

다른 문화적 배경 속에서 문화 정체성의 형성:

미국 내 한국 조기유학생들의 경험을 중심으로

Cultural identity crafting across different cultures in the U.S.: An ethnographic study of temporary migrant Korean secondary students

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본 연구는 최근 늘어나고 있는 미국 내 한국 조기 유학생들의 삶을 올바르게 조명하고 그들이 미국 생활 속에서 어떻게 한국과 미국의 문화적 차이를 극복해 나가는지를 살펴본다. 또한, 자녀의 영어교육을 위해서 그리고 보다 나은 교육과 문화적 혜택을 위해 선택한 미국의 유학 생활이 어떻게 자녀에게 영향을 미치며, 부모가 자녀의 변화를 어떻게 받아들이는지를 살펴본다. 본 연구는 기존의 연구와 달리, 보다 나은 교육의 혜택을 위해 미국으로 떠난 조기유학생들이 한국과 전혀 다른 미국 문화 속에서 생활하며 공부하는 과정에서 치루는 심리적, 문화적 비용(Psychological, Cultural Cost)을 분석한다.

조기유학을 문화자본(Cultural Capital)을 축적 할 수 있는 기회로, 그리고 보다 나은 교육의 혜택을 받을 것이라는 그들의 기대가 미국 생활 후에는 어떻게 달라졌는지를 살펴 볼 것이다. 그리고 조기유학생들이 각기 다른 환경(집, 학교, 지역사회)에서 느끼는 문화적 충돌 속에서 어떻게 그들이 문화정체성(Cultural Identity)을 형성하고 조율해 나가는지를 살펴본다.

[주제어]: 조기유학, 문화 자본, 문화 정체성, 이중문화 정체성, 청소년 정체성 형성

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ABSTRACT

This study explores the significantly growing number of Korean secondary students' study abroad experiences in the U.S. This study examines how these students deal with potential cultural conflicts as they move between Korea and the U.S. and how their parents cope with these changes in order to help their children to learn English and get an education abroad. They consider the U.S. education a beneficial tool used to gain cultural capital. In order to gain their cultural capital they come to the U.S. as elementary and secondary students. These families see this action as a way to gain educational and cultural benefits. The central argument about these students has been focused on the benefits from the study abroad experiences in the U.S. Uniquely this study investigates how these students pay psychological and cultural costs for gaining cultural and educational benefits from studying and living in very different cultural environments in the U.S. Therefore, this study seeks to understand how cultural conflicts influence the negotiation process of these students' cultural identities while they transition across different cultural boundaries among home, school, and community in the U.S.

To support the main arguments of the students' cultural identity crafting among different cultural boundaries in the U.S., Wenger's concept of identity in community of practices, Phinney's concept of bicultural identity, and Bourdieu's cultural capital theory will be used as tools for understanding the Korean secondary study abroad students underlying experiences in the U.S.

This study takes an ethnographic approach to a qualitative methodology in addressing the importance of negotiating cultural identity and understanding cultural capital from the perspectives and experiences of the participants. The data was collected from field notes, the transcripts from interviews and club meetings, video recordings (the Korean Club Meeting), audio recording (in-depth individual interviews and the Korean Club Meeting), and research diaries. This study was conducted by recruiting two *Girugi* families and five *Chogi-Youhacksangs* and their guardians in Springville, a medium size city in a South East area of U.S.

These participants agree with the idea that an American education brings more benefits than a Korean education. There were, however, somewhat different perspectives of the benefits of the education in the U.S. among the parents and the students. Their parents asserted that

American education would be an advantageous tool used to gain cultural capital. The students also admitted that their educational experiences in the U.S. will provide a better position for them compared to their friends in Korea, whether they go back to Korea or not.

The *Girugi* students and *Chogi-Youhacksangs* lived within very different cultural boundaries among home, school, and community. Their cultural boundaries are not only constructed by physical locations but also by relationships. While the students live within two different cultural boundaries, they try to manage their life accordingly in order to integrate the different cultural boundaries. Interestingly, the students seemed to keep practicing Korean cultural habits in the U.S., and the Korean cultural habits strongly influence their cultural identity negotiation. Moreover, huge cultural differences between their home/school and school/community sometimes hindered the students' smooth transition between two different cultures.

Key words: Cultural Identity, Bicultural Identity, Cultural Capital, Study Abroad, Korean-Americans, and Immigrant Youth' Identity Construction

CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION TO STUDY

“I believe that studying at the Charles, a private boarding high schooling in the United States, was truly a blessed experience in my life, so that I was able to get admission from a good college in the U.S. I have studied at the Charles from 10th grade, and I have started studying in English there. Now, I graduated high school and go to a college in the U.S.” –Heecheol Kim, a study abroad student in the U.S.

“A short cut to enter prestigious high schools in Korea and a threshold for Ivy Leagues in the U.S.-Elementary and middle school students’ studying abroad experiences”-an advertisement from the private center in Korea

“Summer English Camps in the U.S for elementary, middle, and high school students – students, from 2nd grade to 11th grade, are eligible to apply for this camp. You can visit eight Ivy Leagues colleges in the U.S., attend private schools’ summer programs, and experience prestigious boarding school in the U.S.”-the catch phrase from a daily news paper

The successful story above was proudly posted in Heecheol Kim’s personal blog and it was also posted in a private placement center’s blog in Korea as an advertisement to recruit more Korean elementary and secondary students to study abroad in the U.S. This type of advertisement is seen not only in internet blogs, but also in TV commercials or major daily newspapers. The above catch phrases are also not only used for advertisement of the private placement center, but also is a title for several daily news articles about elementary and middle school students’ study abroad experiences in Korea. Moreover, we can easily find other types of advertisement about elementary, middle, and high school students’ study abroad experiences from internets, daily newspapers, and TV commercials.

The stories and advertisements above are not unique or surprising stories in Korea. These are easily found in a variety of newspapers or TV commercials in Korea. In other words, many people in Korea want to study abroad in the U.S. This study investigates how Korean secondary

students become study abroad students in the U.S. and their experience behind the scenes of those successful stories about beneficial advantages in the U.S.

There is a growing trend in South Korea (hereafter referred to as Korea) where a significant number of elementary and secondary students are leaving the country to study abroad. The Ministry of Education, Science and Technology (MEST) estimates that approximately 33,000 elementary and secondary students left Korea to study abroad in 2004. In support of the MEST's position, the *Yonhap* News in 2010, a daily newspaper, reported that from 2000 to 2008, the accumulated number of elementary and secondary students who left Korea to study abroad reached one hundred fifty thousand. According to the Korean Education Development Institute's (KEDI) report (2005), the number of K-12 students who left Korea to study abroad was 3,274 (0.04 percent of population of K-12 students in Korea) in 1997. This number increased to 10,498 (0.13 percent of the population of K-12 students in Korea) in 2002.

In Korean terms, the elementary and secondary students who travel abroad by themselves and in the care of a guardian are called *Chogi-Youhacksangs*. Children who travel with a parent are called *Girugi* or "wild geese," indicating a comparison between the migration patterns of these birds and the movement of these families abroad. Due to the high cost of living abroad and the expensive tuition, *Girugi* fathers often stay in Korea to work while their mothers accompany their children abroad. Traditionally, Korean study abroad students tend to study abroad to obtain certain degrees of higher education or spend some time as exchange students in higher education institutions. However, this *Chogi-Youhacksangs* and *Girugi* students are different from traditional study abroad students in Korea. They left Korea at an elementary, middle or high school age and they spend a considerable amount of time abroad to study. Some of them return to Korea to continue pursuing higher education in Korea, and some of them stay abroad to go to college in the new country.

Although many elementary and secondary students leave Korea to study abroad, according to Korean law, elementary and middle school students are not allowed to study abroad alone since they are invited by foreign governments or institutions (KEDI, 2005; Park, 2007). However, there is no lawful mechanism in place to stop these students from leaving for the purpose of studying abroad because Korean parents are not aware of whether they have violated

the law or not. Plus, since too many people send their children to study abroad, the Korean government cannot restrict these people legally. Therefore, the Korean government actually gave up restricting elementary and middle school students who wish to study abroad.

According to KEDI's (2005) survey, of the 8,000 Korean parents surveyed, 23% responded that the primary reason why they send their children abroad is to study English. Korean parents generally consider that an American education is better than a Korean education and can provide better opportunities for their children (Washington post, Jan.9, 2005, "A wrenching choice"). Most Korean parents would prefer to send their children to the United States if they can afford to send their children to study abroad because the United States (hereafter referred to as the U.S.) is one of the most powerful countries—economically, politically and culturally (Kang, 2004; Choi, 2004). They additionally explained that they sent their children to the U. S. or other English speaking countries to study English because they felt that private education cost for studying English in Korea is very expensive. However, education in the U.S. is significantly more expensive than in Korea, if we count the cost of living and travel costs.

Korean parents believe that an education abroad is more valuable than a Korean education because students who have studied abroad have received certain types of benefits. For instance, returning students are able to apply for the Exception Entrance Benefit Policy that helps them to enter prestigious universities in Korea. If students speak English fluently or other foreign languages fluently, they are assumed to be more qualified to enter prestigious universities in Korea. For this reason, most Korean parents wish that they could send their children to study abroad, particularly to English speaking countries (Choi, 2004).

Students who have studied abroad also have easier access to high schools in Korea that specialize in foreign languages and the sciences. These foreign language and sciences specialized high schools are prestigious in Korea. Reports in the media such as the *Hankyoreh* daily newspaper indicated that there are a higher percentage of graduates from these high schools who continue on to prestigious universities than the graduates from normal high schools in Korea. For this reason, many students want to be admitted into these special high schools. For admittance, students must pass an entrance examination that emphasizes English. Applicants for highly competitive and popular jobs at large high technology firms, mass media companies, and

universities are also generally required to have high English scores or demonstrate proficiency in English (Choi, 2004; KEDI, 2005).

The separation of families comes at a price, however, that we cannot calculate in any monetary sense. It seems that Korean parents expect more than English proficiency out of their children's education in the U. S. There are some historical and political backgrounds that support this strong desire to study abroad in Korea society. This strong desire to study abroad may also have been influenced by the previous military regime's restriction on traveling abroad between 1961 and 1987. Only children of ambassadors, the staff in the foreign ministry, and large multinational companies were able to study abroad during that period. After 1987, when the government changed from a military regime to a democratically elected government, the restriction was lifted. Since then, the number of students studying abroad has dramatically increased. This trend has continued through the late 1990s to the present (Kang, 2002).

There was another astonishing turning point to push more students in Korea to study abroad. In the late 1990s, 'globalization' also became a familiar term to Koreans tuned into the global media. Since globalization leads to high competition in the global markets, many Korean students began leaving Korea to study abroad during that period. With English becoming the global language, many Koreans' desire to study English abroad increased (Paik, 2005). Because of this growing emphasis on learning English, Korean society has developed an 'English study fever'. Most Korean children start studying English from a very early age—some at three or four years old—with private tutors or at private institutions in Korea. English has also been introduced as a core course at the 3rd grade level in elementary school since 1999². However, parents do not trust public education, particularly English education in public schools. English education generally emphasizes grammar, and it is a test oriented curriculum in public schools (Paik, 2005; Choi, 2005). Parents prefer private Korean education to public schools because in private institutions teachers are mostly native speakers from the United States or Canada and the focus is on developing English communication skills. One reason Korean parents prefer to have native English speakers teach their children English is their desire to expose their children to American or western culture through these native English speakers. Therefore, this suggests that Koreans consider English proficiency and an exposure to American culture as a social and

². English is taught in middle school, 7th grade in Korea.

cultural benefit. As a result, it seems that children's study abroad is not only aimed at education, but is also a chance to obtain cultural capital that will benefit Korean parents as well as their children.

Statement of Problem

Korean parents believe that by sending their children to study in the U.S., their children will not only obtain a better level of English proficiency. They will also gain an immense amount of cultural capital during their experiences. However, they do underestimate the cost of gaining cultural capital. Underestimating the cost of their cultural capital becomes not only an individual issue, but has also become a social concern in Korea. There are number of educational, social, cultural, and economic issues associated with this phenomenon, such as contributions of declining elementary school enrollment, increasing inequity in the educational system, strained family relationships because of separation of parents, increasing outflow of foreign exchange and other issues (KEDI, 2005)

The Ministry of Education, Science and Technology (MEST) held a symposium in May, 2005 to discuss ways to deal with those issues. According to KEDI's statistics (2005), among all students who were studying abroad, more than 40 % were *Chogi-Youhacksangs* and *Girugi* students who were studying in the U.S. or Canada. The Ministry of Statistics in Korea reported that the enrollment rate of elementary students dropped from 98% in 2000 to 96.5% in 2003 because of this phenomenon.

There is very limited data about Korean elementary and secondary study abroad students. Some studies reported (KEDI, 2005; Son, 2003; Choi, 2004) that most of these students are considered to be from high socioeconomic status (SES) in Korea based on the fact that sending children to study abroad is very expensive and complex. According to the KEDI's statistics (2005), approximate 70% of these study abroad students are from the Seoul metropolitan area. Therefore, these study abroad students are in general from urban areas and are predominately middle class.

In 2005, KEDI surveyed around 300 parents who have sent their children to study abroad. The survey showed the parents' education, occupations, and income and some information about

the students, as well. According to the survey, the parents of these students have high educational backgrounds in that most of the parents have tertiary education: 54.3% of fathers and 25% of mothers have post tertiary education. See table 1.

Table 1. The Parents' Education

Education	Father	Mother
Graduated middle school	-	-
High school	3(1.0)	17(5.5)
Junior college	5(1.7)	13(4.2)
College	130(43.0)	201(65.3)
Master	88(29.1)	51(16.6)
Doctor	76(25.2)	26(8.4)
Total	302(100)	308(100)

(Sources adapted from KEDI survey (2005))

The survey indicated that most of the parents have a high income. For instance, 45.7 % of parents make more than \$ 5,500 monthly and 11.1% of parents responded that they earn more than \$9,000 in a month (see table 2). Comparing the difference of currency³ and living costs in Korea, these parents' incomes are much higher than the value in the U.S.

Table 2. The Parents' Income

Monthly income	Ratio	Monthly income	Ratio
Less than \$1,800	-	\$4,500-5,500	54(18.1)
\$1,800-2,700	6(2.0)	\$5,500-6,400	43(14.1)
\$2,700-3,600	43(14.5)	\$6,400-9,000	61(20.5)
\$3,600-4,500	58(19.5)	More than \$ 9,000	33(11.1)
Total		298(100)	

(Sources adapted from KEDI survey (2005))

³ One U.S. dollar equals to 1,100 *won* (Korean currency). The KEDI data (2005) reported with Korean won and I converted Korean won to U.S. dollar based on the currency rate.

The survey also indicates that these parents tend to be upper managers (34.2%), professionals (18.6%), high ranking public servants (9.4%), professors or researchers (16%), and managers (11.1%). See table 3.

Table 3. The Parents' Occupation

Occupation	Father	Mother
Upper managers level	105(34.0)	2(0.7)
Professional (medical doctors, lawyers, accountants)	57(18.6)	23(8.5)
Professors or researchers	49(16.0)	15(5.5)
Managers level	34(11.0)	9(3.3)
High ranking public servants	29(9.4)	2(0.7)
Own small business	18(5.9)	12(4.4)
Public servants	10(3.3)	2(0.7)
Teachers	1(0.3)	16(5.9)
Production workers	2(0.7)	1(0.4)
Unemployed (including housewives)	2(0.7)	190(69.9)
Agricultures and fisheries	-	-
Total	307(100)	272(100)

(Sources from KEDI survey (2005))

This survey reported some information about the students too. According to the survey, it seems that mostly higher achieving students tended to study abroad. 50.4 % of the parents responded that their children were in the highest 10% in their academic achievement in Korean schools. 30% of the parents responded that their children were in the highest 10-25 % of academic achievement in their schools. Therefore, mostly higher achieving students study abroad (80% of parents responded that their children were in the high 25 % in their schools, see table 4).

