen's positions and perspectives slightly changed when Lena pointed out their current status as Korean immigrant adolescents who lived in-between Korean and American cultures. Although Lena and Jen's self-membership looked different – e.g., Jen was from a "too Korean" group and Lena was from a "too Americanized" group, they are in the same group of hyphenated people, "Korean-American," as indexed by Lena's pronoun "us." When they acknowledged this, Jen and Lena's positions and perspectives were challenged and contested, because it is true that Jen and Lena were in the same circle as Korean immigrant adolescents living in the United States. So, Lena partly accepted Jen's opinion and stated, "It's changing now because of us, because we're not like them." In turn, Jen also slightly shifted her position by stated, "Okay, so, it changed because they're viewing our big pictures instead of small pictures, and their parents are supporting them." I observed Jen and Lena's voices being negotiated by each interlocutor in this discussion; nonetheless, their different perspectives remained.

Summary

In this chapter, I provided stories of Brian and Jen as well as some flashbacks and snapshots. In the stories, I explored each member's experience living in the United States as a

Korean adolescent. By moving, mixing, and hybridizing identities and cultures, Brian and Jen constructed their own voices, positions, and perspectives. In the analysis of narratives, I focused on four points: 1) immigrant backgrounds; 2) the influence of socio-cultural discourses imposed on Korean-Asian immigrants; 3) agency and power struggles related to the concept of othering; and 4) meaningful moments of identity construction and literacy practices in the short story discussions. In the following chapter, I go on to discuss the research questions by linking the central issues raised in Brian and Jen's stories through the lens of the theoretical framework. Additionally, I will identify some educational implications.

CHAPTER 5

DISCUSSION

In this chapter, I discuss the overarching research question and three sub-questions leading to the analysis of the Korean immigrant adolescents' narratives included in this study. The overarching research question for this research is "How do Korean immigrant adolescents (KIAs) see themselves within the socio-cultural context of the United States across school, home, and communities, and how do they construct their identities and practice literacy in these contexts?" Using these questions, I further focused my research on three sub-questions: 1) How do KIAs narrate themselves and others in short story book club discussions and interviews?; 2) How do KIAs deal with their differences and respond to othering from Americans?; and 3) How do American socio-cultural discourses impose on KIAs and play a part in their processes of identity construction and literacy practices? In this chapter, concentrating on my discussion of the research questions, I will discuss what I understood about the experiences of the KIAs from their narratives.

In the previous chapter, I analyzed the stories of Brian and Jen and how they navigate their identities and cultures in their everyday lives as KIAs in the United States, intersecting across school, home, and community. Like Brian and Jen, immigrant youth as a group are living on the cultural "edge" in which acute tensions between cultures are occurring. They navigate and craft their identities through cultural border crossings. In this vein, the stories of Brian and Jen are the stories of current immigrant youth.

In this chapter, through the lens of Bakhtin (1981, 1984, 1986), Hermans and his

colleagues (Hermans & Kempen, 1993, 1998; Hermans & Dimaggio, 2007), Bhatia and Ram (2001), and Jensen (2011), I will expand the analysis of Brian and Jen's stories. Second, I will provide implications for practice and research based on the discussion of my understandings of this research. Lastly, I will end my discussion with my reflection on what I have learned from this study.

Narratives as Spatialization and Ventriloquation

In Brian and Jen's narrative, I observed several recurring characterizations of KIAs' identity construction. I chose two primary features among these characterizations: 1) narrative as spatialization and 2) narrative as ventriloquation. In the following section, I will elaborate on these two features that answer the overarching research questions and three sub-questions and how they connect to the theoretical frameworks undergirding this research.

Narrative as a Spatialization

I found that the two salient characteristics in the analysis of the narratives of KIAs link to Bakhtin's idea of the dialogic approach to identity. Hence, I begin by discussing the connection between the Bakhtinian notion of the dialogic nature of identity construction and KIAs' identity narrative. As a starting point, I take the following statement to connect theory to empirical evidence. The following statement by Bakhtin provides a fundamental assumption in the research, because it encompasses theories, key concepts, KIAs' identity narratives, and future implications for practice and research. Bakhtin (1981) stated:

> The language as a living socio-ideological entity, as a heteroglossic standpoint lies for the individual consciousness on the borders of the one and the foreign. The word in language is half-foreign. It becomes one's own only when the speaker populates it with his own intention, his own accent, when he masters the word, and adapts it to his own meaningful

and expressive tendency. Prior to this moment of appropriation, the word does not exist in

a neutral and impersonal language (it is not, after all, out of a dictionary that a speaker get

his words!), but rather it exists in other people's mouths, in other peoples' contexts, serving

other people's intentions: it is from there that one must take the word, and make it one's

own. (p. 293-294)

In this statement, Bakhtin drew on the idea that language is created on the borderline

between one and the other, resonating with socio-cultural perspectives on the conception of

language. For Bakhtin, language becomes constructs achieved by socio-cultural engagement

between an individual and collective others. In this way, the role of others and the socio-cultural

contexts that one lives with is significant to one's identity construction. This is because identity

is a product as well as a process achieved by social actions in which both the language of the self

and others is mediated. Hence, it assumes that Bakhtin implied that the construction of identity

involves half-self and half-other. The identity de-centering toward others or that which is foreign,

but not centering toward the self, is not fixed and stable. Rather, the identity is flexible, situated,

and, in turn, multi-voiced as presented by what "tone," "accent," or "intention" the speaker

chooses in a given situation.

Herman and his colleagues (Hermans & Kempen, 1993, 1998; Hermans & Dimaggio,

2007) conceptualized the decentralized self as espoused by the works of Bakhtin and James.

They explored the spatialized identities: each I-position or "the speaker's personality" driven by

the individual's own intention presented as specific standpoints in a given situation. According to

Hermans and Kempen (1998), an immigrant I-position, too, is continuously constructed and

reconstructed by moving, mixing, and hybridizing multiple I-positions between one's cultural

origins to new home cultures. As such, the self/identity negotiates the heterogeneity and

homogeneity of who the person is. Hence, the dialogic conception of identity construction is not always peaceful but is tension-filled among multiple I-positions or voices including agreement, disagreement, understanding, misunderstanding, opposition, contradiction, questioning, challenging, and contesting.

The narratives of Brian and Jen demonstrated the multiple-positioned identities as products and processes that traced their immigrant journey. For them, learning and living in the United States meant inevitably encountering, engaging in, and adjusting to American cultures. In addition, this is also the process of becoming aware of their racial/ethnic identity that they had hardly considered under the racially/ethnically homogenous Korean culture. In order to adapt themselves to the new American socio-cultural structure, they learned new codes, such as how to interact, think, dress, use English, etc. in an American way. However, what I saw and heard in these members' cases, particularly in the narratives of Brian and Jen, is that these journeys through adaptations or the adjustment process are not linear and do not simply and cleanly transfer from the Korean culture to the American culture. Instead, these processes are complex and multi-dimensional; they are full of constant negotiation and re-negotiation occurring across the borderlines between the Korean and American cultures.

For instance, Brian was a so-called "too Americanized" boy among the book club's Korean members. In addition to his co-ethnic members, his American friends and teachers perceived him as an "almost" American boy. In school and in the American community, his ways of acting and speaking were not very different from his American friends. Brian was accepted into the dominant circle. However, he was separated from Korean circles as much as he was enveloped in the American ones. By contrast, in a certain situation, such as in his home or in the Korean community, he took a "Korean" position, although he still did not reject his

American identity. However, when compared to his younger sister who did not maintain her Korean heritage, Brian assessed his ethnic identity as more Korean than his younger sister's.

Like Brian who situationally shifted his positions from one to another somewhere in the landscape of a Korean-American, Jen, too, demonstrated her multi-positioned identities that frequently moved, mixed, and hybridized according to the contexts and interactions she faced. In particular, Jen explicitly presented a multiplicity of identities when she faced tension. For example, when Jen argued with Lena in regard to the relationship between parents and children, Jen first positioned herself in a "too-ethnic centered" viewpoint but changed it to the position of an immigrant "Korean-American" shortly after Lena reminded Jen that they shared similar experiences as immigrant students living in the United States.

According to the model of acculturation (Berry, 1997), Jen was an immigrant girl separated from the dominant culture. However, I doubted if Jen's identity could be fixed only in the category of separation. In her narratives, I could hear that Jen almost always navigated her position as a Korean American immigrant in the landscape of life among multi-positions. Although Jen seemed to be primarily in a state of separation, she, in fact, took the role of assimilated speaker engaged in positioning herself in the dominant culture. This role assumption was manifested when she talked about her wish to have a global job, such as one with the UN or UNESCO. Jen was already well aware that fluent white English and middle-class cultural competency, as codes of the dominant American culture, usually have more power than her Korean language and culture. In this situation, Jen was separated from her American peers; however, she did not stop making efforts to blend in with the dominant groups. Studying hard and thereby gaining attention from others in school was the strategy Jen chose to be a part of the dominant groups.

Jen's voices and positions were situationally shifted, negotiated, or hybridized in the middle space where the power balance between the American and Korean cultures is unequal. As such, Jen's multiple identities could not be explained in the power-neutral concept of acculturation. Instead, Jen's multiple-voices or positions demonstrated the dialogical self, what Hermans and Kempen (1993) referred to as a self that keeps creating a dialogical space. The heterogenic I-positions or voices are consistently alive within the self but do not maintain a coherent sense of self, although one position could temporally dominate the other in the space of self. This is the reason that Jen's identity cannot be lumped into one category of assimilation or separation. Accordingly, as pointed out in Bhatia (2002), the power-blinded ideology of the acculturation process in which powers of the dominant culture and the ethnic minority culture are equally considered should be reconceptualized. In this manner, the labels of "ABC" or "FOB" reflecting universal and dichotomized views on immigrants' identity formation are contested and criticized because those binary perspectives do not work for understanding the complexity of KIAs' identity narratives as spatialization.

Narrative as a Ventriloquation

On the basis of Bakhtin's theory, the second characteristic of KIAs' identity construction is ventriloquation. I found that Bakhtin's term, ventriloquation, clearly describes KIAs' socio-cultural negotiation between themselves and their culture, as well as between KIAs and social discourse. Literally, ventriloquation is a specific approach to voicing in which the speaker assumes "the speaker's personality" through the other's voice. However, Bakhtin employed the term as a metaphor to describe the primary feature of language as socio-cultural constructs. For Bakhtin, ventriloquation is a metaphor for emphasizing the doubling, hybridizing, and ambiguity of language resulting from a dialogue between the individual and collective others. By using the

ventriloquation metaphor, Hermans (2001) re-accentuated the meaning of ventriloquation to investigate how individual and collective voices are related to one another and how culture as collective voices exists in the individual mind. Furthermore, Wortham (2001) attended to the ventriloquation metaphor to highlight the individual uniqueness embedded in identity or language as socio-cultural constructs (Wortham, 2001).

In accordance with the notions of ventriloquation, I understood KIAs' identity narratives were filled with the doubling and ambiguity of multiple voices, positions, and perspectives. Most importantly, I understood their ambiguity of identity, driven by their cultural duality between the American and Korean cultures, did not just end in confusion and struggle. Rather, what I observed and heard from the dynamics of these KIAs' narratives was that each member was "becoming" through a dialogue and negotiation filled with uncertainty and striving. Each KIA member was speaking with his or her own voice, while simultaneously orchestrating a story about adjusting to a new home in America.

If we examine Brian and Jen's stories only on the surface, we might think that Brian is a typical Asian boy who is striving to assimilate himself to the dominant group in the United States. Like some members of the Korean community, therefore, we might oversimplify by identifying Brian as a "too-Americanized" Korean adolescent. In a similar way, we might also consider Jen a typical Asian girl who struggles to be in the dominant group. Because of her "too-ethnic" characteristics signified by the indices of her limited English and American cultural competency, we might simply conclude that Jen was separated from the dominant culture. However, if we carefully listen to both Brian and Jen's ventriloquated narratives, under the surfaces of their stories of assimilation to or separation from the acculturation categorization, we understand that both Brian and Jen are endeavoring to speak out in their own voices.

Ventriloquation: identity and culture. On one hand, the voices of Brian and Jen were ventriloquated by the individual voice and the voices of collective others. The cultural hybridization of Brian and Jen proved that culture did not always exist outside an individual. Instead, culture also exists collectively inside an individual. The conception of a multiplicity of I-positions demonstrates that the site at which identity is examined should not only be in the center of the self but also on the periphery at the point where the self encounters others. As such, the socio-cultural concept of identity echoes Bakhtin's idea that the self cannot be explained by only examining the self, itself. Rather, the self should always be explained in relation to the other as a "half-self." So, Bakhtin called for our attention to the virtue of the other for identity formation, because the self is construed by the other, half-foreign. The metaphor of ventriloquating connotes the doubling and ambiguity of voices from the self and the other.

Like the dialogic approach to identity, there has been an alternative view on culture. In the traditional sense, the concept of culture was an essential and static entity. In this view, researchers are concerned with what differences exist between one and another culture. However, researchers from the dialogic perspective have been more interested in culture as collective voices, as dialogic hybridity. From the socio-cultural perspective on identity, it is significant to understand the conception of identity in relation to the conception of culture. That is because, as Bakhtin (1981) stressed, every one engaging in dialogue with interlocutors comes from a specific culture. Accordingly, it is hard to investigate one's identity without considering the culture. Then, the questions are raised: "How does culture contribute to identity? And, how does individual identity contribute to culture?"