Table 4. The Students' School Achievement in Korea

School achievement in Korean school	Students
Higher than 10%	134(50.4)
High in between 10-25%	76(29.5)
High in between 25-50%	41(15.9)
Between 50-75%	8(3.1)
Lower than 75%	1(1.2)
Total	262(100)

(Sources from KEDI survey (2005))

Although only 300 parents participated in this survey, this result of this survey is consistent with what the Korean public already believes about these students: That they are from the urban and middle class in the Seoul metropolitan area. Therefore, as these table revealed, *Girugi* students and *Chogi-Youhacksangs* are generally from wealthy families and have well educated parents. The students are generally higher achieving students in Korea. Therefore, many Koreans believe that this phenomenon creates further educational inequity and aggravates the gap between the high SES and the low SES groups (KEDI, 2005; Son, 2003; Choi, 2004).

One of the concerns based on this trend is the raised awareness of the strain on the Korean society. The Korean public has expressed a concern that the educational inequity from the *Chogi-Youhacksangs* and *Girugi* family phenomenon increases social disparities. In addition, the Korean public is concerned that the traditional family structure would be dissolved because of this family separation. Korean mass media reports many cases of *Girugi* fathers who committed suicide or lead miserable lives in Korea because of the pressure to support their families abroad as well as and *Girugi* mothers who struggled with living abroad. The broken families or family separation became social issues in Korea (KEDI, 2005; Son, 2003; Choi, 2004, Kim, 2007). Another concern is raised regarding the strain on the Korean economy. Korean economic newspapers also report that there has been trade loss of more than two billion U.S. dollars by Korea to the U.S. because many Koreans travel and study in the U.S. (The *Maeil* Business Newspaper, 2008)

In addition to increasing the social gap and trade loss, this phenomenon also introduces a hybrid American culture or ‘*Youhacksangs*⁴ culture’ to Korea. Korean daily newspapers reported that some students who study abroad often experienced problems such as drug usage, alcohol abuse, and school violence since they are assumed to be more exposed to this culture in the U.S. than in Korea. After they return to Korea, students are blamed for continuing these problematic behaviors. Most of these students are from high SES families and their behaviors are often perceived as representing a ‘cool’ American culture to those Korean students who have not studied in the U.S. (Son, 2003).

As Korean daily newspapers, the mass media, and researchers have reported, the *Girugi* students and *Chogi-Youhacksangs* may increase disparities in Korean society, and introduce unfamiliar cultures to Koreans. However, it does not seem that anyone considers how these students live in different cultures and confront huge cultural obstacles because of the desire for a better education in the U.S.

Korean parents consider American educational experience a short cut to gaining a better position for their children’s future in terms of a high quality education, English language proficiency, and cultural benefits such as exploring American cultures and global manners. On the other hand, the Korean public regards American educational experiences as a troublesome social issue. They also look at this issue with a jealous eye because they want to send their children abroad but they cannot do it due to high costs⁵. According to *the Analects of Confucius*, one of Confucianism’s classics, Mangia’s mother moved three times for her son’s education. Korean parents consider moving for their children’s education to be one of the virtues of parents, just like Mangia’s mother. Education is seen as one of the most powerful tools for upward social mobility in Korean society. Therefore, relocation for the children’s education reflects ‘being a good parent’, even though parents have to pay a huge price financially and psychologically in Korea. For these reasons, the *Chogi-Youhacksangs* and *Girugi* families’ phenomenon has been emphasized among parents rather than the experience of students who actually have to go through all the difficulties of challenges abroad.

⁴. *Youhacksangs* means student study abroad in Korean.

⁵ According to the KEDI report (2005), most of parents positively responded to send the children to study abroad if they could afford it.

Living in different cultures is very difficult for adolescents. Research on immigrant youths (Chiang-Hom, 2004; Tsang, A.K., et al., 2003; Vyas, 2004; Lee and Zhou, 2004) stress that foreign born adolescents who arrived in the United States have a particularly challenging time because they have been uprooted from the familiarity of their own culture and placed in a new culture at a time when they are heavily involved in the development of their own identities as adolescents. Particularly, Korean adolescents may face more difficulties than other ethnic groups of students in the U.S. because Korean students have not experienced multicultural environments. Korea is an ethnically and culturally homogeneous country. Erikson (1980) describes how adolescents develop their identities in this period through awareness of and increase in their social role. *Chogi-Youhacksangs* and *Girugi* students mostly come to the U. S. when they are teenagers. Thus, their stage of adolescence and different cultural environments critically influence their identity development. Furthermore, the potential conflict between Korean culture and American culture may challenge the development of students' identities since they have to negotiate between schools and home on a daily basis. This raises the questions of whether the complexities of identity formation in *Chogi-Youhacksangs* and *Girugi* families' experiences undermine the acquisition of cultural capital intended by their parents.

However, *Chogi-Youhacksangs* and *Girugi* students' experiences have been deeply focused on obtaining benefits or successful results. Moreover, since the enormous financial cost of the students' experiences has been stressed, the psychological and cultural costs of these students for studying abroad, such as homesickness, loneliness, cultural differences, language barriers, and identity crisis, have not been considered by the Korean public. Regardless of other costs and many difficulties, the financial costs and educational benefits of *Chogi-Youhacksangs* and *Girugi* students have been highlighted. As a result, *Chogi-Youhacksangs* and *Girugi* families became an object of envy and jealousy. Therefore, *Chogi-Youhacksangs* and *Girugi* families carefully pay attention to how the Korean public considers them. Moreover, *Chogi-Youhacksangs* and *Girugi* families are more concerned with their lives and experiences in the U.S. Once they arrive in the U. S., they need to settle down and adjust to a new life. During this process, they face many difficulties due to the cultural differences and language barriers (Chiang-Hom, 2004; Tsang et al., 2003; Choi et al, 2001). Although they are willing to accept a new culture and new life in the U.S., they experience conflicts and contradictions between

Korean and American values and cultures.

Presumably, *Chogi-Youhacksangs* and *Girugi* students might be disciplined more strictly based on traditional Korean values to emphasize the importance of being a ‘good student’ and ‘good child’ because of the negative image of study abroad children and families in Korea. This creates conflict between Korean values and the U. S. system because the cultures are different. Korean parents also expect their children to adhere to Korean values and etiquette, such as respecting elders, being obedient to parents, and studying hard. When children go to school, they face a culture different from what their parents teach them at home. This creates a great contrast between the students’ experiences at home and those in schools. Therefore, these children are confused as they try to adapt to the new culture in the United States and struggle in defining who they are.

Chogi-Youhacksangs and *Girugi* families in the U. S. are situated within multiple environments such as school, home, and community. These environments are composed of different layers of culture. Korean students are exposed to Korean culture and values at home and community in the United States. At the same time, they are surrounded by American culture when they go to school. Therefore, these students pursue different cultural practices depending on whether they are at home or in school. This situation results in multiple cultural memberships and possibly multiple identities when they participate in these different environments. Moreover, *Girugi* families and *Chogi-Youhacksangs* are often uncertain whether to stay in the U. S. or go back to Korea after they complete their study. This uncertainty also causes confusion about how to acculturate to the new environment in the United States. Therefore, these students not only have shifted from Korea to the U. S., but also repeat the transition from home (Korea) to school (the U. S.) in their everyday lives.

Thus, the *Chogi-Youhacksangs* and *Girugi* families have been an issue in Korean society since the late 1990s. However, the *Chogi-Youhacksangs* and *Girugi* students’ actual efforts and challenges, such as dealing with culture shock, crafting their identity, and adapting to new cultures, have not been revealed because the Korean public has only highlighted parents and the public point of views. Therefore, this study will examine the individual *Chogi-Youhacksangs* and *Girugi* students’ living and studying experiences in the U.S.

Research Questions

In order to consider understanding the psychological and cultural costs of the *Girugi* students and *Chogi-Youhacksangs*' experiences, this study seeks to understand how these Korean K-12 study abroad students and their families acculturate in the U.S. It will also examine how *Girugi* students and *Chogi-Youhacksangs* negotiate their cultural identities among different environments in the United States. Therefore, the following research questions are posed:

1. What are Korean parents, *Girugi* students and *Chogi-Youhacksangs*' perception of the relationship between the study abroad experience and their cultural capital? To what extent do parents and children share common or different understandings of the cultural capital acquired in studying in the U.S.?
 - a. What was their perception about the U.S. education before they move into the U.S.?
 - b. Are there any changes in the perception of U.S. education after they experience the new environments? If the perception has changed, how it has been changed?
2. How do these *Girugi* and *Chogi-Youhacksangs* deal with identity crafting between their family, American schools, and peers, and their potential future return to Korea?
 - a. How does the difference in family structures of *Girugi* and *Chogi-Youhacksangs* influence their children's identity crafting?
 - b. How do their Korean memberships and practices in the community influence negotiating their cultural identity?
 - c. How does their participation in American schools and cultural practices affect their identity crafting?

Theoretical Framework

The theoretical framework for this attempt to understand the experience of *Chogi-Youhacksangs* and *Girugi* students draws from three theoretical perspectives and their relationship with cultural capital and cultural identity: Bourdieu's cultural capital theory, Wenger's cultural identity formation from community practice, and Phinney's bicultural identity.

These three areas of research converge to provide insights into these Korean students' and their families' thoughts on an education in the U.S. Also, these conceptual frameworks help to understand how *Girugi* students and *Chogi-Youhacksangs* and their families acculturate and how these students particularly negotiate their cultural identities among different environments in the U.S.

Bourdieu (1986) describes cultural capital as forms of symbolic credit that a person acquires, and which enact signs of social standing. Cultural capital can be demonstrated by a person's attitudes, the way they speak, and the value they place on a certain commodity, such as education. For example, Levinson and Holland (1996) state that people with higher social standing automatically achieve greater currency because of the cultural symbolic credit. The families of *Girugi* and *Chogi-Youhacksangs* students have taken significant steps to provide a U.S. education for their children based on the value they believe it will bring to their children and to their families. Most of these parents place greater value on obtaining a U. S education compared to a Korean education. They also believe that if their children live and study in the U.S., they will become more proficient in English and will be more competitive in the job market. Although Korean parents want their children to benefit from an American education, *Girugi* and *Chogi-Youhacksangs* students may face many challenges as they try to negotiate living in an American culture while maintaining their Korean culture at home.

The challenges, faced during the students' adolescent years, certainly have an impact on their identity formation. Wenger's (1998) view of identity formation will also provide a way to examine how Korean students negotiate their identities as they study and live in the U. S. He argues that a person's identity is formed through participation in communities of practice, which is demonstrated not by holding a card or other forms of identification to indicate having membership to a group. Rather, membership is demonstrated by one's competence within the group. Cultural identity is the relationship between individuals and groups of people who share a common culture, history, language and ways of understanding the world (Collier & Thomas, 1988; Norton, 1997). Cultural identity is closely aligned with linguistic and cultural practices various ideologies, power structures, and historical legacies. This alignment is based on different forms of language use, cultures, and situations. It is also based on how specific groups frame their own linguistic and cultural practices. While the *Chogi-Youhacksangs* and *Girugi* students

are in the U. S., they are members of several communities—home, schools, and community. Therefore, they could have membership based on how confident they feel about their participation in their multicultural environments.

This raises questions when they cross cultural boundaries from school to home or school to community; they need to negotiate how they behave, talk, and what to wear between two different cultures in Korea and the U.S. When the *Chogi-Youhacksangs* and *Girugi* students go to school, they are exposed to American culture and are surrounded by American peers and teachers. They may make friends in schools; however, when they return home or they are in the Korean community, they practice their home values. This may create conflict and contradiction since there are significant differences between the Korean and American value system. Rotheram-Borus (1993) refers to biculturalism as the exposure of minority youth to the dominant culture and the degree of association the youth make with the majority culture. Phinney and Devich-Navarro (1997) suggested that there are two ways of being bicultural based on the premise that two cultures are perceived as overlapping, but not completely. Phinney and Dupont (1994) as cited in Noh (2003) define bicultural identity as involving identification with both the ethnic culture of one's origin and the mainstream culture as well as what one makes of his/her exposure to the two sets of culture.

While many American children experience differences between the cultures of home, school, and community, these differences are constantly on-going aspects of their developmental experience to which they are forced to adjust as permanent residents in the U.S. society. Like these students, the *Chogi-Youhacksangs* and *Girugi* students experience their own culture at home, another at school, and yet another in their community. Unlike these permanent residents, the *Chogi-Youhacksangs* and *Girugi* students are temporary residents in the U.S. Their awareness of this is likely to affect the way they negotiate their cultural identity. Therefore, while the theory of bicultural identity formation is deeply relevant there is still room to argue which culture is subordinated by which culture between Korean culture and American culture for these students since biculturalism generally speaks to the acculturation process of permanent immigrants in societies. In other words, these students do not need to consider Korean cultures as subordinated cultures compared to the U.S. cultures because they are temporary migrants. Therefore, it is important to understand how these students take on a new culture for surviving in

a new environment or consider whether they see the American culture as more valuable than Korean cultures since they came to the U.S. in order to study English and explore American cultures. As I stated above, English proficiency and knowledge about American cultures can be huge benefits and advantageous tools in Korea. As a result, experience of American cultures is meant to be a benefit and a source of cultural capital to these students.

Methods

This study was conducted using qualitative data collection and analysis in Springville in the southeast part of the U. S. The primary data sources are semi-instructed interviews and Korean Club meetings (KCM) observations. Participants include *Girugi* families- children and mother- and *Chogi-Youhacksangs* and their guardians in the city. This study also uses field notes and research diaries. This study attempts to understand a certain group of people's thoughts and experiences under a particular situation; namely temporary migration and transitional periods. This study seeks to examine the nature of this experience of *Girugi* families and *Chogi-Youhacksangs'* experiences and identity crafting in the U. S. Therefore, this study will take an ethnographical approach within a qualitative methodology. Further discussion of the methodology will take place in Chapter III.

Organization of the Study

In this chapter I have discussed the major issues, background and the problem of the recent phenomenon in Korea. In the following chapter, I will examine the literature on cultural identity formation, bicultural identity on Asian American youths in the U.S. and cultural capital theory. I will also review the empirical literatures on these groups of Korean students and some groups of Chinese or Taiwanese students in North America because these Chinese and Taiwanese students also are secondary school students, live under guardians' care, and attend schools in North America. Moreover, only minimal research about *Chogi-Youhacksangs* and *Girugi* family has been done so far, but comparatively more research on Chinese and Taiwanese students has been done than on these Korean students. For these reasons, I will include the empirical literature on the Chinese and Taiwanese students' experiences. I will also extend reviewing the empirical literatures to Korean-Americans, Asian-Americans, Asian immigrant

youth, and Korean immigrant youths because the studies about the *Girugi* students and *Chogi-Youhacksangs* are very sparse. Immigrant youth or Korean-Americans have experienced a somewhat similar degree of acculturation process and formation of their cultural identity with these Korean students. From the empirical literature review, I will discuss how their understanding of cultural capital influences formation of cultural identity for temporarily immigrant youths. Chapter III describes the research methodology, data collection methods and analysis procedures. In Chapter IV, I present the results from the analysis of the data. In Chapter V, I summarize the major findings and make some recommendations for future studies.

Summary

Recently, significant numbers of Korean elementary and secondary students have temporarily migrated into the U. S. for educational purposes. These students and their families believe that an American education is an advantageous tool to build cultural capital. However, living in the U. S. as Koreans may present some challenges because of differences between two cultures. This study examines the experiences of the students and their families as living and studying in the U. S. The study also investigates how some of the cultural challenges of living and studying in another culture influence these Korean students. It also explores how these students negotiate their cultural identity as they transition from Korean culture at home/community to the U. S. culture at school in their everyday lives.

CHAPTER TWO

CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK & LITERATURE REVIEW

Introduction

The purpose of this chapter is to explain and discuss the theoretical framework, which draws upon Bourdieu's Cultural Capital theory, Wenger's cultural identity formation through communities of practice, and Phinney's bicultural identity. The focus of this research will be the examination of the *Chogi-Youhacksang* and the *Girugi* students' perception and the parents' perception about an American education. The utilization of these three highly developed theories is to develop a better understanding of identity crafting for these students in the U.S. Bourdieu's Cultural Capital Theory is used to explain the Korean parents' perception and their decision making process as they prepare for their children to study abroad in the U.S. An analysis of literature focusing on Wenger's cultural identity formation in community practices will be highlighted in order to present a theoretical lens to discuss how these particular Korean students constructed their cultural identity in their new environments. Lastly, Phinney's bicultural identity concept is used to explain how these students negotiate and transition their cultural identities from the Korean culture to the multitude of American cultures.