In dialogical self theory, Hermans (2003) attempted to explain that the dialogic approach reconciles the dichotomization between the self/identity as the individual and the culture as the

collective. In other words, for Hermans, culture was not only the entity existing outside the self but also the entity existing within the self collectively. Thus, the dialogic approach to identity and culture opened to a possible theory of identity as cultural hybridity. Namely, culture is not internally homogenous and externally distinctive. In contrast, culture is composed of collective voices so that the individual can select and omit some of them according to his or her own intention. This view resonated with the notion that culture is not a static "container" but a "leaky" one – i.e., the boundaries are permeable (Alvermann, 2001, p. 678). What both theories of culture attempt to point out is that culture is defined as a product (e.g., being) and, at the same time, as a process (e.g., doing) that members share.

The narratives of Brian and Jen demonstrated that culture is shifted, negotiated, and created, although with a certain coherence, as a shared meaning in the culture remaining among members. So, their narratives were ventriloquating the voice of the individual and the voices of collective others. Both Brian and Jen were acting as *cultural workers*, contributing to sharing the culture as a product and simultaneously creating novel cultures by hybridizing the Korean and American cultures. Like their language, Korean-English, a hybridizing of Korean and English based on his or her own recipe, they narrated their own stories of KIAs in the United States.

However, it is noteworthy that the process of cultural hybridization was not always peaceful and comfortable for them. The cultural duality of Brian and Jen rendered them feeling ambiguous about their identities, particularly when they encountered conflicts and cultural tensions between the Korean and American cultures. Accordingly to Hermans and Dimaggio (2007), frequently facing new cultures and otherness in globalization engenders some level of anxiety for the individual. The process of the cultural negotiating of KIAs indispensably entails

some level of anxiety and confusion derived from the ambiguity among multiple identities and cultural hybridization.

For instance, both Brian and Jen often spoke about their insufficient feelings stemming from the cultural ambiguity of their immigrant identity by saying, "I am not 100 percent Korean or American." In this remark, what stood out for me was that both Brian and Jen wanted their identities and culture to be fixed and to make clear where their identities and culture were situated. In other words, they wanted to be positioned in either the Korean or American cultures, which seemed to be a most unrealistic aspiration for them living within both cultures as immigrant adolescents. Obviously, the traditional ideology grounded in the Cartesian binary viewpoint of "the illusion of culture as essence" was still persistent for KIA discourse. In so doing, the dichotomy ideology of the concept of culture and identity denied KIAs the idea that they could consider their cultural hybridism as benefits. Also, they came to overlook the likelihood that they understood both cultures and could engender completely innovative voices as ventriloquations of the Korean and American cultures in their own ways through cultural negotiations of these two cultures.

Taken together, I understood that Brian and Jen's identities were "situationally shifting," culturally negotiating between two cultures. That is a process filled with "variability-stability, discontinuity-continuity, multiplicity-unity" (Bell & Das, 2011, p. 244). And, this also denoted the ventriloquation of their identity and culture, and so, their voices were complicated. Thus, their voices were imbued with duality and ambiguity but not abstractions. So, Brian and Jen's singular tones were kept alive in their stories of KIAs crafting a cultural hybridity. For Brian and Jen, Korean and American cultures were not only outside of their identities, but they were also inside, because these cultures as collective voices kept dialoguing with their identities. These

narratives that I witnessed proved Brian and Jen were crafting a cultural hybridity through the navigation of identity as a collective part of the individual and the culture.

       Ventriloquation: identity and stereotypes. On the other hand, the voices of Brian and Jen were ventriloquations of their own voices through Americans' voices. What I noted in Brian and Jen's stories was that they narrated their stories through the American socio-cultural discourses, the forever foreigner and model minority, imposed on Korean/Asian immigrants. In other words, stereotypes as "negative connotations" have been influencing American society to keep identifying Asians as "the other." As noted earlier, such stereotypes are keenly related to the concept of othering.

       And, for Korean/Asian immigrant adolescents, othering is not just a neutral identification process in which a Korean girl recognizes her difference as an individual unique from an American girl. Rather, it can be considered as a powerful intervening process of identity formation in which members forming the dominant groups distanced them from other ethnic minority groups. In the process, for the sake of differentiation, the dominant members create a characterization of the ethnic minority group as lacking some quality or qualities possessed by the original identity claimant (Fine, 1993). The characterization becomes a firm image of the ethnic groups: a stereotype. As such, othering and stereotypes constructed by dominant group members function to reproduce social inequality by devaluing the subordinate having specific characteristics allegedly deemed to be inferior to the dominant.

       In this vein, for KIAs, their differences were frequently experienced as forms of othering and stereotyping in unpleasant ways. And, they unwittingly internalized the dominant ideology embedded in othering and stereotypes and even reproduced it with their co-ethnic peers. As argued by Schwalbe and Mason-Schrock et al.(1996), for them, racial categorization does not

simply say, "There are different kinds of people," but "There are different kinds of people, all of whom are inferior to us in some way" (p. 139). As such, unusual stereotypes imposed on Korean immigrant students, such as "forever foreigner" and "model minority," lump all KIAs into a homogenous group. That is a dehumanizing process in which the individual uniqueness of KIAs is oversimplified and ignored.

The forever foreigner stereotype. The narratives of Brian and Jen affirmed their experiences of othering enacted with the stereotype of the forever foreigner across their school and communities. American socio-cultural contexts in which they frequently encountered other races and ethnic people caused Brian and Jen to affirm who they are by comparing their sameness and difference with others. Their altered perspectives were manifested when they assumed altered perspectives of their lives. For instance, I found that Brian and Jen could see themselves and others not only through a Korean-centered perspective but also through others' perspectives. In the short story discussions, it was obvious that Brian viewed some topics, such as parent obedience and relationships between parent and children, the adolescent job ethos, and the issue of independence, not only through the lens of an American viewpoint but also through the lens of a Korean one. Jen also negotiated her perspectives to interpret themes of short stories as a way of contrasting and comparing the cultures of Korea and America.

On the other hand, as criticized above, for Brian and Jen, othering worked for the process of affirming their racial/ethnic identity as less powerful than or powerless against that of their counterparts. Thus, I witnessed that they struggled with their differences as disadvantages for their American lives. Assimilation to the dominant culture as a form of oppression was one example. They unwittingly internalized the dominant ideology, and sometimes their voices

tended to resonate with what the dominant group said about them. Furthermore, they imitated and reproduced the dominant ideology of the Cartesian dualism between the self and the other.

For instance, Brian and Jen divided their co-ethnic short story club members into two subgroups: those who are "too-Korean" and those who are "too-American." Brian distanced himself from the other members oriented toward the Korean culture by underscoring his competency with American ideology and cultural knowledge. That was one way that he established his membership in the dominant culture. As the dominant group ascribed Korean/Asian immigrants to being forever foreigners, Brian drew a firm line between the other members and himself. Jen too differentiated Brian and Lena from other members as being "too-Americanized" and herself as oriented toward the Korean culture. Even Jen brought an extremely binary viewpoint as to who belonged to the American circle and who did not. What impressed me, however, as the short story club got underway and members got to know each other and shared their immigrant experiences, the line between Brian and Jen or Brian and other members became blurred and permeable. So, in the last session, I eventually saw quite a large leap. Brian, who in an interview had expressed his uncomfortable feelings toward "too-ethnic" KIAs, accepted Jen and Alex's offers to be "Facebook friends."