As the *Chogi-Youhacksangs* and *Girugi* students have developed their identity in Korea as adolescents, they will inevitably develop their cultural identities in their new environments. As highlighted in this study these students participate in different communities and practice the communities' cultures in the U.S. As Wenger's cultural identity formation through community practices suggest, the fact that the *Chogi-Youhacksangs* and *Girugi* students participate in different communities and practices across various communities' cultures explains how these students form and negotiate their cultural identity in the U.S. During the process of identity development, the migration of the *Chogi-Youhacksangs* and *Girugi* students suggests that they have dual cultural identities between Korean and American. Therefore, bicultural identity theory tells us about how these temporary migrant adolescents may have dual or two identities. Moreover, these students need to accept and adapt to their new cultures in the U.S. based on the

fact that they came to the U.S. to study English and acquire valuable cultural experiences. Gaining English fluency and American cultural experiences are also their parents' hope of their children's study abroad in the U.S. In other words, the Korean parents implicitly understand their children's study abroad in the U.S. as gaining cultural capital opportunities.

As a result, the Korean parents make rational decisions to build up cultural capital in terms of their children's education in the U.S. Therefore, Bourdieu's cultural capital theory helps to explain which leads to the decision making procedure to study abroad in the U.S and the negotiation of the students' cultural identity between two cultures. This cultural capital theory helps to explain the experience of the *Chogi-Youhacksangs* and *Girugi* students. On the other hand, this theory does not tell us the cost that the Korean parents and the *Chogi- Youhacksangs* and *Girugi* students actually pay for this capital. Therefore, I will examine the cultural and psychological costs as these students craft their cultural identities across different cultural boundaries in the U.S. See conceptual framework figure 1.

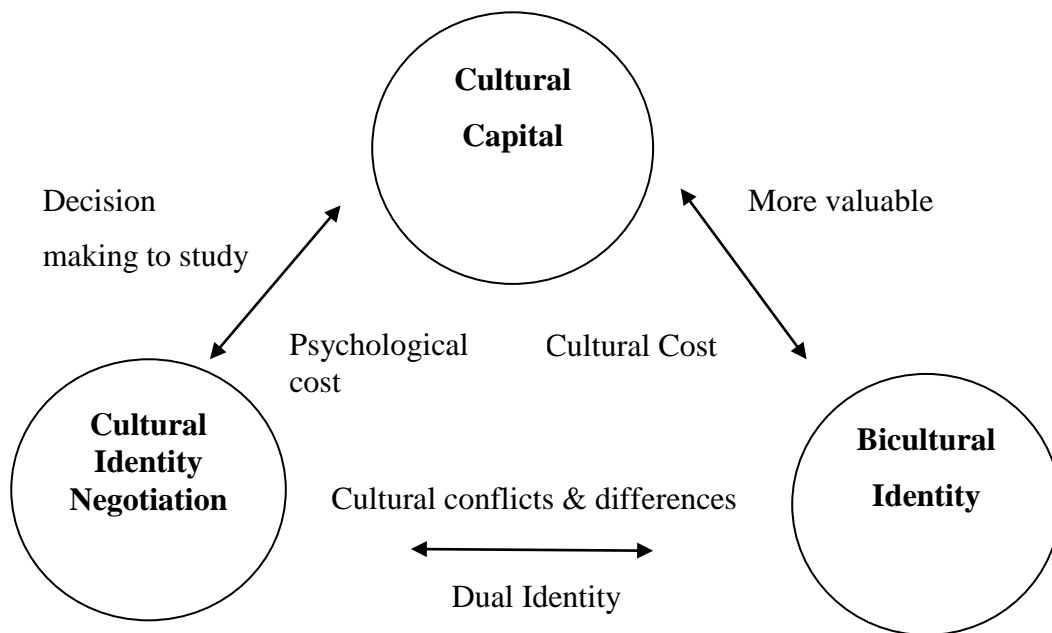


Figure 1. Conceptual Framework

In sum, Bourdieu's cultural capital theory, Wenger's cultural identity negotiation through communities of practices, and the concept of bicultural identity help to explain the *Girugi* students and *Chogi-Youhacksangs*' intense process of identity negotiation in the U.S. After developing the theoretical framework of this study, I will examine relevant empirical literature that offers insight into these students' experiences. Due to the relative paucity of the specifically addressing of the *Chogi-Youhacksangs* and *Girugi* students, in my discussion I will include empirical studies on Korean-Americans, Korean-immigrants, Asian-Americans, and Asian-immigrants.

Cultural Capital

Bourdieu (1986) distinguishes between three types of capital: economic capital, social capital, and cultural capital. He states that "economic capital is immediately and directly convertible into money and may be institutionalized in the form of property rights; social capital, which is made up of social obligations, is convertible in certain condition into economic capital and may be institutionalized in the form of a title of nobility; and cultural capital is convertible, on certain conditions, into economic capital and may be institutionalized in the form of educational qualifications" (1986, p.243). He extends economic power to non-economic goods and services such as culture, habits, and tastes. He stresses that cultures can be very powerful resources because many characteristics of economic power are included in cultures. Therefore, cultural capital transits to hidden form of economic resources in many societies due to the fact that cultural capital can be gradually transferred to economic power in certain conditions.

After Bourdieu's cultural capital theory had been introduced in the U.S., some American scholars have developed their own definition of cultural capital. Lamont and Lareau (1987) stated that cultural capital could be considered broadly to include "high cultural signals" such as attitudes, preferences, behaviors and goods used in direct and indirect social and cultural exclusion. Levinson and Holland (1996) define cultural capital as a kind of symbolic credit one acquires through learning to embody and enact signs of social standing. This credit consists of a series of competencies and character traits, such as taste and intelligence. They defined taste as certain cultural products, manner of deportment, speech, style of dress, consumptions patterns. Thus, they propose that the educated person is a cultural product.

Symbolic Power

Bourdieu (1977) explains cultural capital as a symbolic power. Since material, social, physical, and mental structures are differentiated by a range of logical principles, they are valued differently from each other and the dominant logic. Bourdieu asserts that these structures produce symbolic capital, since they only have social and cultural value and it is defined as “arbitrary (1977, p.8)”. Thus, they need to be understood as symbolic rather than designated by any ultimate worth. Bourdieu implies that language proficiency is related to cultural capital because language is not only an instrument of communication or even of knowledge, but also an instrument of power. He pointed out that “a person speaks not only to be understood but also to be believed, obeyed, respected, distinguished. Therefore, the full definition of competence is the right to speech, i.e. to the legitimate language, the authorized language which is also the language of authority (1977, p.148).” He also stated “the dominant class can make deliberately or accidentally lax use of language without their discourse ever being invested with the same social value as that of the dominated. What speaks is not the utterance, the language, but the whole social person (this is what those who look for the ‘illocutionary force’ of language in language forget) (1977, p. 153)”. As a result, we need to comprehend the linguistic competencies as symbolic power, instead of the simple means of communication.

Bourdieu describes how the dominated understand and adapt to the social order or social world through the concept of symbolic violence, legitimizing their condition of domination. He considered symbolic power to be a legitimating power and defined symbolic violence as “the power which manages to impose meanings and to impose them as legitimate by concealing the power relations which are the basis of its force, and adds its own specifically symbolic force to those power relations (1977, p.4).”

As a result, cultural capital is a form of symbolic power generated by the dominant class and is able to be transmitted into economic capital. For instance, the assumption about the U.S. education and cultural experiences by the high SES Korean parents is spread throughout the Korean public. Based on this assumption, the trend to study abroad in the U.S. becomes the hottest educational issue and trend in Korea. For this reason, Korean parents want to send their

children to study abroad in the U.S. whether their children are ready or not, in order to pursue this symbolic power.

Forms of Cultural Capital

According to Bourdieu (1986), there are three different forms of cultural capital: the embodied state, the objective state, and the institutionalized state. The embodied state of cultural capital is in the formation of long-lasting dispositions of the mind and body. In other words, this refers to behavioral styles, ways of speaking, cultural preferences, understanding of valued cultural knowledge, and appreciation of art (Olneck, 2000). Cultural capital is shown as a competence or skill that cannot be separated from its holder in the ‘embodied’ form. When individuals obtain the embodied state of cultural capital, they gradually gain the cultural capital from long time exposure to the environments. Therefore, this type of cultural capital can be acquired unconsciously and without any deliberate inculcation.

The objective state of cultural capital is in the form of cultural goods such as pictures, books, dictionaries, instruments, and machines. This type of cultural capital can be directly transmitted via material elements.

The institutionalized state takes the form of academic qualifications. Bourdieu explains that a certificate of cultural competence confers on its holder a conventional, constant, legally guaranteed value with respect to culture. Therefore, the ‘institutionalized’ form exists in a society with a system of formal education (Lareau & Weinger, 2003). The educational system is the principal institution to transmit and reflect cultural capital to students in the form of educational degrees (Bourdieu, 1986 ; DiMaggio, 1982; Lareau, 1999; Levinson and Holland, 1996; Luttrell, 1989). According to Swartz, “higher education has created massive credential markets that are today decisive in reproducing the social class structures. Since educational credentials have become increasingly necessary for gaining access to desirable positions in the job market, it becomes essential for parents to invest in a good education for their children so they can reap the ‘profit’ on the job market” (1997, p.76).

Therefore, clearly well-to-do Korean families believe that study in the U.S. provides a meaning of cultural capital that explains their children’s success through the institutionalized

formation of cultural capital. Moreover, English fluency and living experience in the U.S. are seen as valuable assets in Korea. For this reason, Korean parents send their children to study abroad in the U.S. to gain more cultural capital.

Formation of Cultural Capital

Bourdieu (1986) proposes that cultural capital can be generated from forms of knowledge, skills, and education. Any advantage a person has which gives them a higher status in society, including high expectations, can be considered cultural capital. In other words, well-educated and upper class parents can provide their children with cultural capital through their attitudes and knowledge, making the educational system a comfortable, familiar place in which they can succeed.

Also, Bourdieu (1993) emphasizes a physical and social space where cultural capital is transmitted. Bourdieu (1993) explains that this space could be differentiated and structured. “Structured space is made up of recognized bounded territories; fields-networks, configurations, and objectifiable structured spaces. They have specific interests and stakes, power relations, and share common interests. Bourdieu stresses parental involvement and home environment are significant in forming children’s habitus, their system of predispositions to action and belief acquired through, what he calls ‘inculcation’ in the family (1993, p.78). Bourdieu defines habitus as

“a system of durable, transposable dispositions, structured structures predisposed to function as structuring structures, that is, as principles which generate and organize practices and representations that can be objectively adapted to their outcomes without presupposing a conscious aiming at ends or an express mastery of the operations necessary in order to attain them (1986, p.53).”

Habitus means a system of predispositions to action and belief acquired through inculcation in the family. External conditions of existence, which include class position, mediated by the family, determine the structures of the habits which in turn become the basis of perception and appreciation of all subsequent experience (Bourdieu & Passeron, 1977). Habitus results from early socialization experiences in which external structures are internalized. As a result,

internalized dispositions of broad parameters and boundaries of what is possible or unlikely for a particular group in a stratified social world develop through socialization. Thus, Swartz (1997) observes that on the one hand, habits set structural limits for action. On the other hand, habitus generates perceptions, aspirations, and practices that correspond to the structuring properties of earlier socialization.

As Bourdieu argues, the habits are transmitted and mediated through individuals. However, the value of habitus is determined within institutions. As a result, the habitus is intangible with the relation between individual and institutionalization. Harvot and Antonio (1999) developed the concept of habitus and introduced “the organizational habitus”, instead of Bourdieu’s individual habitus, highlighting the importance of organizational and institutional cognition of culture. Therefore, these Korean parents and students’ perception about American education stem from the societal and institutionalized mentality in Korea and the global society as well.

To conclude, Bourdieu (1986) describes how and where cultural capital is transmitted, by highlighting the relation between cultural capital and education. He argues that all cultural practices and preferences are closely linked to educational level and social origin. Although inherited cultural resources are significant in building cultural capital, education and schooling should not be underestimated for their contribution to resources that transform into cultural capital.

Cultural Capital and Educational Attainments

Education is a major component for social mobility in most contemporary societies. Historically, education has developed societies and enlightened people in many ways. While some people have attained their prosperity thanks to education, others have been subordinated due to education. Many scholars, (Bourdieu & Passeron, 1977; Lamont & Lareau, 1987; De Carvalho, 2001; DiMaggio, 1982; Swartz, 1997) have highlighted how education has also served to maintain a dominant hegemony in societies. Bourdieu & Passeron (1977) argue that the educational system serves to reproduce social inequalities rather than eliminate them. Bourdieu & Passeron (1977) use the concept of cultural capital to explain the academic achievement gap

among different social classes and social origins in France. They point out that high culture is more valued in school settings so that students who are familiar with high culture could be more successful than those who are not familiar with high culture. As a result, schools could be major institutions to mediate dominant groups' high culture.

As cultural capital is strongly associated with students' achievement, many American scholars on cultural capital have elaborated on how students' achievements are correlated with their class and cultural backgrounds (DiMaggio, 1982; DiMaggio and Mohr, 1985; Lareau, 1987; Lareau & Lamont, 1988; Lareau & Horvat, 1999; Antonio & Horvat, 1999; Lareau & Weinger, 2003). The academic gaps among students from different social origins and social classes in contemporary societies are associated with cultural capital. In general, academic success is attained by the amount and type of cultural capital inherited from the family milieu rather than by measures of individual talent or achievement (Bourdieu 1986; DiMaggio, 1982; Lareau, 1987; Levinson and Holland 1996; and Luttrell, 1989).

DiMaggio (1982) assumes that cultural capital depends on the "status attainment process." He finds that teachers communicated more easily with those who participate in the elite status cultures, gave them more attention and special assistance, and perceived them as more intelligent or gifted than students who lack cultural capital. Later, DiMaggio and Mohr (1985) showed in their research how interest in and experience with prestigious cultural resources among high school students is associated with their educational and marital attainment. Reed-Danahay (2000) argues that discontinuity between the culture of school and the culture of home generated gaps in school achievement for students. Labaree (1997) argues that a primary reason that individuals invest money, time, and effort in schooling is to acquire qualifications that will enable them to advance to higher levels of education and attain desirable employment and social positions. Therefore, schools are major institutions to inculcate the dominant legitimacy through cultural capital, and schools maintain privilege by allowing inherited cultural differences to shape academic achievements and occupational attainment (Bourdieu, 1977; Swartz, 1997).

Because education is considered a major social system to reproduce social inequality, Bourdieu and Passeron define education as "the process through which a cultural arbitrary is historically reproduced, the equivalent, in the cultural order, of the transmission of genetic

capital, in the biological order” (1977, p.32). De Cavalho contends that “the modes of education and social reproduction are historically and culturally variable and arbitrary”(2001, p. 29). They represent cultural choices which cannot be explained in terms of natural or rational determination but are grounded in the expression of material and power relations. The educational system reproduces the structure of power relationships and symbolic relationships between social classes. Bourdieu (1977) see educational institutions as socially as well as academically tracked. Moreover, prestigious institutions, such as *Grandes Ecoles* and others in France reinforce class-based social stratification within the higher educational system. The hierarchical nature of the higher educational system varies among other countries. Swartz states that “American universities seem much more interacted (interactive) and show less autonomy between the academic field and the economic and political fields than Bourdieu’s framework explained the case in France”(1997, p. 127).

According to cultural capital theorists, education mediates the effects of class backgrounds in complex ways. Bourdieu (1986) points out that cultural capital is not only related to academic success but also curriculum, the process of pedagogy and evaluation. The concept of cultural capital is strongly associated with children’s backgrounds, ambitions and expectations. Their education and careers are the structurally determined products of parental and other reference-group educational experience and cultural life (Swartz, 1997). Bourdieu & Passeron (1977) argue that students’ school achievement is strongly related to parents’ cultural backgrounds because formal schooling contributes to the maintenance of an unequal social system by privileging a certain cultural heritage and penalizing others through the unequal selection process in schools. They argue that tests and grades in school do not simply measure students’ performance, but characterize their social origin and sex. Therefore, schools are a milieu where unequal selection is perpetuated by the dominants.