Another point that I would make is this: even Brian and Jen had experienced othering and practiced the dominant ideology to some extent. However, the way each member reacted to it was quite different. In one instance, in order to attain membership in the dominant culture, Brian had practiced *defensive othering* (Schwalbe et al., 1996; 2000, Pyke & Dang, 2003), a measure employed by a member of the dominated who seeks his or her membership in the dominant group and attempts to distance himself/herself from the stigma linked to his/her status. In contrast, Jen did not practice defensive othering in the short story club. Rather, she found her

membership in the Korean culture. However, like Brian, she used the dualistic ideology to identify Brian and Lena as "whitewashed" and the rest of the members as "FOB."

It is complicated why the approaches Brian and Jen used to enact/react to othering were quite a bit different. I assumed that the different immigrant situations Brian and Jen faced might have had an impact on their ways of reacting to othering. Brian was from a (typical) Korean American immigrant family in which all family members live together in the United States. Although his family members were reunited after four years of being a wild-geese family, Brian's family was now pursuing American citizenship. In contrast, Jen lived in the United States by herself and was separated from her parents who were living in Korea. Although her family members had temporally lived in the United States, they had always planned on returning to Korea. Indeed, for Jen, home was in two places, Seoul and Georgia. I cannot say that a single Korean immigrant teen, such as a parachute kid or a child from a wild geese family, always finds his or her membership in an ethnic culture. I can say that each separate immigrant situation might affect how KIAs enact/react to their differences and experiences of othering, at least to some degree.

The model minority stereotype. I concur with Jensen's (2011) argument from a post-colonialist standpoint that othering and stereotypes are useful concepts for delving into immigrant identity construction. KIAs' identity construction in the United States is situated within a specific American socio-cultural context. In that context, the model minority images of Asian/Korean immigrant youth as academically gifted students, math geeks, violin players, and sometimes, nerds have a profound impact on the KIAs' identity. Regardless of what the original intention was in regard to the use of "the model minority" discourse, it is hard to disagree with the idea that those "model" images have partly contributed to positively changing what Asians

are like in the United States. However, if we consider how the voice of a stereotype might restrict and twist one's way of dialogue with oneself, the other, and the world, we cannot overlook how the model minority stereotype negatively functions in the experiences of KIAs.

In analyzing the narratives of Brian and Jen, I acknowledged how the model minority stereotype complicates their experiences. First of all, a question was raised as I listened to Brian and Jen's narratives. And, then, I doubted and questioned: "Does the voice of the model minority come solely from the dominant culture so that KIAs were always suppressed by the dominant voice?" What I discovered was that, for KIAs, the model minority label was doubled by the integrated voices of the dominant American culture and the Korean culture, which highly values education and pushes children to attain high academic achievement. Echoing Zhou and Kim (2006), it was apparent that the model minority stereotype had combined with the traditional Asian culture of high expectations for educational achievement and immigrants' pursuits of upward social mobility. What I would add is that the ways each student, Brian and Jen, reacted to the model minority discourse were heterogeneous.

As the oldest son in a Korean immigrant family whose members had moved to America for a better education, Brian was under pressure to "represent his family." For upward social mobility, Brian made efforts to attain excellent grades and admission to a prestige university. However, Brian enacted the model minority discourse in his own way. He acknowledged what he really wanted to be/do and which university would be best for his future job and success. As a result, he did not merely follow the voices of the "model minority stereotype" by applying to an Ivy League university, spending all his time studying, and playing the violin. Instead, Brian was determined to go to a well known university in the mid-west, enjoy his spare time hanging out with his American friends, play electric guitar in a band, and work at a part-time job.

Jen's story also showed how she had crafted her hybridized identity by reacting to the model minority discourse in her own way. On one hand, Jen was a typical case of how a KIA was submissive to the model minority stereotype. She did her best to gain straight "As" on her report card, spending her entire time studying and doing homework and playing clarinet in the school band. As a result, her classmates and teachers perceived her to be "a nerd." On the other hand, after one year of being isolated at school, she was determined to assimilate to what American students did, which was to project herself by retaining an emphasis on study. While discarding her "too-Korean" images, such as being a-shy-silent-submissive Korean girl, Jen tried to actively involve herself in class.

Accordingly, for Jen, the model minority discourse affected who she was in a complicated way. Although she projected herself like the American students, her other plan seemed to include portraying herself as "too Korean" and to embody the hard working, academically gifted traits that Americans ascribed to her and the model minority. I assumed that Jen probably chose some collective voices of the model minority discourse according to her plan. In other words, she reinforced the model minority discourse as well as enacted it by collectively choosing the voice with which she wanted to dialogue.

Taken together, Brian and Jen as KIAs were ventriloquating their identities/cultures through two peculiar stereotypes, the forever foreigner and the model minority. As social actors, however, they did not merely tailor themselves to what the stereotype demanded. Instead, they reinforced it as well as reinvented it in their heterogeneous ways as they engaged themselves in dialogue with the American socio-cultural discourse.

Implications for Research and Practice

In closing my discussion, I addressed some implications for future research and practice on the basis of what I have learned from this research. Focusing on some crucial issues relevant to adolescent identity and literacy studies, I attempted to look back at what I have learned from this research and look ahead to what future research and practice can do.

Implications for Research

Crafting immigrant identity across borders.

What I discovered from this research was that the ways Korean/Asian immigrant adolescents crafted their identities were perplexing and dynamic, because they not only occurred across cultures but also across linguistic and geographical borders. Most of all, KIAs'/Asian immigrant adolescents' experiences of immigration and globalization profoundly impacted their experiences in the United States.

First, as Lee and Zhou (2004) and Fu and Graff (2009) noted, despite their diverse origins, Asian immigrant students shared some commonalities relevant to their transnational cultural/identity practices. As students from non-western immigrant families, these groups of students tended to commit themselves to practicing their heritage culture, while simultaneously seeking to learn the American culture. Accordingly, those students often faced cultural conflicts and struggles derived from the large cultural gap between their heritage and their new home culture, e.g., family obligations and high parental expectations for educational and occupational achievement. The business and pressures they had to cope with were different than what most mainstream students faced in their everyday lives. Additionally, the ways each member responded to those difficulties varied depending on the individual student's socio-cultural contexts.

In particular, I witnessed how different their levels of pressure and ways of responding were when it came to "representing family." One example was how each member was positioned in his or her role in the family structure. Brian, as the oldest son, actively adjusted to the mainstream culture, because he positioned himself as one who was responsible for "representing family" more so than what Jen, as a second daughter, did. Thus, future research should pay more attention to the diverse contexts each immigrant student faces, such as gender, age, and other factors, in order to bring a more scrutinized view to investigating immigrant students' identity crafting.