In sum, Bourdieu’s cultural capital theory is relevant to explain how privilege is reproduced in societies through symbolic power and education. However, there are some arguments that dispute his theory based on the fact that the definition of cultural capital is so broad.

Critics on Bourdieu’s Cultural Capital Theory

Many scholars (Lamont & Lareau, 1988; Lareau and Horvat, 1999; Kingston, 2001) have criticized the definition of Bourdieu's cultural capital as vague and broad. Lamont and Lareau (1988) noted that Bourdieu's concept of cultural capital is strongly associated with 'high-brow' or dominant culture. Kingston (2001) pointed out that Bourdieu did not precisely describe how the appreciation of high culture translated into school success. Also, Lareau and Horvat (1999) indicated that his studies do not clearly identify on advance knowledge of the process where social and cultural resources is converted into educational advantages. Many scholars (Kingston, 2001; Lamont and Lareau, 1988; Lareau and Weinger, 2003) draw attention to important limitations in Bourdieu's cultural capital concept because his concept highly depends on the social setting. Also, there is an important difference between the possession and activation of capital or resources. That is, people who have social and cultural capital may choose to activate capital or not, and they vary in the skill with which they activate their skills. Lastly, these two points come together to suggest that rather than being an overly deterministic continual process, reproduction of cultural capital is continually negotiated by social actors. Also, scholars (Kingston, 2001; Lamont and Lareau, 1988; Lareau and Weinger, 2003) claimed that the definition of cultural capital has been overly extended. This criticism of the concept of cultural capital has been targeted not only toward Bourdieu, but also other cultural capital scholars. Lareau and Weinger state that there are two crucial premises of interpretation for cultural capital among scholars.

"First, the concept of cultural capital is assumed to denote knowledge of or competence with highbrow aesthetic culture. Second, researchers assume that the effects of cultural capital must be partitioned from those of properly educational 'skills', 'ability', or 'achievement'. These premises result in studies, in which the salience of cultural capital is tested by assessing whether measures of 'highbrow' cultural participation predict educational outcomes(such as grades) independently of various 'ability' measures(such as standardized test scores)"(Lareau & Weinger, 2003, p.569).

Therefore, Lareau and Weinger (2003) develop a cultural capital concept that emphasizes micro-interactional processes whereby individuals' strategic use of knowledge, skills, and competence comes into contact with institutionalized standards of evaluation. Moreover, some scholars introduce a clarified version of cultural capital. DiMaggio (1985) defines cultural capital

as prestigious cultural resources and status culture participation. Yosso (2005) introduces the alternative concept called “community cultural wealth” instead of cultural capital, emphasizing the nature of cultural value which is formed among institutions.

Although scholars point out that Bourdieu’s definition of cultural capital has been somewhat changed and extended, it still comprises a common understanding of cultural capital; high culture and high value of culture are easily convertible to economic power. Cultural capital can be a strong power resource because it includes broad concepts such as verbal facility, general cultural awareness, aesthetic preferences, information about the school system, and educational credentials. Cultural capital can generate inequality among societies because cultural habits and dispositions comprise a resource capable of generating profits; they are potentially subject to monopolization by individuals and groups and, under appropriate condition, they can be transmitted from one generation to the next (Bourdieu, 1986). Korean parents instinctively understand this concept. This explains why they send their children to study abroad in the U.S.

Cultural Capital in Korea and the *Chogi-Youhacksangs* and *Girugi* Students

Traditionally, education is considered to be a significant key for upward social mobility in Korea. As I explained in the previous section, graduation from prestigious universities often provides better opportunities for jobs and even marriages. Recently, scholars (Choi, 2004; Son, 2002) have argued that the process of forming Korean educational elites has begun to shift from the prestigious universities to elite high schools and middle schools. This is based on the students’ family backgrounds, such as who their parents are and where they live. Korean elementary and secondary students are assigned to their schools based on where they live; therefore, the elite high schools and middle schools are located in the wealthy districts in Korea. Due to the importance of education in Korean society, high SES families move into these districts to provide a better educational environment and opportunities for their children. Not only do Korean parents relocate themselves for their children’s education in Korea, but also they send their children to study abroad. Korean parents enthusiasm for their children’s education is known as ‘Education fever’ (Hyun, et al, 2007; Park, 2009; Seth, 2002). The strongest manifestation of this fever in the practice of sending their children to study abroad in the U.S.,

which reflects parent's perception about American education as an advantageous tool to place their children in a better position in the Korean society.

English is one of the major subjects required to enter the better universities and one of the most critical criteria to getting a better job in Korean society. Since English is a global language and the U.S. is a superpower, studying in the U.S. is considered an enormously beneficial tool in which to increase a person's chance to achieve upward social mobility in the Korean society. Furthermore, studying abroad at an early age or studying English at an early age are regarded by Korean parents as the best ways to obtain linguistic and cultural power for their children (Kim, 1995; Paik, 2005). However, only high socioeconomic status (SES) families are able to send their children to study abroad in the U.S because of the high cost both financially and culturally. The Korean daily newspapers report that the *Gangnam* district, the wealthiest district in Korea where highly educated families live, is a well-documented center in Korea for sending children to study abroad (*Kukmin Ilbo*, 2010; the *Yonhap News*, 2010). In sum, Korean parents consider education as a powerful tool for social mobility. With this preoccupation for a better education, coupled with English study fever, and the superpower status of the U.S., Korean parents tend to make decisions to send their children to study abroad particularly in the U.S. Cultural capital theory explains to benefits they expect from study abroad in the U.S.

Cultural capital theory also offers understanding of the *Chogi-Youhacksangs* and *Girugi* students' cultural identity negotiation while they are in the U.S. as well. According to biculturalism scholars, the immigrant youth view the U.S. cultures as the dominant culture and their inherited cultures as subordinated culture. Unlike other immigrant youths, these Korean students tend to comprehend American cultures as valuable or high cultures rather than the dominant culture compared to Korean cultures because they are from high SES and voluntarily migrated into the U.S. The Korean students' particular status and families backgrounds provide somewhat different status to these students compared to other immigrant youths in the U.S. For this reason, the *Chogi-Youhacksangs* and *Girugi* students do not feel any obligation to accept American cultures or adapt their lives in the U.S. However, living in a new environment, these students inevitably adjust their lives into the environment. Moreover, since they came to the U.S. with a certain purpose, learning English and American cultures that they perceive to have

cultural and symbolic power, they evidently make effort to accept and learn American cultures during their sojourn in the U.S.

Unlike American higher education, the Korean university system is more like what Bourdieu explained as socially and academically tracked. For instance, the graduates from prestigious universities in Korea have a better position socially, economically, and culturally than others. They are able to obtain better jobs, social position, and even marriages (Choi, 2004). For this reason, Korean parents want their children to attend prestigious middle schools or high schools in order to gain better chances for entering prestigious universities. The socially and academically tracked higher education system in Korea might be one of the major reasons why Korean elementary and secondary students come to study in the U.S. Through the American educational experience, they are able to gain more cultural capital to enter prestigious universities in Korea.

To conclude, since Korean parents' perception about an American education is heavily associated with 'Education Fever' and 'English Study Fever' in Korea, studying abroad in the U.S. is portrayed as cultural capital and symbolic power. Korean parents make decisions to send their children to study abroad in the U.S. to obtain better chances to increase their children's cultural capital through their experience of an American education. However, Korean parents and public only emphasize the benefits or outcome from the U.S. education. They often underestimate or ignore the cost for studying abroad in the U.S., or they only focus on financial costs for this educational journey. Bourdieu's cultural capital concept explains why Korean parents send their children to study abroad in the U.S. However, this concept cannot explain *Chogi-Youhacksangs* and *Girugi* students' living and studying experiences in the U.S. Therefore, I will explain what types of the cost that the *Chogi-Youhacksangs* and *Girugi* students spend in the U.S. through cultural identity negotiation in the next section.

Cultural Identity

Cultural identity is the relationship between individuals and groups of people who share a common culture, history, language and ways of understanding the world (Collier & Thomas, 1988; Norton, 1997). Cultural identity is closely associated with linguistic and cultural practices,

the various ideologies, power structures, and historical legacies. This alignment is based on different forms of language use, cultures, and situations. It is also based on how specific groups frame their own linguistic and cultural practices (Corson, 2001; Bailley, 2000; Hall, 1990; Lee & Anderson, 2009). In other words, cultural identity is heavily influenced by languages and cultures, and is tied to the way people will interact, learn, and teach within specific societies. The *Chogi-Youhacksangs* and *Girugi* students have travelled to the U.S. in order to improve their English skills and gain cultural experiences. These Korean temporary migrant students face very different cultures in the U.S. In order to adapt they also need to learn and engage with new cultural practices. This situation obviously influences these students' cultural identity formation. In this section, I will discuss how cultural identity is defined and how cultural identity is formed.

Hall (1990) states that there are two different ways researchers could think about cultural identity. First, cultural identity reflects the common historical experiences and shared cultural codes which are very stable and unchangeable. Second, Hall points out that cultural identity could be understood as a matter of 'becoming' as well as of 'being'. In other words, cultural identity is formed by not only the past but also the 'play' of the past. He claimed that "identity is the names we give to the different ways we are positioned by, and position ourselves within the narratives of the past" (1990, p.225). Therefore, he stresses that how others position 'us' is crucial in a person's formation of their cultural identity. Cultural identity is not an accomplished fact and it is never completed by how we present ourselves to others. As a result, Hall points out that "cultural identities are the points of identification, the unstable points of identification or suture, which are made, within the discourse of history and culture. Not an essence but a positioning" (1990, p. 226).

There are some other scholars who have argued about the relationship between culture and identity. Sociocultural theorists (Cote, 1996; Norton & Toohey, 2000; Wenger, 1998) argued that identity needs to be understood within three levels; social structure, interaction in socializing institutions and personality. They highlight that identity is an integral aspect of a social theory of learning. They argue that the concept of identity serves as a pivot between the social and the individual so that each can be discussed in terms of the other. Wenger states that "the concept of identity does justice to the lived experience of identity while recognizing its social character—it is the social, the cultural, and the historical with a human face" (1998, p.145). He also asserts

that people's identities are demonstrated in the way they live their lives rather than in the way they describe themselves or the way others describe them.

In sum, sociocultural theorist (Cote, 1996; Norton & Toohey, 2000; Wenger, 1998) and critical scholars (Ball & Ellis, 2007; Hall, 1990, 1996; Nasir, 2002; Norton, 1997; Sadowski, 2008) highlight that cultural identity is intricately tied to the ways that we as humans interact, learn, and teach within individuals' various cultural environments. They understand that cultural identity is not an accomplished or static that after the individual has been through all psychological developmental stages. They view cultural identity as fluid, social, and variable, intricately interwoven with the concept of social constructions. As a result, this cultural identity concept highlights the *Chogi-Youhacksangs* and *Girugi* students' identity negotiation as processes and experiences in which they construct their cultural identity within a series of very complicated social and cultural interactions in their new environments.

Cultural Identity Construction

Traditionally, identity construction has been explained by Erikson's (1965) psychosocial identity developmental theory. In his view, identity is interwoven between the individual and the sociocultural context and experience. His theory also emphasized the roles of social, historical, and cultural factors on ego identity developments and the stages beyond adolescence. This theory covered the entire life span of what is referred to as psychosocial development (Kim, 1998). Erikson (1965) defined the term 'identity' to include both a persistent sameness within oneself (self-sameness) and a persistent sharing of some kind of essential character with others. He determined the eight stages in the process of identity development and suggested that these eight stages were sequentially developed and influenced by the previous stage to the following stage.

In addition to Erikson, another educational psychologist, Marcia (1966, 1980) emphasized that identity is formed by reciprocal social interactions. He proposed adolescent's identity formation as four identity statuses; identity achievement, foreclosure, identity diffusion, and moratorium. He classified these statues based on "the presences or absence of decision-making periods (crisis)" (1980, p.111). Identity achievement is a status in which the individual has gone through the crisis. The adolescents in the foreclosure status willingly commit their roles,

values, or goal before they have experienced identity crisis. The diffusion status means that the adolescents do not have any sense of their commitment for the roles, values, etc. The adolescents in moratorium status are currently in identity crisis. They might explore various commitments for their roles in society.

Though Erikson and Marcia understand the role of social interaction in identity and points to how the adolescent period is critical to formulating their personal identity through social roles, their theory may not apply well to temporarily immigrated Korean adolescents because these Korean adolescents face different cultural environments in their everyday lives and they need to negotiate their identity in various communities in the U.S.

Unlike Erikson's traditional concept of linear psychological identity development, Wenger (1998) argues that a person's identity is formed by various social and cultural interactions through participation in communities of practice. He explains that participation in the communities is not demonstrated by holding a card or other form of identification to indicate membership in a group. Rather, membership is demonstrated by one's competence within the group. Wenger (1998) investigates a profound connection between identity and practice. He defines practice as doing, but not just doing in and of itself. He also points out that 'doing' needs to be understood in a historical and social context that gives structure and meaning to what we do. For this reason, he states that 'practice' needs to be always understood as 'social practice'. Wenger (1998) explains that practice is explained with three basic concepts-- negotiation of meaning, participation, and reification. He describes participation as the social experience of living in the world in terms of membership in social communities and active involvement in social enterprise. Participation is personal and social. It is a complex process that combines doing, talking, thinking, feeling, and belonging. Therefore, he concludes "that an identity is a layering of events of participation and reification by which our experience and its social interpretation inform each other" (p.59).

As Wenger's theory suggested, the *Chogi-Youhacksangs* and *Girugi* students experience various social practices and participations in the U.S. For instance, these students attend American schools and they develop and practice their understanding of their new cultures with their American peers in schools. Some *Chogi-Youhacksangs* who live with American host

families practice the American culture at home, as well. The *Girugi* students and some *Chogi-Youhacksangs* who live with Korean host families in this study practice Korean culture at home. In addition, these students explicitly and implicitly participate in the Korean communities throughout the U.S. These Korean students participate in various social and cultural communities and practice different communities' cultures throughout the U.S.; therefore, these students need to make cultural transitions within and across the Korean and American cultures in their everyday lives from home, school and Korean community. While they traverse across different environments every day in the U.S., they might face conflict and contradiction because Korean culture and American cultures are significantly different.

Supporting Wenger's theory of multiple memberships in multiple communities, some scholars point out that the individual may develop multiple identities through complicated social and cultural interactions while they negotiate their identities. Gergen (1991) has pointed out that social saturation forces the individual to take on many different social roles. In the process of the "consciousness of self-construction," the idea of a unique core identity is placed (formed) by the individual's many social roles. He argues that the individual accepts his/her sense of self which is constructed and reconstructed in multiple contexts. Gergen views identity as a periphery-based phenomenon. It often has variables and is adaptive and context-specific in nature (cited Vyas, 2003). Corson (2001) postulates the idea of identity formation within cultural domains. Corson argues that identity could be negotiated in local institutional spaces as well as in cultural imaginaries through various linguistic and cultural references. Bailey (2000) points out that identity's are constructed and negotiated in local contexts as well as within larger socio-historical contexts. This makes it more visible how the identities that one may want to portray may be met with resistance and non-acceptance based on the dominant forms of ascription that are culturally prevalent.

As a result, identity is formed within a dynamic process, so an individual's identity does not necessarily remain the same while he/she participates in different contexts. Identity is not developed and ceased within a certain circumstance, but changed during the interaction with multiple circumstances so that it can demonstrate dual or multiple features (Gergen, 1991; Vyas, 2003). Identity is not crafted through defining categories; rather, it is a product of social action that creates the categories by which it is later defined. According to this dialectic, identities are

negotiated in face to face interaction, but their significance is understood in terms of what those actions mean, based on the sociocultural and historical practices that are more encompassing than those interactions themselves (Brown et al., 2005).