Second, I observed that globalization also crucially impacted the experiences of Korean/Asian immigrant adolescents' identities/cultures. Growing digital technology and Internet use and subsequent increasing interactions with diverse cultures caused Korean/Asian immigrant adolescents to accelerate their crafting of hybrid identities/cultures. Hence, in the vanguard as cultural brokers, Korean/Asian immigrant adolescents negotiated two or more distinct norms and expectations in their ways of living in the juncture across culture, linguistic, and geographic borders. As reported in Lam and Rosario-Ramos (2009) and Yi, Y.(2008), digital mediums have become major tools and avenues for those from diverse immigrant origins to maintain and develop relations with people, media, and events across borderlines. Not only the literacy practices of Korean/Asian immigrant adolescents but also those of other (immigrant) adolescents might be affected by this globalized cultural interconnection.

As such, future research should concern itself with digital networks as crucial loci in which immigrant adolescents conduct their diasporic practices as they navigate, hedge, negotiate, and craft their hybrid identities and cultures between their heritage and new home resources. In addition, it is noteworthy that their practices of negotiating identities and cultures between their

heritage and new home resources were not neutral but political with existing power differences heavily involved. This was not a neutral identity shuttling between two or four points—e.g., assimilation, separation, integration, and marginalization (Berry, 1997) or "too-Americanized" and "too-ethnic." Rather, it was a continuous negotiation and navigation across identity landscapes requiring a keen awareness of the power differences between identities/cultures. Thus, future researchers should not only be concerned with the dynamics of identities and culture through the use of multimodal literacy practices occurring in cyberspace, but they should also ponder the power negotiations inherently embedded in their literacy practices. Moreover, the researchers need to consistently ask about those power interplays in the process of immigrant identity and literacy.

Narrative representing and interacting identities. In this research, what I found was that narratives were useful for observing how Korean/Asian immigrant adolescents mapped their dynamic trajectories of identity/culture negotiation. As noted in earlier chapters, I used narrative as a window through which I examined KIAs' representational identities as well as their interactional identities. In interview and short story group discussions, each member shared his or her experiences and self-concepts with actual/ imaginary audiences, e.g., other literature club members, the facilitator, and the researcher. Through narrating stories to/with others, each member was subjected to authoring his or her own story by hedging, navigating, negotiating, and crafting identities: that is, identity mapping somewhere in between two cultures.

Therefore, future research should look closely into "small stories" as identities talk-in-action in finding a linkage with the "big story" (Bamberg, 2004). In this way, in relation to immigrant identity crafting, it should also be considered that narrative occurs in more varied

contexts in which actual/imaginary interactions occur and diverse audiences take part, such as not only the dominant Americans but also the racially/ethnically different and co-ethnic others.

Implications for Practice

Why does listening to adolescent voices matter to educators— e.g., teachers, educators, and policy makers? An adolescent literacy scholar, Alvermann (2009), asserted the following:

> Listening to and observing youth as they communicate their familiarity with multiple kinds of texts across space, place, and time can provide valuable insights into how to approach both instruction and research — insights that might otherwise be lost or taken for granted in the rush to categorize literacy practices as either in-school or out-of-school, adolescents as either struggling or competent, and thereby either worthy of our attention or not. (p. 25)

This statement alerts educators who are less likely to closely consider diverse voices from adolescents in their preparation for teaching and creating educational policy. In any educational service, a fundamental mindset for educators might be attentiveness to customers' voices and knowing who they are, what they want, and how we can help them. Furthermore, if the customers are immigrant students from different cultures, the significance for educators to listen to those voices is amplified.

To be sure, we should cherish existing school events with regard to implementing the spirit of celebrating diversity as the first efforts for respecting immigrant students from different cultures, including such things as ethnic food potlucks and exhibitions of cultural artifacts. However, scholars (Delpit, 2006; Ladson-Billing & Tate IV, 1995; Nieto, 2010) have criticized those examples for making students' diversity appear trivial and preventing students, teachers, and educators from seeking to examine institutional inequality. That is because, unless we carefully listen to immigrant students' voices and intervene in the school curriculum and

instruction centered on mainstream cultures, we pretend to be blind to the educational

possibilities of immigrant students and the relevant educational inequality. For example, if an

English teacher carefully listened to the KIA narratives generated in the book club I conducted

and saw how Asian American stories prompted those students to speak up, he or she might

consider reading and discussing Korean/Asian short stories in an English literature class for his

or her KIAs or other Asian immigrant students.

Second, this statement echoed what I understood about this research: that educators

should not oversimplify and overgeneralize the kind of student an immigrant adolescent is and so

avoid labeling the student with a stereotype or categorization. In an effort to respect a student as

a human being, it is imperative for educators to use more attentive "eyes" to understand an

individual's uniqueness. In an interview with a book club member, Lena, I was impressed to hear

her voice saying, "It would be great that others see me not as an Asian or a Korean but as simply

Lena, me." I am not saying that racial/ethnic categorization is completely useless at all. I am

saying that pedagogues should not overlook the pitfalls of categorizations and fail to see the

possibilities each student has. Dehumanization by categorizing undermines the fundamental

mindset of education that enhances the possibilities of all learners (Duncan-Andrade & Morrell,

2008; Shor, 1996).

In addition, as reported earlier, KIAs have struggled with some of the stereotypes

imposed on them. For minority students, stereotyping as a form of othering is problematic,

because it reproduces a Cartesian binary standpoint in which the self and others are demarcated.

By so doing, immigrant students are subject to internalizing a binary perspective and using it to

view others (Pyke & Dang, 2003). In the sense of the dialogical notion of identity construction,

we are all entities continuously constructed by responding to others and worlds. Our fresh

learning, insights, and becoming can be achieved through ongoing dialogue with others. Consequently, denying others through a binary perspective prevents our becoming and potential to employ an innovative perspective.

Lastly, for immigrant students, narrative is a valuable literacy practice for seeing them in relation to others. In the co-ethnic short story club, I saw that KIAs took time to ponder who they were in the course of externalizing, sharing, and reflecting on their immigrant experiences. As Kaufka (2009) asserted, through the process of narrative, immigrant students can connect to their inner selves and turn some emotions caused by unpleasant experiences of (oppressive) othering inside out. Accordingly, those processes can empower individuals by giving them "the tools, trust and power to facilitate their own healing on their own terms" (p. 137). Most importantly, as negotiating diverse voices to tell their stories, immigrant students can complicate a simplistic binary point of view. Narratives help us author our own stories by listening to the voices exsiting inside and outside us, responding to those diverse voices, negotiating, and consistantly helping us make sense of ourselves, others, and worlds as contingent on the socio-cultural contexts in which we live.