Cultural Identity Crafting

Wenger (1998) describes identity crafting as movement along the different trajectories moving towards full participation in a community of practice in terms of the influence on the development of identity. He associates identity with the notion of learning and competence. Wenger (1998) says that “identity is not some primordial core of personality that already exists. Nor is it something we acquire at some point in the same way that, at a certain age, we grow a set of permanent teeth. Even though issues of identity as a focus of overt concern may become more salient at certain times than at others, our identity is something we constantly renegotiate during the course of our lives(1998, p. 154).”

He also proposes five trajectories which identify the context of practices of participation in the communities that are formed: (1) peripheral, (2) inbound, (3) insider, (4) boundary, and (5) outbound trajectories. Peripheral trajectories are where individuals had limited participation by choice and by necessity but their participation is enough to contribute to their identity. Inbound trajectories describe the newcomers who fully join the community of practice although they are peripheral participants. Insider trajectories describe the individuals who fully practice in the community. They evolve their practices and renegotiate their identity. Boundary trajectories describe how individuals sustain their identities across different practices. Outbound trajectories describe individuals who over time move out of a practice and develop new relationships, become more involved in the community, and see the world with their own perspectives. For example, these *Chogi- Youhacksangs* and *Girugi* students demonstrate community of practice through attending American schools, getting involved in a Korean church and living with American host families. Beach (1999, 2003) proposes the concept of consequential transition to illustrate the changes in knowledge and identity that may or may not occur as a person moves across social contexts. The concept of consequential transition involves a developmental change in the relationship between an individual and one or more social activities. Identity is one of the mediators of that relationship. Beach (2003) defines transition as “the reconstruction of new

knowledge, skills, and artifacts, or transformation, across time and through multiple social contexts” (p. 9). This movement across contexts is seen as progress and is considered to be a developmental process which can result in change in the individual, the activity or both.

When individuals consciously reflect on a transition and there are changes in the way they view themselves and their position within a community, the transition becomes consequential since it results in a change in identity. In other words, the *Chogi-Youhacksangs* and *Girugi* students develop purposeful movements among schools, home, and the communities. With these movements, they also need to reconstruct or negotiate their inherited values or knowledge to adjust into new social contexts. This means that they need to ‘transition’ among different environments, such as schools, home, and the community in a well-planned and purposeful manner.

Beach (1999) describes four types of transitions: lateral, collateral, encompassing, and meditational. He stated that these transitions share four common features “(1) each involves the construction of knowledge, identities, and skills, or transformation rather than the application of something that has been acquired elsewhere; (2) the notion of progress is understood to be a developmental process; (3) each involves change in knowledge, skill and in identity; (4) each represents changing relationships between individuals and the social contexts within which they are operating” (p.119). Particularly, he explains that “in collateral transition, individuals involve simultaneous participants in two or more historically-related activities. Back and forth movement between activities may or may not have an explicit notion of developmental progress tied to the movement itself (2003, 43p)”.

When individuals move between social contexts, they transition either laterally or collaterally. A lateral transition is movement in one direction and the person is seen as progressing from one social activity to another where the previous activity is seen as a preparation for the subsequent activity. A collateral transition is multidirectional and is seen in when individuals are simultaneously participating in two or more related activities at the same time. For instance, the *Chogi-Youhacksangs* and *Girugi* students continually transition between school, home, and the community in their everyday lives. This means that they transition between complicatedly entangled networks within their social and cultural contexts.

While Wenger and Beach explain how individuals form their cultural identity among different cultural transitions, Oberg (1960) explains how individuals can confront and feel culture shocks in a new environment. Since these students are adolescents and are experiencing new cultures in the U.S., they might personally experience some culture shock regarding the multiple U.S. cultures. Therefore, by understanding cultural identity formation, it will be easier to realize to what degree these students are able to handle cultural situations which could lead to a form of cultural shock.

Oberg defines “culture shock as precipitated by the anxiety that results from losing all our familiar signs and symbols of social intercourse (1960, p.177).” He identifies four stages in culture shock, such as honeymoon, crisis, recovery, and adjustment stage. The honeymoon stage is like a honeymoon; people are fascinated by new cultures when they encounter the new culture for the first time. In the crisis stage, individuals begin criticizing and become hostile toward the host cultures. In this stage, they experience a particularly difficult time adjusting to the new cultures. However, after individuals gain some knowledge and language in the new cultures, they begin the recovery stage by opening their mind to new cultures. They still face some difficulties in this stage, but they make more of an effort to adjust themselves to the new cultures with better attitudes. Then, in the last stage, the adjustment stage, individuals finally accept the new cultures equally and adjust their lives to the new cultures.

In summary, the *Chogi-Youhacksangs* and *Girugi* students in the U.S. make transitions among different cultural environments. Due to huge cultural differences between Korea and the U.S., they may experience culture shock, and they may not experience a smooth transition among home, school, and the community. While they transition among different environments, they often develop dual or multiple memberships. The dual or multiple memberships suggest having dual identities or multiple identities.

Bicultural Identity

The literature on cultural identity construction suggests that *Chogi-Youhacksangs* and *Girugi* students are likely to experience identity negotiation that create in a form of dual or multiple identities. Many educational psychologists and critical scholars (Berry, 1997;

LaFrombois et al, 1993; Phinney et al., 1994; Valentin, 1971; deAnda, 1984; Ramirez & Castandeda, 1974; Red Horse et al., 1981; Solis, 1980; Rashid, 1981; Darder, 1991) also describe a concept of dual identity among individuals who live between a dominant culture and a subordinated culture-their own inherited cultures. They have argued that bicultural individuals experience the dynamics of living in constant tension between conflicting cultural values and conditions of cultural subordination.

Darder claims that “biculturalism refers to a process wherein individuals learn to function in two distinct sociocultural environments: their primary culture, and that of the dominant mainstream culture of the society in which they live” (1991, p. 48). She adds that this process of biculturalism is how bicultural individuals respond to cultural conflicts and the daily struggle with cultural invasion. Solis (1980) points out that biculturalism is displayed when an individual is forced to exist and adapt to two cultures having substantial dissimilarities. He states that the dynamics of biculturation begins when the dominant culture influences the subordinate culture to such a strong degree that it is forced to adapt and assimilate to the dominant culture’s value, language and cognitive style (sited by Darder, 1991). Among various conceptualizations of biculturalism, Rotheram-Borus (1993) suggests that biculturalism can characterize one’s personal identity, one’s choice of a reference group orientation, or one’s competence in negotiating two cultures. She states that biculturalism refers to the exposure of the minority youths to the dominant culture and the degree of association the youths make with the majority culture.

As a result, these critical scholars stress how bicultural individuals are challenged to assimilate and acculturate themselves between dominant culture and their culture. Interestingly, educational psychologists (Berry 1990, 1997; Phinney, 1996) explain that immigrant youths have often either maintained their own culture or adapted to the dominant culture in the society. This process can be identified as acculturation (Phinney, 1996). Phinney defined acculturation as “the extent to which individuals have maintained their culture of origin or have adapted to the larger society (1996. p. 921).” In addition, Berry (1990, 1997) claims that acculturation concepts of multi-dimensional processes composed of assimilation, separation, integration and marginalization. According to Berry (1990, 1997), the assimilation strategy is “when individuals do not wish to maintain their cultural identity and seek daily interaction with other cultures (1997,

p.9).” On the other hand, the separation strategy is when individual identifies solely with their original cultures and rejects interaction with others. The integration is “some degree of cultural integrity maintained, while at the same time seeking to participate as an integral part of the larger social network (p.9)”. The marginalization is when individual rejects both their inherited culture and the dominant culture. Therefore, immigrant youths tend to maintain their inherited cultures and at the same time they inevitably accept the host culture. While they are juggling between the inherited cultures and the dominant cultures, this situation apparently influences formation of immigrant youth’s cultural identity.

Phinney and Devich-Navarro (1997) suggest that there are two ways of being bicultural. This is based on the premise that two cultures are perceived as overlapping, but not completely. Phinney and Dupont (1994) describe bicultural identity as identification with both ethnic culture of one’s origin and the mainstream culture and as well as what one makes of his/her exposure to the two sets of culture (cited Noh, 2003). Vyas (2001) defines bicultural identity as sense of social construction in relation and negotiation of cultural boundaries.

Some other bicultural researchers (Hong, Benet-Martinez, Chiu, & Morris, 2000; 2003) proposed that bicultural individuals possess two or more cultural interpretative frames or schema’s as networks of discrete and specific constructs. These cultural schemas guide behavior only when they come to the foreground in one’s mind and only when they are applicable to social events that need to be judged. Particularly, bicultural individuals engage in a process called ‘cultural frame switching’ (CFS), where they shift between their two cultural interpretive frames in response to cues in their social environment (Cheng et al., 2006). Therefore, bicultural identity integrates both cultures in their everyday lives, demonstrates behavioral competency in both culture, and switching their behavior depending on the cultural demands of the situation (Birman, 1994; Chuang, 1999). In other words, bicultural individuals make transition between their culture and the dominant cultures in their everyday lives just as the *Chogi-Youhacksangs* and *Girugi* students travel across Korean and the U.S. cultures.

While bicultural individuals acculturate into the dominant cultures, they often face challenges and difficulties. Research on bicultural identity describes challenges that immigrant adolescent’s face daily as they deal with their family’s culture of origin and the culture of the

society in which they reside (Barry et al., 2006; Phinney & Devich-Navarro, 1997; Vyas, 2004). Particularly, many studies on Asian immigrants point out how Asian immigrant youth have a difficult time adapting to their new lives in the U.S. based on language barriers and huge cultural differences. Zhou and Lee (2004) found that “the first generation of immigrants often endures difficulties associated with migration such as lack of English-language proficiency, American cultural literacy, and familiarity with the host society” (p.15).

Zhou (2003) explains that many Asian immigrant teenagers spend the majority of their formative years in a different culture, are schooled in a different language, participate in established peer groups, and are immersed in a different youth culture other than that of the U.S. youth culture. Chiang-Hom (2004) finds that “immigrant adolescents were the masters of their own culture--defining what was cool and trendy in their homeland. However, their status changed when they moved to the U.S., where they often would find themselves categorized and ridiculed as racialized minorities by their U.S.-born peers, including their acculturated co-ethnics”(p.143).

Lee (2000) also found that Asian immigrants from the middle class in their home countries often endure downward mobility, relative deprivation, and discrimination in the U.S. As a result, foreign born adolescents who arrived in the U.S. have a particularly challenging time because they have been uprooted from the familiarity of their own culture and placed in a new culture (Chiang-Hom, 2004) at a time when they are heavily involved in the development of their own identities as adolescents. Moreover, Erikson (1980) claims that adolescence is a critical period in identity development because this is the time when adolescents develop their identities in this period through awareness of and increase in their social role. Therefore, the *Chogi-Youhacksangs* and *Girugi* students, foreign born immigrant adolescences, may face huge challenge to be aware of who they are and how they are positioned by others in the U.S.

In sum, educational psychologists (Berry, 1997; Patel et al., 1996; Szapocznik et al., 1980; Phinney & Devich-Navarro, 1997; La Fromboise et al., 1993) state that individuals adopt values in varying degrees leading to an integrative style, instead of substituting one value system for another, so that they become bicultural. In addition, they highlight how culture provides the framework to identify individuals and interact in social relationships. Berry (1997) argues that

the motivation for the cultural transition significantly influences the immigrants compared to the travelers because of the differences between the dominant cultures and the subordinated cultures. In other words, temporary migrants such as travelers, visiting scholars, and study abroad students may have different acculturation strategies from permanent immigrants in the U.S.

The concept of bicultural identity provides some understanding of the dual identity of the *Chogi-Youhacksangs* and *Girugi* students in the U.S. However, the *Chogi-Youhacksangs* and *Girugi* students are not permanent immigrants. Their temporary immigrant status places these students in a somewhat different situation from permanent immigrant youths in the U.S. These Korean students may accept the American cultures more voluntarily than permanent immigrants. Or, they do not need to understand the relationship between Korean cultures and American cultures as the subordinated culture vs. the dominant cultures. Furthermore, the *Chogi-Youhacksangs* and *Girugi* students are positioned in a somewhat higher socioeconomic status compared to other immigrant youths in the U.S. because they are from wealthy families and have highly educated parents. Therefore, the *Chogi-Youhacksangs* and *Girugi* students may develop dual and bicultural identities after they made the significant cultural transitions from Korea to the U.S., but the concept of bicultural identity may not fully explain the identity negotiation of these particular students.

In conclusion, the concept of bicultural identity offers an understanding of the *Chogi-Youhacksangs* and *Girugi* students experience in the U.S. in some aspects such as dual identities between adapted American cultures and their Korean culture. While the theory of biculturalism strongly influences immigrant youths to form their cultural identity between their culture and newly adapted dominant culture, the bicultural identity concept focus on permanent immigrant youth. The *Chogi-Youhacksangs* and *Girugi* students such as those in this study are temporarily migrated into the U.S. They are uncertain as to whether or not they will stay in the U.S. or return to Korea. In addition, the biculturalism assumes that cultural contrast or conflicts between the dominant and the subordinated cultures. The *Chogi-Youhacksangs* and *Girugi* view American cultures as valuable rather than dominant compared to Korea cultures. The reason that they consider American cultures as valuable is because they come to the U.S. to study English, gain American education, and acquire cultural experiences in the U.S. In other words, American education and cultures are cultural capital for them and they have come to the U.S. in order to

gain cultural capital ultimately. Bourdieu's cultural capital theory and how the cultural capital theory influences these students identity negotiation while they are in the U.S. will be discussed in the next section.

In summary, I presented Bourdieu's cultural capital theory, Wenger's cultural identity formation through community practices, and the concept of bicultural identity to discuss the *Chogi-Youhacksangs* and *Girugi* students' cultural identity negotiation in the U.S. I used three conceptual frameworks to explain the benefits that the parents and students expect from studying abroad in the U.S. and the costs that the parents and students should pay for this trip no matter whether they realize their expectations or not. Since Korean parents and the general public only emphasize the benefits or outcome from the U.S. education, they often underestimate or ignore the cost for studying abroad in the U.S. or they only focus on financial costs for this educational journey. In the next section, I will present what the costs and the benefits are for these Korean students and parents from empirical studies.

Empirical Literature Reviews

As previously stated, because this phenomenon is a recent trend little research has been conducted regarding the elementary and secondary students' study abroad phenomenon and the experiences these Korean students face. Some studies have been done on K-12 study abroad students from Hong Kong and Taiwan. When Hong Kong was returned to China in the late of 1990s, many K-12 students from Hong Kong and Taiwan came to Canada or the U.S. for political and economic safety issue (Tsang et al., 2003; Zhou, 1998). Although the primary reason of their migration into North America is not educational purpose, they might face similar challenges to adjust their lives in new environments as Asian youths. Also, Korean study abroad students in the U.S. may have experiences with Korean Americans or immigrants despite their temporarily migrant status. Therefore, I will review literatures on Asian Americans and Asian immigrant youths, as well as a few studies on Korean elementary and secondary study abroad students in the next sections.

Asian Immigrant Youth

Immigration is a very difficult and painful procedure (Segal, 1991) and can be very challenging for immigrant adolescents to adopt a new culture. Zhou and Lee (2004) found that “the first generation of immigrants so often endure difficulties associated with migration, such as lack of English-language proficiency, American cultural literacy, and familiarity with the host society” (p.15). Chiang-Hom (2004) explains that foreign born adolescents who arrive in the U. S. have a particularly challenging time because they have been uprooted from the familiarity of their own culture and placed in a new culture at a time when they are heavily involved in the development of their own identities as adolescents. Erikson (1980) describes how adolescents develop their identities in this period through awareness of and increase in their social roles. In other words, adolescence is a critical period in identity development. Thus, immigrant adolescents face huge difficulties and challenges to construct their cultural identities in their new environment.

Researchers on immigrant youths (Yeh et al., 2007; Zhou, 2003; Zhou & Lee, 2004; Chiang-Hom, 2004) have highlighted how immigrant teenagers have struggled with acculturating in a new environment after spending the majority of their formative years in a different culture, where they were schooled in a different language, established peer groups, and were immersed in a different youth culture than that of the United States. Chiang-Hom (2004) finds that “immigrant adolescents were the masters of their own culture--defining what was cool and trendy in their homeland. However, their status changed when they moved to the U.S., where they often would find themselves categorized and ridiculed as racialized minorities by their U.S.-born peers, including their acculturated coethnics”(p.143). Immigrant youths have experienced not only cultural and social transition, but also changes in class status. Lee (2000) finds that Asian immigrants from the middle class in their countries often endure downward mobility, relative deprivation, and discrimination in the U.S. It is the same for most *Girugi* students and *Chogi-Youhacksangs* who are from high SES family backgrounds. They were considered to be in a high status economically and culturally in Korea. However, they find themselves socially repositioned to a status below what they are accustomed to when they lived in Korea.

Once *Girugi* families and *Chogi-Youhacksangs* arrive in the U. S., they settle down and adjust to their new life. During this process, they face many difficulties because of cultural

differences and language barriers (Chiang-Hom, 2004; Tsang et al., 2003; Choi et al, 2001; Park, 2007). Although they are willing to accept a new culture and new life in the U.S., they experience conflicts and contradictions between the Korean and American values and culture. Kim and Seth (2008) point out that Korean Americans are more likely group-oriented people based on their collectivism and Confucian tradition. This Korean tradition is often contradicted by American cultural individualism. Research on Korean Americans (Strom et al., 1987; Rohner & Pettengill, 1985; Kim & Hong, 2007; Park. 2007) finds that Korean American youth are raised under strong parental control, and Korean parents focus on Korean values for their children. This strong Korean traditional style of parenting is often a cause of conflicts for Korean American adolescents.

Therefore, *Girugi* students and *Chogi-Youhacksangs* may reject the American culture when they feel that it contradicts their Korean values or the family values that their parents want to teach them at home. Sometimes they may have to choose between Korean values or American values in the case of a choice between their friends in school and their parents or guardians and their communities. Such was the case in the research done by Centrie (2004), who studied bicultural issues among Vietnamese students, and Zhou and Lee (2004), who studied Asian-American adolescents. Korean parents may want their children to be exposed to American culture and to practice English with their American friends. On the other hand, they may also be afraid that their children will become “too” American. That is why many *Girugi* families and *Chogi-Youhacksangs* generally settle in metropolitan areas of the U.S. where there are large Korean communities. They often want their children to live in a Korean enclave while they are in the U.S. (KEDI, 2005).

As a result, Asian immigrant youths face various challenges adapting their new lives to the U.S. because they already set up their status and have accumulated a certain degree of inherited cultures in their home countries. These situations often make Asian immigrant youths confused about whom they really are and how they are to behave in their new environments. However, they have to face another big misunderstanding about Asian Americans after they struggle with overcoming their cultural differences-model minority stereotypes.

Model Minority Stereotype

Although there are a great variety of Asian ethnicities and cultures of Asian immigrants, Asian-Americans or Asian immigrants are generally viewed as a single “model” minority group in the U.S. (Lee, 1996, 2008). The model minority stereotype is basically focused on how Asian American students are academically successful in their schools in the U. S. Lee (1996) argued that “the model minority stereotype maintains the dominance of whites in the racial hierarchy by diverting attention away from racial inequality and by setting standards for how minorities behave” (p. 6). An additional problem with this concept of model minority is that it may provide a prejudiced image of Asian immigrant adolescents as “math genius”, “computer geeks”, or “the effeminized” (Zhou and Lee, 2004; Lee, 2008, Godina & Choi, 2009). Recent studies (Lee, 1999, 2008; Lew, 2007; Yeh et al., 2007, Godina & Choi, 2009) show how model minority stereotypes misinterpreted the formation of Asian immigrant youth identity.

The model minority stereotype is also criticized because it is based on incorrect assumptions that Asians are homogenous groups (Yeh et al, 2005). Lew (2007) studied how the Asian-Americans, particularly Korean Americans student’s, dropout rate is increasing in the New York City metropolitan area. She points out that model minority stereotypes ignore structural barriers in the U.S., and Korean-American students face these structural barriers in their families, schools and communities. Godina and Choi (2009) explore how the stereotype and a particular cultural image mislead and generalize the understanding for Korean-Americans in intercultural elementary school classroom environments. Asher (2007) claims that the model minority stereotype represents Asian Americans as one single image of academically and economically successful ethnic minority group in the U.S. She asserts that this stereotype is “an insidious, racist, hegemonic device, which operates to ensure Asian Americans’ acceptance of White standards of objectivity...and achievement as being morally absolute” (2007, p. 70). In sum, the model minority stereotype shrinks Asian Americans’ ethnic and cultural diversities and provide biased monolithic images about Asian Americans in the U.S. This stereotype may aggravate the gap not only among other ethnic minorities, but also among themselves.

Model Minority Stereotype and Cultural Capital. Asian Americans are the third largest minority groups in the U.S., and there are huge diversities among Asian Americans. However, there is not much research on this diverse group of Asian Americans (Barnes & Bennet, 2000). Studies on Asian American youth (Hong, 1993; Zhou & Lee, 2004; Yeh et al.,

2005) claim that Asian American youths have been omitted from research or limited to the model minority stereotype. In addition, they observe that Asian Americans have been portrayed as the exotic oriental (Hong, 1993). For example, Asian students tend to be seen as mysteriously shy or inhibited compared to outgoing American students in school.

Recent studies on Asian Americans (Lee, 1999; Lew, 2007; Yeh et al., 2005) point out how previous studies that focus on model minority stereotypes misinterpret the formation of Asian immigrant youth identity. The model minority stereotype is also criticized because it is based on the incorrect assumption that Asians are homogenous groups (Yeh et al, 2005). Lew (2007) studies how Asian-American, particularly Korean American, students' drop-out rate is increasing in the New York City metropolitan area. She points out that model minority stereotypes ignore structural barriers in the U. S., and Korean American students face these structural barriers in their families, schools and communities.

Generally, Korean students in the U.S. are high achieving students in school, like the model minority stereotype claims. However, Lew (2004) analyzed the dark sides of the model minority stereotype for Korean American students and shows how their socioeconomic backgrounds, social capital and school resources affect those youths' educational attainment and aspirations. She pointed out that although Korean Americans are considered uniformly middle class, entrepreneurial and successful, most of the families of Korean American high school dropouts were not entrepreneurs, but rather worked for co-ethnic entrepreneurs. Their parents have low skill jobs in ethnic enclaves with limited income.

Therefore, these Korean American students' limited social economic backgrounds do not allow them to be embedded in social networks in communities or schools in the U.S. that could provide them with important institutional resources and support. This study unveils that Korean students in the U.S. do not always achieve the academic success that Korean parents hoped for and imagined in Korea. Lew's studies (2004, 2007) provide different perspectives compared to the blind positive perception of Korean parents about the U.S. education. In addition, it signifies that students might have different perspectives than their parents.

Unlike African Americans, Korean immigrants to the U.S. generally have been classified as voluntary immigrants who have immigrated into the U.S. for the better opportunities compared to other ethnic minority immigrants (Ogbu, 1983). This voluntary immigrant position provides somewhat different or higher status to Korean immigrants compared to other ethnic minority groups in the U.S. Scholars on immigrants (Ogbu & Simmons, 1987; Nasir & Saxe, 2003) also argued that their status heavily influence the students' performance in schools. On the other hand, many scholars (DiMaggio, 1992; Lareau, 2002; Lareau & Weinger, 2003) on cultural capital have discovered how students have different levels of academic success in school based on the discontinuity between their home culture and school culture. While they highlight why African American or Hispanic American students show higher dropout rates or lower academic performances in the U.S. education system, they barely mentioned Asian Americans or Asian immigrants or they excluded Asian students because of their somewhat different immigrant status or the model minority stereotype.

Therefore, Asian immigrants or Asian Americans are excluded from studies on cultural capital theory in the U.S., although they face language barriers and huge cultural gaps between their home and school. However, gaining cultural capital is a salient reason why these Korean K-12 students and their families come to the U.S. It should also be stated that they have temporarily migrated into the U.S. and are unsure how long they will stay in the U.S. These conditions push these students to adapt themselves to the American culture rapidly compared to the permanent immigrants. As a result, the effort and challenges of Asian immigrant youths is underestimated because of the model minority stereotype. Thus, we should carefully examine how this complicated situation influences *Girugi* students and *Chogi-Youhacksangs* cultural identity. In order to shed light on how these Korean students construct their cultural identities with challenges and misunderstandings from others, previous studies of Asian Americans' bicultural identity formation in the next section.

Bicultural identity of Asian American Youth

Among various conceptualizations of biculturalism, Rotheram-Borus (1993) suggests that biculturalism can characterize one's personal identity, one's choice of a reference group orientation, or one's competence in negotiating two cultures. She states that biculturalism refers

to the exposure of minority youths to the dominant culture and the degree of association the youths make with a majority culture.

Immigrant adolescents often feel that they are situated at the intersection of ethnically and socially diverse cultures (Bhatti, 1999) and that the different cultural worlds of home and school (Garret, 1995; Phelan et al., 1998; Vyas, 2002) contribute to the sense of duality that is often inherent in their identity making. Thus, cultural tensions between their own culture and their newly adapted culture are clearly a challenge. For example, the familial obligation to obey the elders and repay parental sacrifices, along with the extraordinarily high parental expectations for educational and occupational achievements for immigrant adolescents (Zhou and Lee, 2004, p.15) can conflict with independent and more autonomous American culture.

Studies on bicultural identity of Asian Americans (Choi et al., 2001; Park, 1999; Farver & Lee-Shin, 2000; Hong et al., 2000; Lu, 2001; Benet-Martinez, 2002; Tsang et al., 2003) observe how Asian immigrants acculturate in the U.S. by using Berry's four stages of acculturation (1990): integration, assimilation, separation, and marginalization. Berry (1990, 1997) explains that integration is a procedure to become bicultural by maintaining some characteristics of their ethnic group while selectively adding those of the host culture. Assimilation is defined as being identified solely with the dominant culture and to sever with one's own culture. Separation stage is to be identified solely with their group and reject the host culture. Marginalization is a stage where a person rejects both their own culture and the host culture.

Studies on the Asian American cultures observed that Asian Americans possess duality or double consciousness between western culture and their traditional culture (Hong et al., 2000, Lee et al., 2001; Park, 1999, Yeh et al., 2005). Choi et al., (2001) and Park (1999) studied how the 1.5⁶ generation of Korean Americans formed their ethnic identity. They found that there was the duality or double consciousness in the Korean American's life. Particularly, they focus on the 1.5 generation Korean American, who were born in Korea and immigrated to the U.S. and how they acculturated differently within the U.S. from the second generation and the first generation.

⁶ They are born in Korea and they moved into the U.S. with their parents. In this reason, they are neither classified as the first generation, nor the second generation of Korean immigrants. Therefore, they are called as 1.5 generation.

Lee (2002) studies the relationship between Korean maintenance and cultural identity formation of the second generation of Korean Americans. She finds that higher Korean identity orientation shows with higher Korean proficiency in Korean Americans. Interestingly, her study also shows that higher Korean proficiency is associated with higher American orientation items. In other words, Korean Americans who speak fluent Korean tend to be more bicultural in her study.

While many Korean Americans manage the dual cultural identities, it often causes confusion and contradiction between the new western culture and their traditional culture. Yeh et al. (2005) claims that Korean Americans struggle to balance American and Korean cultural values and norms and use social support networks to manage the stress in order to be acculturated in the U.S life. Particularly, several studies point out that Korean immigrants have struggled with acculturating in new environments because they show more 'ethnic attachment' than among other immigrant groups (Farver & Lee-Shin, 2000). Min (1998) claims that Korean immigrants maintain Korean culture by associating with a Korean social network, typically a Christian church. Min (2000) also estimated that about 75% of Korean immigrants in the U.S. were affiliated with Korean churches and that Korean churches played significant roles for Korean communities in the U. S. Min (1992) observes that Korean churches are one of the significant social institutions used to maintain Korean culture and identity while Koreans settle down in a new environment in order to meet their needs through social networks. From my pilot study (2007), I found that many Korean immigrants are very actively involved with Korean churches in the city. They attend Sunday schools, Bible study in Korean, church orchestra, church band, church choir, sports events, and other volunteer work in churches. Therefore, this situation may lead the Korean immigrant families to be excluded from the mainstream American culture and encourage them to shift into an ethnic enclave, such as a church centered Korean community.

Additionally, researchers (Farver & Lee-Shin, 2000; Kim, 1995; Lee, 1990; Park & Cho, 1995, Yeh et al., 2005) explain that the Korean traditional culture is very distinct from an American contemporary culture. For instance, Korean traditional Confucian values, such as hierarchy of status difference reflecting age, and gender, cause contradiction between the American and Korean cultures. When Korean parents send their children to the U.S., they want their children to improve in their English proficiency and gain exposure to the American culture,

such as how Americans speak and how Americans behave (KEDI, 2005; Kang, 2002; Choi, 2004). However, these families cannot fully support and be involved in their children's lives in the United States beyond giving financial support due to the fact that their Korean culture and values, such as respect and concession, modesty, harmony, and endurance are very different from American values and is often contradicted by American culture. As a result, this unique situation of temporarily migrated Korean K-12 students heavily influences their formation of their cultural identity among different environments in the U.S.

Asian American youths often feel a duality as Asians and as Americans. They often feel confused of who they really are because of their disconnection between their home and school culture. However, *Girugi* students and *Chogi-Youhacksang* are exposed to more complicated situations than Asian Americans because of their uncertain immigration status. Unlike permanent immigrant youths, the *Chogi-Youhacksangs* and *Girugi* students need to maintain Korean values or cultures purposefully in preparation of their return to Korea.

Parachute Kids from Hong Kong, Taiwan, and China

Leaving one's home country for education is found not only in Korea but also in many other parts of the world. Some studies have been done on study abroad K-12 students from Hong Kong, Taiwan, and China. However, scholars used different terms to describe these types of students and families, such as 'parachute kids', 'satellite children', and 'astronaut families' (Hwang & Watanabee, 1990; "Home Alone," 1993; Lam, 1994; van den Hemel, 1996a, 1996b; Orellana et al., 2001; Tsang et al, 2003; Waters, 2002; Zhou, 1998; Tsong & Liu, 2008).

Zhou(1998) defines parachute kids as "a highly select group of foreign students' age 8 to 17 who has arrived in the United States, mostly from Asia, to seek a better education in American elementary or high schools (p. 683)." According to Hamilton (1993), parachute kids generally refer to Asian Americans who come to the U.S. for an education without their parents, particularly students from Hong Kong and Taiwan in the 1990s. In other words, parachute kids generally refer to Asian students, particularly from Hong Kong and Taiwan who study abroad in the U.S.

Li (2006) describes astronaut families as families separated across the Pacific Ocean. Waters (2002) describe the astronaut families as “a migration strategy, practiced by Hong Kong and Taiwanese business and professional families and manifest in immigrant gateway cities such as Vancouver, Sydney, and Auckland (2002, p. 117).” As Waters defines the term of astronaut families, studies of these families were focused on Hong Kong, Taiwanese, and Chinese in Canada. The family is separated by the Pacific Ocean and parents seldom see their children. The satellite children are derived from similar situations (Man, 1994) with astronaut families. However, these terms mainly refer to Chinese immigrants from Hong Kong and Taiwan. They have somewhat different reasons than Korean students and their families for coming to the U.S., such as political security and personal liberty (Tsang et al., 2003).

To sum these terms, parachute kids, astronaut families, and satellite children, refer the Asian elementary and secondary students or their families who come to the North America to study abroad. They generally came from China, Hong Kong, and Taiwan for economic, political and educational purpose.

Since this pattern of immigrants is a new trend, some studies (Zhou, 1998; Hsieh, 2007; Li, 2006; Tsong & Liu, 2008; Water, 2010) offer an introduction their group of people and their general experiences in the U.S. or Canada rather attempting a deeper analysis of this population. Some studies (Cheng, 1998; Tsong & Liu, 2008) revealed that these students have struggled with living without their parents in the U.S. These studies focused on the students’ psychological development to live in the U.S. Tsang et al. (2003) studied how satellite children in Canada have struggled with developing their identity due to the uncertainties derived from fractured family relations and racism in the new land. They posed questions on how satellite children negotiate their identity in the context of the challenges and demands. Some studies (Waters 2002; Tsang et al, 2003) argued the push and pull factors for why the students left their homeland and come to the U.S. for economic and political liberty. Most research on this group of students was conducted in large Chinese ethnic enclaves from metropolitan area such as California and British Colombia, Canada.