Reflection on My Study

I agree with the notion that as educators, one of our responsibilities is to continue to educate ourselves in order to provide the best education possible. I believe that this study served as a good opportunity to educate me by enlightening, reaffirming, and challenging many of my beliefs. In particular, through listening to six students' narratives in interviews and discussions, as a learner and researcher, I had a valuable opportunity to ponder what "being-in; being-for; being-with" the world of the other (Moustakes, 1995, cited in Patton, 2002, p. 8) means for me as a qualitative researcher.

First, through this study, as a researcher I could experience the experiences of Korean immigrant adolescents. I not only talked with them in the Sunday book club discussion and interview, but I also conversed with them in a car as well as a restaurant. What I have learned was that immersing myself in their worlds was not easy. I had to demonstrate how I respected their experiences and endeavored to open myself to them in order to listen to their experiences. This study taught me the way and mindsets of how to absorb myself as a qualitative researcher in others' worlds. Honestly, however, despite my efforts directed toward "being in" the world of Brian, Jen, Lena, Chloe, Alex and Whe, I could not be invited by all of them into their worlds. For example, Brian, Jen, and Lena were willing to share their experiences with me, but Chloe, Alex, and Whe were not. In particular, I bonded with Jen and as a result, I could encourage and support her to externalize and reflect on her experiences. In so doing, I experienced what "being-for" the worlds of Jen. By taking a stand supporting her, I could hear her own voices with reference to her struggles, frustration, and problems.

Secondly, this study provided me with an opportunity to ponder what "being with" the world of others means to me. As a Korean doctoral student who has had the lived-experience of an immigrant life in the United States, throughout this study, I had to grapple with the issue of openness to differences from others as a mindset for a learner who is/wants to be "becoming." The narratives of each member taught me that the mindset of openness could be acquired through education. During this study, I affirmed the idea that if one (i.e., not only mainstream but also immigrant students) has a mindset validating and valuing differences from others, that person enhances his or her learning and becoming. To be sure, doing so might not be easy but challenging because we are required to be more flexible to deal with unfamiliarity drawn from the other's difference. As the stories of Jen and Brian let us know, despite the difficulties, we

should immerse us in the worlds of others because we know there may be no "becoming" unless we continuously make our efforts to encounter and learn from others.

Overall, throughout the entire course of this study, I have learned ways of being in/for/with world of others, along with many relevant concepts. And, I believe that those educational experiences are crucial in that they will help me in becoming an educator and a researcher, which in turn, will help my future students become better learners in their education and lives.

Summary

In this chapter, through the lenses of Bakhtin (1981, 1986), Herman and Kempen (1993, 1998), Bhatia and Ram (2001), and Jensen (2011), I attempted to discuss the identity and literacy of KIAs. In particular, the narratives of KIAs were a primary tool through which I explored the process of identity construction and literacy practices. In order to answer the overarching research question and three sub-questions, I used two metaphors: Narrative as spatialization and ventriloquation in addressing relationships among identity, literacy, and narrative across school, home, and community. In addition, I discussed some key implications of my understanding and discussion in this study for future research and practice. And lastly, I reflected on this study.

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APPENDIX A

Consent Forms

Parental Consent Form

I _____, as parent or legal guardian of

_____, agree to let him/her take part in a research study

titled "*The Identity and Culture of Korean American Adolescents: Literacy Practices in a*

Literature Club", which is being conducted by Hye-Young Park, Department of Language and

Literacy Education, (706-542-2718) under the direction of Dr. Bob Fecho, Department of

Language and Literacy Education, University of Georgia, (706-542-2718). I understand that my

child's participation is voluntary; he/she can stop taking part at any time without giving any

reason and without penalty. I can ask to have information related to my child returned to me,

removed from the research records, or destroyed.

The purpose of this study is to learn how Korean American Adolescents negotiate their culture

with American culture in a literature club through literacy practices and from these experiences

how their identities shape and are shaped by those literacy practices. Information will be

gathered through interviews and through being observed in the literature club. Because of your

child's participation, he/she may gain knowledge about his or her reading, discussing, and

writing to understand American short stories in English.

If I decide to allow my child to take part in this study, I understand that my child will be asked to do the following:

1. Participate in at least 3 audio-taped interviews about his/her experience in the U.S. and in the literature club.

2. Write and submit 10 reflections.

3. Submit samples of school and personal writings.

4. Read and comment on the accuracy of information in the interviews and findings.

5. Be audio-taped, photographed and/or videotaped.

6. Be observed and video-recorded in a literature club setting.

No risk, discomforts or stresses are expected from my child's participation in the study. His/her name will not be used in any papers that the researcher writes or publishes about this research. Any information that is obtained in connection with this study and that can be identified with him/her will remain confidential unless required by law. All information will be kept secure, and access to the records will be limited to the researcher.

If I want my child to stop participation in this project, I am free to do so at any time. He/she can also choose not to answer questions that he/she does not want to answer.

The researcher will answer any further questions about the research, now or during the course of the project, and can be reached by telephone at 706-340-8063.

Hye-Young Park

_____

Researcher's Signature

Telephone: 706-340-8063

Email: ph716@uga.edu

Date:_____

My signature below indicates that the researcher has answered all of my questions to my satisfaction and that I am agreeing to allow my child to take part in this research project. I will be given a signed copy of this form for my records.

_____   _____

Signature of Parent or Legal Guardian   Date

_____   _____

Signature of Parent or Legal Guardian   Date

Please sign both copies, keep one and return one to the researcher.

Additional questions or problems regarding your rights as a research participant should be addressed to The Chairperson, Institutional Review Board, University of Georgia, 612 Boyd Graduate Studies Research Center, Athens, Georgia 30602-7411; Telephone (706) 542-3199; E-Mail Address IRB@uga.edu

Minor Assent Form

Dear Participant,

You are invited to participate in my research project titled "*The Identity and Culture of Korean American Adolescents: Literacy Practices in a Literature Club.*" Through this study I hope to investigate how secondary school students experience American short stories in a literature club.

If you decide to be part of this study, information will be gathered through interviews with you and through observing you in a literature club setting. I will ask to meet with you at least three times to talk about your literacy practices, classes, and school. I will ask you to keep a journal on your responses to short stories that you will read in a literature club.

Your participation in this study will not affect your grades in school. I will not use your name on any papers that I write or publish about this research. However, because of your participation you may improve your progress in your regular school work.

If you want to stop participating in this project, you are free to do so at any time. You can also choose not to answer any questions that you don't want to answer.

The researcher will answer any further questions about the research, now or during the course of the project, and can be reached by telephone at: 706-340-8063

Hye-Young Park

_____

Researcher's Signature

Telephone: 706-340-8063

Email: ph716@uga.edu

Date: _____

My signature below indicates that the researcher has answered all of my questions to my

satisfaction and that I am agreeing to allow my child to take part in this research project. I

will be given a signed copy of this form for my records.

_____   _____

Signature of Parent or Legal Guardian   Date

Please sign both copies, keep one and return one to the researcher.