Korean Elementary and Secondary Students Studying Abroad

The study of these particular groups of Korean students and their families in the U.S. is relatively new and there is little consensus among researchers about how they refer to these groups of people. Therefore, there are various terms to be used to investigate the Korean students and their families. Whereas most scholars in Korea used the same term, *Chogi-Youhacksangs* and *Girugi* families, scholars in the U.S. used various terms such as ‘parachute kids’, ‘Early Study Abroad Students’, and Korean Americans or Korean immigrants to explore and understand these students and families. Some studies (Orellana et al, 2001; Lee, 2006; Byun, 2010) borrowed ‘parachute kids’, which originally refers to a group of Hong Kong and Taiwanese students. Some studies (Park, 2007; Lee, 2010) used the term, ‘Early Study Abroad Students’, which is an English transition from the Korean term, *Chogi-Youhacksangs*. Or, some scholars (Palmer & Jang, 2005) classify these Korean students as Korean immigrants in the U.S.

To clarify the unique situation of these Korean students, I will use the terms *Chogi-Youhacksang* and *Girugi* families in this study because this study focuses on Korean students and their families. They come to the U.S. in order to gain better opportunities through education and this singular purpose influences how they form their cultural identity in the U.S. Moreover, I would like to introduce the Korean phenomenon and cultures in this study. For these reasons, I will use the term *Chogi-Youhacksangs* and *Girugi* families in this study.

Like some studies on parachute kids, one type of study (Orellana et al.2001; Kim, 2007; Lee, 2006) on the Korean students and families is a general introduction to this population and their lives in the U.S. Orellana et al., (2001) study the pattern and experiences of several immigrant groups from Mexico, Central America, Korea, and Yemen in Los Angeles area. They introduce the Korean students as ‘parachute kids’ and explain some of the reasons Korean students study abroad in the U.S.: to avoid high competitive studying stress, to enter universities in Korea, and as a stepping stone to gradually immigrate in to the U.S.

Some studies tried to reveal the reasons why the students left Korea to study abroad in the U.S. Unlike satellite children and parachute kids from Hong Kong and Taiwan, Korean students come to the U.S. for educational purpose and cultural benefits as well. Due to obvious purposes for studying abroad, several studies focus on the reasons why Korean parents want to send their children to study abroad in the U.S. According to the KEDI survey (2005), one of the major

reasons why parents send their kids to study abroad is because of English proficiency. Secondly, the KEDI survey (2005) reported that parents feel that a Korean education is too competitive, particularly the national entrance examination for prestigious universities. Thirdly, parents think that a private education in Korea is too expensive. Also, parents pointed out that a foreign education is considered to be more valuable in Korea, and they want to raise their kids as global citizens. Some studies (Park & Nancy, 2004; Park, 2009) proved that English is not merely viewed as a language in Korea. It is rather an “ideological vehicle” in Korea than practical language because of the value of English proficiency in Korean society; that is, Koreans consider English proficiency and an exposure to American culture as a social and cultural benefit.

Interestingly, some Korean researchers on this phenomenon (KEDI, 2005; Kang, 2002; Choi, 2004; Kim, 2001) showed that parents stressed about whether their children may or may not be left behind unless they receive an education abroad. When their neighbors leave Korea to study abroad, other parents decide to send their children to study abroad as well. Choi(2004) particularly claims that Korean parents often identify themselves with their children and Korean parents want to their dreams to come true through their children. For this reason, the Korean parents pay close attention to the education their children receive and provide better educational environments. In one very interesting study, Kang (2002) studies the perception of mothers who send their children study abroad in the wealthiest school district in Korea. She describes that the parent’s perception about study abroad is strongly associated with their wealth neighbors. Therefore, children’s education abroad is aimed not only at education, but also at achieving a kind of social symbol for high SES parents to build cultural capital.

Therefore, we need to explore this study abroad phenomenon in a way that not only focuses on the surface level, but also on understanding multiple perspectives such as gaining cultural and symbolic power. However, no previous studies have been done with these multiple perspectives on this phenomenon. In addition, recent studies (Chung 2008; Paik, 2005; Park & Nancy, 2004; Park, 2007; Lee, 2010) describe the phenomenon as just because of ‘English fever’ or emphasizing improving the children English education instead of exploring multiple layers of Korean parents’ decision.

Leaving Korea to study abroad for elementary and secondary students in Korea has become a pervasive and common phenomenon in Korea. Although this issue has been frequently discussed in Korean major mass media, major broadcasting stations and major daily newspapers, there have been few academic studies on this phenomenon in Korea because this is a recent trend. Furthermore, previous studies have focused more on social impacts rather than individual experiences. For example, researchers and educators focused on how this phenomenon aggravated the gap between high socioeconomic status (SES) and low socioeconomic status (SES) Koreans (Son, 2003; Kang, 2002, Kim, 2005; KEDI, 2005). Policy makers and mass media tried to find out the reason why Korean elementary and secondary students left Korea to study abroad and suggested the remedies for Korean students and their families who are left in Korea (KEDI, 2005; Park, 2005). Moreover, some researchers investigate how parents struggled with this temporary family separation because of their children's education (Choi, 2004). Some researchers (Kim, 1997; Kim, 1999; Son, 2003) examined how Korean students returning from study abroad experienced challenges reintegrating back into Korean culture.

Among the few studies conducted in the U.S., most research (Chung, 2008; Kim, 2007; Paik 2005; Park, 2007) on this issue discusses how mothers in the U.S. struggle with their new environments rather than describing students' perspectives. Park (2007) investigated parents' belief about their children's learning English in the U.S. and highlighted the students' study English in the U.S. Even when researchers studied students in the U.S., they did not distinguish carefully between students who immigrated into the U.S. with their parents and those who came to the U.S. with their mothers or by themselves for educational purposes. For instance, Palmer and Jang (2005) studied how recent Korean immigrant high school students became aware of ethnic and racial issues in the U.S. school setting. In their study, they used the term Korean Born, Korean American, (KBKA) to describe these students.

A few studies have been done focusing on Korean college students in the U.S. Lee (2006) studied how Korean American students acculturated and developed their ethnic identity. He examined how Korean American college students cope with their challenges in new environments. He focused on college students in his study and found clear differences between the second generation of Korean Americans and Korean parachute kids to maintain and develop Korean ethnic identity. Lee (2010) focused in her research that these Korean college students

who have attended elementary and secondary schools in the U.S. develop their identity through learning English in the U.S. She focuses on identity development as English learners. However, these studies focus on Korean college students who have already been through their adolescents before they came to the U.S.

Most research on the Korean secondary study abroad students has been conducted in Los Angeles area where the largest Korean population in the US is located. These Korean students tend to settle in a big city because they are from the biggest city in Korea. They are used to living in a metropolitan area and prefer the west coast area because of the geographical closeness with Korea (Orellanan et al., 2001; Kim, 2007; Lee, 2010; Byun, 2010). In her research, Byun (2010) observed 10 Korean high school students. She focused on studying these students' school experiences and their psychological adjustment. Lee (2007) studied 11 Korean students who attend the elementary and high school students in the U.S. He explored the students' lives in the U.S. focusing on school experiences. He also included in his study the students who came with their parents to the U.S. and highlighted their studying English purpose during their stay in the U.S.

Over all, most research on these Korean students and families seems to agree that the major purpose for studying abroad in the U.S. is studying English and gaining education. English and the U.S. education apparently provide benefits to the students. Therefore, many scholars argued there are benefits from studying abroad in the U.S. and how the benefits influence Korean society. Particularly, the studies conducted in Korea highlighted the parents' perspectives and the social issues which can be result from the study abroad experiences. In other words, they emphasize the benefits or the outcome of studying abroad in the U.S. without mentioning any costs that the students and the families may pay for the study abroad in the U.S. except financial costs.

On the other hand, the research conducted in the U.S. tried to explain the students and their family's experiences in the U.S. However, the scholars limited focusing on these Korean students' school experiences in the U.S. as solely emphasizing studying English as the purpose. When scholars studied this phenomenon in Korea and the U.S., they tended to highlight the purpose of studying abroad in the U.S. as studying English. However, as I already point out, if

Korean parents consider only studying English for their children, they can choose any other English speaking countries such as India, the Philippines, South Africa, etc. However, many parents wish to send their children primarily in the U.S. in spite of significant financial, cultural, and psychological costs because the U.S. is a culturally, politically, and economically powerful country in the global era. In other words, Korean parents consider that the U.S. education and culture is valuable and worthy for their children's future. For this reason, we should not minimize the study abroad experience in the U.S. as just for English proficiency. There are more various desires from Korean parents to send their children study abroad in the U.S.

Thus, in this research, I will examine the unrevealed cost that the students and families have to go through while living in massively different cultural environments while carefully paying attention to the *de facto* purpose to study abroad in the U.S.- gaining cultural capital through the U.S. education and living experiences.

To conclude, there are few studies on this particular group of Koreans students and families in Korea and in the U.S. as well. Their studies on Korean youth in the U.S. do not clearly distinguish between permanent immigrants with their families and temporarily immigrants with their mothers or by themselves. Many studies reviews on Asian Americans about the model minority stereotypes underestimate these Korean students' challenges or struggles to adapt new cultures. To explain developing Asian Americans and Asian immigrants' cultural identity, many researchers observe that they become bicultural and they negotiate their cultural identities among different environments. However, few studies focus on how these Korean adolescents acculturate in new environments and how they negotiate their cultural identities in different environments.

Summary

In this chapter I have reviewed a body of relevant theoretical and empirical literature in order to gain insight into the unique nature of the *Chogi-Youhacksangs* and *Girugi* families' experiences.

Cultural identity construction and the concept of bicultural identity anticipate way of the experiences that the Korean parents and children are most likely to have on their identity crafting

in the U.S. Once these Korean families arrive in the U.S., they may face unexpected challenges because of their lack of English literacy and differences in the value system between Korea and the U. S. Bourdieu's cultural capital theory supports parents' assumptions that an American education is an advantage tool to gain and accumulate cultural capital. This also explains the benefits that Korean parents derive from having their children's education in the U. S. Wenger's (1998) concept of identity formation in community of practice offers an understanding how the *Girugi* and *Chogi-Youhacksangs* craft their identity through their experiences within the different cultural environments such as homes, schools and communities. The concept of cultural identity helps to understand how these Korean students construct their cultural identity through not only how they identify themselves but also how they are labeled by others within social, political and cultural contexts. Research on bicultural identity describes some of the challenges that *Chogi-Youhacksangs* and *Girugi* families may face as they negotiate living between the Korean and American culture.

In the empirical studies, I discussed previous studies on Asian American immigrant youths, Asian Americans, and study abroad phenomenon in Korea. Due to a lack of comprehensive studies on these particular Korean students and their families, I presented studies on Asian immigrant youths and Asian Americans. This literature is useful to describe how these Korean students and their families struggle with the acculturation process they will go through during their time in the U.S. However, these studies focus on permanent immigration youths instead of temporary migration youths like the *Chogi-Youhacksangs* and *Girugi* students. I introduced studies on Chinese study abroad students from Hong Kong and Twain. It helps to understand how a journey from their countries to the U.S. influences on adolescents' lives, although these Chinese students have somewhat different purpose for coming to the U.S. with Korean students. Previous Korean literature on the *Chogi-Youhacksangs* and *Girugi* students reveal the social effects in Korean society, academic ramifications, and parental experiences. However, it does not examine the students' perspectives and their experiences as they spend time to acculturate themselves and negotiate to form their cultural identity in the U.S. Therefore, this study is necessary to fully understand the experience and the cost of the *Chogi- Youhacksangs* and *Girugi* families in the U.S.

I have also reviewed studies on Korean elementary and secondary study abroad students in the U.S. and the study abroad phenomenon in Korea. Firstly, researchers use the term for these group of Korean students and their families as Korea Born Korean American, Korean American, Korean immigrants, or parachute kids without any explanation or any distinction among Korean Americans and these temporary migrants. Therefore, I use the Korean term, *Chogi-Youhacksangs* and *Girugi* families, because in my study I focus on specific Korean students and their families, and these students' identity formation. Additionally, many researchers emphasize how parents in Korea scarified themselves for their children's education. Lastly, studies have been done in Korea focus on analyzing the study abroad trend with societal levels. To better analyze this phenomenon, we should understand how these students and their families' lives really are in the U.S.

CHAPTER THREE

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY AND DESIGN

Introduction

This study examines the experiences of *Chogi-Youhacksangs* and *Girugi* families who have temporarily migrated for the purpose of living and studying in the U.S. This study also investigates how some of the cultural challenges of living and studying in another culture influence these Korean students. They come to the U.S. to gain the perceived advantages of an American education. At the same time, these students and families must renegotiate their cultural identity in temporarily migrating to the U.S. for educational purposes. The temporary migrating status and living in different cultural environments challenge them during their cultural journey in their everyday lives from school to home/home to community between Korea and the U.S. cultures. When these Korean adolescents travel across different cultural environments, they also need to negotiate their cultural identity. This form of identity negotiation is particularly challenging because many students and their families plan to return to Korea. As a result, these Korean students and their parents make a very important decision to study abroad in the U.S. to gain cultural capital by gaining English fluency and cultural experiences. However, they face unexpected challenges and pay unpredicted costs for this trip.

The phenomenon of *Girugi* families and *Chogi-Youhacksangs* has been accelerated by ‘Globalization’ and ‘English Fever’ in Korea starting in the late 1990s (Park, 2007). Korean daily news, The *Yonhap* News, reported that from 2000 to 2008, the total number of elementary and secondary students who left Korea to study abroad reached one hundred fifty thousand. With an increasing numbers of these students, the Korean public is concerned whether the benefits from the experiences of study abroad are positive or negative for Korean society. However, minimal research has been performed regarding how the students incur tremendous psychological and cultural costs in order to study in the U.S. Therefore, this study examines what the benefits and the unforeseen costs are for the students and their families.

The term *Chogi- Youhacksang*⁷ is used to refer to students who study abroad in elementary or secondary schools. *Girugi* family is a popular colloquial term rather than an academic concept in Korean. Koreans use the term *Girugi*, wild goose, to refer to families that separate, leaving some family members in Korea while other members travel to other countries in order to pursue better educational opportunities for the younger generations. Recently, this colloquial term is newly further classified by parents' economic status as three different types: Eagle fathers, Wild goose fathers, and Penguin fathers. First, 'Eagle' fathers are the richest fathers who are able to fly into the U.S. whenever they want. That's why they are called Eager fathers. Secondly, fathers who are able to fly into the U.S. once or twice per year are called Goose fathers. However, fathers who cannot fly to the U.S. because they cannot afford the travel cost are called Penguin fathers like penguins, birds which cannot fly. These newly coined terms about *Girugi* fathers reflect how sending children to study abroad is pervasive in Korea and how the Korean public considers an education abroad, particularly in the U.S., as economic and symbolic power.

In this study, I will use the general term *Girugi*- wild goose- families to explain the families which are temporarily separated for their children's educational purposes. Therefore, *Girugi* students refer to the students who live with their mother in the U.S. In addition, I will use the term *Chogi-Youhacksangs* to describe the students who come to the U.S. by themselves and live with guardians in order to distinguish between the two different groups of the students in this study.

There are slightly different processes to become *Girugi* families. Some mothers accompany their child/children to the U.S. in order to provide better educational opportunities for their child/children. Other Korean parents travel to the U.S. for business with their children. When the fathers return to Korea, they sometimes leave the rest of their family members in the U.S. for their children's educational purposes. Recently, more and more mothers travel to the U.S. to pursue their own personal higher education, and they bring their children with them. This study only includes the first and second patterns of *Girugi* families because the third pattern is

⁷ In Korean, *Chogi* means "an early age" and *Youhacksang* translates into "study abroad students".

primarily for parents' education instead of their children's education. Also, when Korean mothers pursue their higher education, they are generally in their late thirties or mid- forties, which means that their children are generally younger than the demography of this study. Therefore, the third pattern of *Girugi* family is excluded from this study.