Additional questions or problems regarding your rights as a research participant should be addressed to The

Chairperson, Institutional Review Board, University of Georgia, 612 Boyd Graduate Studies Research Center,

Athens, Georgia 30602-7411; Telephone (706) 542-3199; E-Mail Address IRB@uga.edu

Consent Form (for participants 18 or over)

I give my consent to participate in the research study titled "*The Identity and Culture of Korean American Adolescents: Literacy Practices in a Literature Club*" that is being conducted by Hye-Young Park, Department of Language & Literacy Education, University of Georgia, 706-340-8063**. This participation is entirely voluntary; I can withdraw my consent at any time without penalty and have the results of the participation, to the extent that it can be identified as me, returned to me, removed from the records, or destroyed.**

The following points have been explained to me:

1) The reason for the research is that it will give the researcher and other educators a better understanding of how Korean American adolescents experience American short stories in a literature club in American schools.

2) The benefits I might expect are an improved ability in reading, discussing, and writing about American short stories using English language skills.

3) I understand that the study will take place from January 2011 until May 2011.

4) If I agree to participate in the study, I agree that I will, once a week, write one short personal story related to short stories that you will read in a literature club. This writing will take place on my time and should take no more that 30 minutes per week.

5) I also agree to do all of the following: (1) take part in three interviews conducted by Hye-Young Park (2) and allow Hye-Young Park to observe and video-tape me as I participate in a literature club discussion. Participation in the interviews will not be more than 1 hour a month and will occur at a place that I am comfortable with. The interviews will be audio-taped.

6) I agree to share the products of school assignments and personal writings with Hye-Young Park.

7) I agree to join in literature club sessions from January 2011 until May 2011 and help the researcher make clear the meaning of her understanding of the research data.

8) No risks to the participants are foreseen, except the minimal risk sometimes associated with revealing personal information through writing and speaking.

9) The researcher will answer any further questions about the research now or during the course of the project and can be reached by telephone (706-340-8063) and Email (ph716@uga.edu)

10) In no way will these activities affect, either positively or negatively, grading in my courses. If I choose not to be part of this study, that choice will also not affect my grade either positively or negatively. Participation in this study will not release me from any course or school requirements.

FINAL AGREEMENT:

_____

Student's Name (Please Print)

Please check:

_____ I AGREE TO PARTICIPATE IN THE RESEARCH STUDY.

_____I DO NOT AGREE TO PARTICIPATE IN THE RESEARCH STUDY.

My signature below indicates that the researchers have answered all of my questions to my satisfaction and that I give my consent to participate in this study. In addition, I have been given a copy of this form

_____   _____

Signature of Researcher   Date   Signature of Participant   Date

---

Additional questions or problems regarding your child's rights as a research participant should be addressed

to The Chairperson, Institutional Review Board, University of Georgia, 612 Boyd Graduate Studies Research

Center, Athens, Georgia 30602-7411; Telephone (706) 542-3199; Email Address IRB@uga.edu

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APPENDIX B

Interview Guide

Identity, Culture, and Literacy Practices of Korean immigrant adolescents in the U.S.

Background/Context

1. Tell me about your family, friends, neighborhood, and communities you are involved in.

2. Tell me about why you came to the U.S.

3. Describe yourself as a reader, writer, and learner in school.

School/Education

4. Compare your school, teacher, and peers to those in Korea.

5. Tell me about some of your adjustments to school.

6. Describe your daily life in school.

7. Tell me about classes you enjoy. Tell me about one of your least favorite classes.

8. Tell me about some of the school-related activities in which you are involved (e.g. clubs)

9. Tell me about English and Language Arts class. Compare it to what you did in Korea.

10. Tell me about your memorable experiences in school.

11. Tell me about a time when you had a difficulty in school. How did you deal with the difficulty?

Literacy practices and book club activities

12. How much time do you spend reading and writing?

13. Tell me about what kind of book you like or which is your least favorite.

14. Tell me about your daily routine out of school during the week and on weekends.

15. Tell me about the extra activities in which you are involved (e.g. band or sports team).

Culture

16. Tell me about what Korean culture means for you.

17. Compare the U.S. culture to Korean culture.

18. Tell me about your connection to Korean culture in the U.S.

19. Tell me about when your Korean culture conflict with American culture.

20. Can you describe your most memorable experiences as immigrants in regard to culture (e.g.

Korean culture/American culture)?

APPENDIX C

Writing Samples

1. Brian's writing sample

College Admissions Process: A Vast Obstacle to the Acquisition of True Scholarship

The role of scholarship in American society today is extremely vital and significant. The people who successfully thrive as great scholars are generally widely influential and active members of the society. To become highly respected in the field of scholarship, one must engage in numerous scholastic opportunities and a social life that are conducive to an academic acceleration. Most people pursue this scholarly environment by applying to be admitted to an educational institution where outstanding academic curriculum and opportunities are offered. Logically, it is broadly agreed that the chances of success as a scholar are greater at more respected and prestigious colleges. To be admitted to a highly selective college, a student must present an impressive transcript and high standardized test scores. However, the student's abilities to apply the facts and history to real life, or to develop on ideas and connect them with one another to improve it are not evaluated or included in the application. Despite the fact that these do not affect one's chances of admission to a college, these abilities have tremendous potentials to better the world. The college admissions process, which overemphasizes quantitative evaluation, fails to acknowledge the entire scope of student achievement and abilities, and subsequently encourages students to focus on superficial aspects of education rather than genuine learning and understanding of subject fields.

The most prevailing college admissions process includes the following: high school Grade Point Average (GPA), Scholastic Aptitude Test (SAT) scores, extracurricular activities, and personal essays. The most heavily valued out of these are the high school GPA and the SAT scores. It is not incorrect to say that the student's extracurricular activities or the personal essays will not be looked at with serious consideration if a student lacked an impressive GPA or SAT scores. This forces America's high school students to focus their attention solely on their grades. In addition, high schools in America tend to award the students with the highest GPA and SAT score at the end of the school year while disregarding the students with exceptionally creative minds or cognitive intellects. Also, the universities in America are ranked nationally by numerous surveying organizations. The interesting reality about these rankings is the fact that the university's ranking is proportional to the average GPA and SAT scores of the freshmen class. For example, if a student has a GPA and SAT scores that belonged to the top 10% of the students nationwide, he/she will most likely apply to and be admitted to a top 10% university in the nation. Based on these facts, one can conclude that the college admissions process in America today clearly overemphasizes quantitative evaluation.

Many people hope to become a well-educated scholar who works to improve the world. If a person wants to achieve this, he/she must have a solid and highly prestigious education and opportunities. Attending an excellent college or university is considered tremendously conducive to achieving this. Therefore many people hope to go to a good college because they ultimately wish to become a respectable and laudable person, and they recognize the idea that the road to a desirable scholastic life generally starts with being admitted to a good college. Then, getting admitted to a good college is logically extremely important. More specifically, students' preparation for college in their high school career demonstrates significant importance.

Consequently, if a person wants to live an enviable scholastic life in this modern American society, he/she must strive to acquire outstanding GPA and SAT scores.

The college admissions process in America forces countless high school students to solely focus on their grades and test scores, and it is likely that this will compel students to work diligently and industriously to complete their assignments and score well on their tests. Although these tasks could facilitate students' intellectual acceleration, there are some notable flaws. First, students are strongly compelled to become brainwashed by their teachers; their main motive is to get good grades, and suggesting ideas contrary to their teacher's philosophy or opinions prevents them from this. The effects of this could transform students into timid and unconfident people. Second, college admissions process chooses which school subjects students must study for. Students have no choice but to master these pre-chosen subjects in order to get admitted to a college. There are many cases in which students reluctantly accept their classes and express pessimistic attitudes. Nevertheless, they spend countless number of hours learning these subjects. Unfortunately, these students could spend these wasted hours on subjects or topics they have patently greater interest in. Students are not likely to explore their real interests or develop creativity with this education. Third, college admissions process does not highly encourage mature sentiments or evolved philosophy. Every student mentally mature and experience changes in their intellectual capabilities during his/her adolescent. This tremendous development in one's life without a doubt defines his/her capabilities and much more. However, none of the requirements for college has any remarkable relevance to this, therefore virtually providing no opportunities for students to demonstrate their cognitive abilities. In conclusion, many students feel obligated to: be timid and the opposite of opinionated, study subjects they are not interested

in, and ignore and neglect their true intellectual inner thoughts. The outcomes of America's education today include such regrettable traits.

Then, what do students must strive to be instead of what America's college admissions process forces them to be? The best description of the genuine education and scholar was presented by a globally-recognized American lecturer Ralph Waldo Emerson. In his lectures, he introduces traits of a real scholar that are contrary to what the college admissions process in America compel students to embrace. In "*The American Scholar*," Ralph Waldo Emerson stated "The soul active sees absolute truth; and utters truth, or creates. In this action, it is genius; not the privilege of here and there a favorite, but the sound estate of every man." This highly promotes "seeing absolute truth" and indirectly insinuates that the inactive soul is not opinionated and would unconsciously see the world the way he/she was taught to by others. According to Emerson, avoiding to express unconventional thoughts and agreeing with the teachers regardless of one's personal opinion is not a trait of a real scholar. This, Emerson had implied was an aspect of genuine learning. Emerson, in *The American Scholar,* asserted that "Man hopes" and "Genius creates." The college admissions process' policy that does not encourage high school students to freely pursue their own interests but to take required classes prevents development of creativity. It is much more likely that students will apply what they learn in class to reality and further develop on the ideas to improve it or create new principles or notions if they were studying subjects that they had interest in. This supports the widely-agreed idea that the understanding of subject fields becomes extremely easy if the subject fields appeal to students. Also, in *The Divinity School Address*, Emerson insists that "the sentiment of virtue on the heart... Through it, the soul first knows itself. It corrects the capital mistake of the infant man, who seeks to be great by following the great, and hopes to derive advantages from another, by showing the fountain of

all good to be in himself." He believed that what makes a person profoundly a great scholar are the true sentiments and philosophies that are clearly distinct from all earthbound objects and thoughts derived from genuine spirituality. Fortunately, many people hope to achieve these qualities. Nevertheless, the college admissions process does not serve as a motivator of this, for they include no kind of evaluation for these qualities. In conclusion, the "true scholar's qualities", or the "genuine learning and the understanding of subject fields" include attributes such as the ability to see the truth and think independently, creativity, and the true sentiments and philosophies. Unfortunately, none of these are encouraged by today's college admissions process, and this could possibly result in production of unimaginative drones.

Ivy League level universities like Harvard, Yale, Princeton, and Stanford educate and produce exceptionally talented and stupendous people every year without fail. It is accurate to say that the students studying at institutions like these are privileged and fortunate. However, are there not the ones that have the potential to do the same great deeds but were not "qualified" to be admitted to these universities? If there are, then are these people not going to be able to spread their wings but become a wasted talent? The problem lies with the defective college admissions process. If this is not improved, drastic consequences might follow as a result. Perhaps, the whole concept of scholarship will eventually become corrupt and American scholars will become like the old European scholars that Emerson described in "The American Scholar". Perhaps, the American society will become filled with wasted talent who never even bothered to share their brilliant thoughts or ideas with the world. Nevertheless, no one has suggested a clear solution for this intricate challenge. American education might need a complete reform, or America might look to an education system in another country for help. Whatever the solution may be, the most

important thing lies within the essential acknowledgement of the problem in the college admissions process in America.

2. Jen's writing sample

<div align="center">Am I a Stranger?</div>

In natural, the mankind feels amity to similarity. People feel amity to the situation, environment, and people that are familiar and similar to them. Contrasts with the case of similarity, people do not always have attractions towards the new. Even for the most adventurous people, they hesitate whether they have to approach to the new situation, environment, and people or not. This phenomenon especially happens when a person goes to a foreign country. It is always difficult for a person to accost to the foreigners who look and talk different. Why is that?

All the animals, especially the mankind are strongly influenced by the surrounding environment. The surrounding environment includes surroundings, cultures, the people, and the habits of oneself and the others. A person tries to adapt to the environment that he or she is presently at but when he or she faces a different environment, he or she hesitates to adapt the environment and even if a person choose to adapt the new environment, he or she sometimes has a hard time accepting the environment. That is, it is difficult for a person to accept and adopt new environment because of one's initial environment. Because of the fact that the person already has been used to one environment that it is hard to perfectly adopt a new environment. In most of the case, when people go to foreign country and face the fact that they have to adopt the new environment somehow, most of the people struggle how to accept the new environment. Among the foreigners that look and talk different, people feel left out from the group and feel

uncomfortable. Even with the most sociable people who easily accept different environments and cultures, they continuously struggle with the complete adaption.

Personally, I have experienced this phenomenon for many times. I went to several countries around the world. Every time I went to foreign countries, I had to adopt the environment of them. It was hard for me to accept those environments and cultures because I was already used to Korean culture. I could not accost to foreigners who had different look and talked with different language. Despite to all the efforts for adapting new environments, I realized the limit of adapting new environments. Because of the different look on my face, I had to suffer from all those eyes staring at me wherever I go such as school, restaurants, and markets. Sometimes I felt like a monkey in a cage at the zoo. I kept asking myself "Why can't I be like others?" and the answer I got as a result was "the cultural difference." Because of the difference between two very different cultures, I could not easily approach to the foreign environment. Thus I sometimes feel like a stranger who came from a different world.

Therefore, for the reasons above, I think the perfect adaption of new environments for the mankind does not exist. Everybody suffers from the difference between the initial environment that he or she is used to and the new environments. In real life, although they cannot achieve complete adaption of new environments, people try hard to at least approach to the point that they get comfortable with the new environments. Today, I try to say "Hello" to as many people I can meet, hoping for reaching that point.