Theoretical Framework

To gain an understanding of the phenomenon where a significant number of Korean adolescents are brought to the U. S. to study in middle schools and high schools, I examine the phenomenon using three concepts: cultural capital theory, cultural identity formation, and bicultural identity.

Cultural Capital

To examine the parents' perception about an American education, I use Bourdieu's cultural capital theory (1986). As explained above, Korean parents and the general public believe an American education confers cultural benefits and symbolic power that can be transformed into economic power for their children's future in terms of English proficiency, cultural experiences, and the benefits for the entrance examination to prestigious universities in Korea.

Cultural Identity Formation

To investigate the *Chogi-Youhacksangs* and *Girugi* students' cultural identity negotiation in new environments, I will utilize a sociocultural perspective of identity formation. Wenger (1998) argues that an individual's identity is formed through participation in communities of practice which is not demonstrated by holding a card or other forms of identification to indicate having membership to a group. Beach (1999, 2003) explores the concept of consequential transition to illustrate the changes in knowledge and identity that may or may not occur as a person moves across social contexts. Therefore, the students continuously negotiate their identities during the transitions from school, home, and the community in their everyday lives.

Bicultural Identity

To illustrate the *Chogi-Youhacksangs* and *Girugi* students' cultural journey in their everyday lives between Korean and American cultures, I use the concept of bicultural identity concept. Researchers on immigrants state that immigrants adopt values in varying degrees leading to an integrative style instead of substituting one value system for another so that they eventually become bicultural. The students are exposed to the dominant cultures in the U.S. while they are in schools. They practice their own cultural customs at home or the communities. Two distinct cultures cause conflicts for them to adjust their lives in new environments.

Literature Review

Previous Korean literature on the *Chogi-Youhacksangs* and *Girugi* students has been focused on the social effects in Korean society, academic ramifications, and parental experiences. However, it does not examine the students' perspectives and their experiences as they spend time to acculturate themselves and negotiate their cultural identity in the U.S. Minimal research on the *Chogi-Youhacksangs* and *Girugi* students has been conducted in the U.S. Most research has been conducted in a large Korean community in a metropolitan area. The literature has focused mainly on the student's school or their experiences while learning English in the U.S. Also some of the literature focuses on the mother's experiences in the U.S. Unfortunately, the researchers use the term for these group of Korean students and their families as Korea Born Korean American, Korean American, Korean immigrants, or parachute kids without any explanation or any distinction among Korean Americans and these temporary migrants.

As a result, the research that has been performed was not found on the experiences of *Chogi-Youhacksangs* and *Girugi* students in the U.S. Therefore, in this study I will utilize the conceptual frameworks to describe the benefits of an American education that Korean parents expect and the costs of American education that the students are faced with while studying in the U.S. In the following, I explain the data and data collection to answer all research questions and describe who the participants are in this study.

Research Questions

The review of the literature in chapter II describes the three complementary perspectives that form the basis of the conceptual framework that is used to conduct this study

and used to address the following questions:

1. What are Korean parents, *Girugi* students and *Chogi-Youhacksangs*' perception of the relationship between the study abroad experience and their cultural capital? To what extent do parents and children share common or different understandings of the cultural capital acquired in studying in the U.S.?
 - a. What was their perception about the U.S. education before they move into the U.S.?
 - b. Are there any changes in the perception of U.S. education after they experience the new environments? If the perception has changed, how it has been changed?
2. How do these *Girugi* and *Chogi-Youhacksangs* deal with identity crafting between their family, American schools, and peers, and their potential future return to Korea?
 - a. How does the difference in family structures of *Girugi* and *Chogi-Youhacksangs* influence their children's identity crafting?
 - b. How do their Korean memberships and practices in the community influence negotiating their cultural identity?
 - c. How does their participation in American schools and cultural practices affect their identity crafting?

Methodology

This study examines how Korean secondary students' relocation to the U.S. for education influences their cultural identity negotiation. As I reviewed previous empirical literature on these students, significant research has been done to describe these students' lives in the U.S. or focus on the benefits that Korean parents expected from the study abroad in the U.S. However, this study discusses the cost that the students and the families pay in the U.S. as well. This study provides a more holistic view to better understand the students and their families' lives in the U.S., based on the fact that this study was conducted by a qualitative research utilizing interviews and participant observations of these students and parents in the U.S.

Qualitative research provides a holistic view in understanding a social phenomenon with

as little disruption of the natural setting as possible (Merriam, 1998; Patton; 2002). Merriam (1998) described qualitative research as based on “the view that reality is constructed by individuals interacting with their social worlds (p.6)”. As a result, qualitative researchers study “the understanding, the meaning people have constructed, that is, how they make sense of their world and the experiences they have in the world (p.6)”. Denzin & Lincoln (2003) also state that qualitative researchers focus on “the socially constructed nature of reality, the intimate relationship between the researcher and what is studied, and the situational constraints that shape inquiry” (p. 13). Therefore, qualitative research is used to understand social phenomenon constructed by people through communication and interpretation with the people via a holistic view.

This study explores a social phenomenon, a trend of secondary students’ study abroad in the U.S. that has significant implications how these students negotiate their cultural identities among different cultural boundaries in the U.S. rather than focusing on any causal relationship or entities on these students. Therefore, this research is conducted using a qualitative methodology.

Ethnography

In this study, I will use ethnographic methods (Goetz & LeComte, 1984; Hatch, 2002; Marriam, 1998; Emerson et al., 1995; Patton, 2002; Rossman & Rallis, 2003) to investigate how Korean temporary migrants, adolescents and their families, live within two different cultures in the U. S. and the challenges they face dealing with issues of their identity. Traditionally, ethnography was developed from anthropology, which studies cultures and human societies by conducting field work (Hatch, 2002; Marriam, 1998). Cultures are often defined very broadly including the beliefs, values, and attitudes of specific group of people. Chamber (2003) argues that the term ‘culture’ is ambiguous and has been subject to a variety of interpretations. Culture is composed of those ways of understanding that capture the beliefs and values shared by members of a group. Culture is the collection of behavioral patterns and the beliefs that are constituted by groups of people. Therefore, understanding culture is an interpretation of the sociocultural context of a certain group of people.

Rossman & Rallis (2003) assert that ethnographic research are used to understand

complex cultures, “the ways and the things people should behave: it thus determines what is good and true” (p. 95). Patton (2002) states that “ethnographical inquiry takes as its central and guiding assumption that any human group of people interacting together for a period of time will evolve a culture” (p.81). Moreover, Goetz & LeComte define an ethnography as “analytic description of social scenes and groups that recreate for the reader the shared beliefs, practices, artifacts, folk knowledge, and behaviors of those people (1984, pp. 2-3).” In other words, ethnography is the way to explain how people live their lives and to scientifically describe people and the cultural basis of their personhood (Vidich and Lynman, 2000).

In education, ethnography is used for describing educational settings, generating policies or theories, and evaluating educational programs. It provides plentiful and descriptive data about many issues in educational settings (LeComte & Preissle, 1993). LeComte & Preissle also assert that “educational ethnography is an approach to studying problems and processes in education; substantively, it represents an emergent interdisciplinary fusion because it has been practiced by researchers from different traditions (1993, p.9).” In addition, Merriam (1998) claims that ethnography presents a sociocultural analysis of the units of study. The Korean student study abroad phenomenon is a clear educational and social issue in Korea and the U.S. as well. As stated above, the underlying meaning of Korean students studying abroad in the U.S. is complicatedly interwoven by educational, social, cultural, economic, and symbolic factors in Korea. Since this study will describe the way the *Chogi-Youhacksang* and *Girugi* students live in different cultures and how they negotiate identity within different cultural environments. This study examines not only the problem but also the processes in educational issues by explaining their lives in sociocultural context. For this reason, an ethnographic approach is the best way to investigate how these students negotiate their cultural identity among different cultural environments in the U.S. Therefore, I will use an ethnographic approach in this research.

Data Collection Methods

Study Site

Springville City. In general, *Chogi-Youhacksangs* and *Girugi* families live in metropolitan cities where big Korean communities are developed, such as the Northeast or East

Coast area in the U.S. because of the predominate Korean and Asian population. As I mentioned in the previous chapter, many studies have been conducted in large metropolitan areas. Unlike previous research, this research was carried out in Springville City, a medium size city in the Southeast section of the U.S. There are around six-hundred Koreans in the city. Since there are two major universities in the city, most Koreans are associated with these universities. For instance, the majority of Koreans are graduate students in these universities and some of them are professors, visiting scholars, or working in post-doctoral positions. This academically oriented environment encouraged *Girugi* families to come to Springville because families are able to live and work in the city based on their temporary visiting scholar positions. Later, when it is time for the fathers to leave, their children often remain and enroll in the schools in the city. Another benefit of living in this city is that there are several prestigious private schools in Springville where Korean private placement centers have a strong affiliation. This phenomenon is not limited to the larger cities. Medium size and relatively small populations of Koreans in the city also are able to pull *Girugi* students and *Chogi-Youhacksangs* because of lower living costs and providing more opportunities for Korean students and their families to experience the American cultures while living in a big metropolitan city within a larger Korean community.

The Korean Church. Many studies on Korean immigrants and Korean Americans in the U.S.(Chong; 1998, Hurh, 1998; Han, 2008; Kim, I et al., 2006; Kim, Y & Grant D, 1997; Min, 1992) have explored how Korean Christian churches have very important social functions for Koreans in the U.S. The studies have shown that Korean Christian churches are one of the major institutions that construct and maintain ethnic identity among Korean immigrants. Korean immigrants show greater church involvement than any other ethnic groups in the U.S. Moreover, studies on temporary Korean immigrants (Kim, 2004; Park, 2008; Byun, 2010) show that they also rely heavily on Korean churches in the U.S.

It is estimated that approximately 70% of the Korean Americans and Korean immigrants attend Korean churches in the U.S. (Hurh, 1998). Surprisingly, the study indicates a much higher percentage of Korean Christian population in the U.S. compared to Christian population in Korea attending a Christian church. Only a little more than 20% of Koreans affiliate with a Christian church in Korea (Min, 1992). Researchers (Min 1992; Hurh, 1998) have investigated why there is a high percentage of Korean Americans and Korean immigrants who attend a Korean church

in the U.S. Primarily, urban and middle-class Koreans tend to be more affiliated with Christian churches than other religions in Korea. These Korean Christians are more likely westernized and may choose to move into the U.S. Interestingly, Min(1992) reported that the majority of Korean immigrants have had Christian backgrounds in Korea. However, many researchers (Chong; 1998, Hurh, 1998; Han, 2008; Kim, I et al., 2006; Kim, Y & Grant D, 1997; Min, 1992) assert that Korean immigrants have attended Korean churches not only for religious purposes but also for practical needs. Min (1992) particularly explores how Korean churches meet Korean immigrants' practical needs in the U.S. He explains four major social functions of Korean churches in the U.S.: fellowship, maintaining the Korean cultural traditions, social services, and social status and social positions. According to Min, Korean immigrants principally engage in social interactions and form their social networks through Korean churches. In addition, Korean churches are major institutions for helping Korean immigrants to maintain the Korean cultural traditions, to speak Korean and teach the Korean language for Korean immigrants' children, to celebrate Korean traditional holidays, emphasize Korean values, etc. Moreover, Korean churches provide various social services for Korean immigrants such as support and help for Korean newcomers, educational services in Korean language schools, Bible schools, etc. Lastly, Korean immigrants are able to enhance their social status and social positions from within Korean churches. Most Korean immigrants have experienced social downward mobility in the U.S. although they have achieved economic success in the U.S. This drives them to want to hold meaningful positions in the Korean community. The Korean churches provide for this need in a number of position such as a designation of deacons, seniors, etc. Therefore, Korean churches meet the religious need and these social needs for Korean immigrants as well. In other words, Korean churches are religious places as well as a Korean ethnic enclave in the U.S. For these reasons, this study selected a Korean church in Springville as one of its research sites.

As these empirical studies suggest, the Korean church in Springville has several important social and cultural functions for Korean immigrants. First of all, the Korean church members provide a lot of support and help for newcomers whether they are Christians or not. For this reason, approximately two third of the Korean population in Springville attend the Korean church. In addition, the Korean church is a primary place to attend social and cultural gathering for Koreans in Springville. Each church member in the Korean church belongs to small groups,

and they get together once a week or more frequently if possible. The Korean church serves Korean food for lunch after the service every week, celebrates Korean holidays, and provides Korean language classes. As a result, the Korean church represents a microcosm of the actual Korean community in Springville.

Through my social network and my involvement in the Korean church, I was able to make contact with these families and students in Springville. Through these networks I met a high school student from Eden school (a pseudonym). After I explained my study to him, he wanted to participate and introduced me to his friends at Eden school. I was able to recruit participants in this study using the church as a stepping stone.

In addition, the church was the place where I performed participant observation through the Korean Club Meeting (KCM). The KCM was held in the church for several reasons. First, most of the participants, (students, mothers and guardians), attend this church. It was easy to gather these participants after Sunday school. Second, most of the participants were very busy during the weekdays because they are juniors and seniors in high school. For this reason, it was a convenient time for them to meet on Sunday afternoons. Last, as I attended the church myself. This allowed me to have easy access to the church facilities for the KCM, such as class rooms, white boards, and some equipment. For these reasons, I used the Korean church as both place to recruit participants and as a physical site for my study.

Sampling

Purposeful and Snowball Sampling. Considering this *Girugi* and *Chogi-Youhacksangs* population, it could be useful to select a sample from elementary, middle school, and high school in the U.S. It might be also ideal to select a sample of students and families based on the length of their stay abroad. However, the main purpose of this study is to investigate how the cultural challenges these students and families face influence their cultural identity negotiation, therefore that this study focuses on secondary school students and families who have stayed more than two years in the U.S.

Erikson (1980) states that adolescents are particularly aware of and concerned about who they are, how others perceive them, and who they want to be in the future. This research

explores the adolescences' cultural identity formation and negotiation among different cultural environments. For this reason, this study excludes elementary school students from *Girugi* students and *Chogi-Youhacksangs*. As a result, this study required participants who are between the 7th and 12th grades, and between fourteen years and eighteen years old. Selecting an approximate methods purpose of the research, I needed to recruit very specific groups of *Chogi-Youhacksangs* and *Girugi* students via a purposeful sampling. Marriam (1998) described purposeful sampling as based on the assumption that the investigator wants to discover, understand, and gain insight and therefore must select a sample from which the most can be learned.

Moreover, it is difficult to recruit the *Girugi* families and *Chogi-Youhacksangs* through any means other than social networking, because traditionally Koreans do not openly talk about their family issues. Koreans generally pay careful attention to their reputation. Therefore, they may be particularly concerned about the negative image of *Girugi* families and *Chogi-Youhacksangs* in the Korean public media, since education abroad is achieved not by abilities, but by economic standing. It is also reported in the media that some *Chogi-Youhacksangs* and *Girugi* families have introduced a negative reflection of education abroad, such as juvenile violence, drug usage, and extravagant consumption (Son, 2003; KEDI, 2005). For this reason, snowball sampling was used to recruit *Girugi* families and *Chogi-Youhacksangs*. The process begins by asking a *Girugi* family and a few *Chogi-Youhacksangs*, "whom should I talk to?" As Patton (1990) describes, this strategy involves identifying participants or "cases of interest from people who know people who know people who know what cases are information-rich, that is good examples for study, good interview subjects (p.182)." Therefore, snowball sampling for this study is not only able to provide access to participants, and but also increase the credibility of the study.

As a researcher and community member in the city, I was able to use my social network to recruit the participants. To find them, I started by contacting a Korean grocery owner who knows the city and community very well. He told me that several *Chogi-Youhacksangs* and *Girugi* students recently came to the city and enrolled in Eden school, a private high school in the city. The Eden school is known as an expensive private school and is located within a wealthy neighborhood in Springville. After I gained this information, I initiated a conversation at

my church with a student who attends Eden school. He introduced me to some *Chogi-Youhacksangs* and *Girugi* families from his school.

Two *Girugi* families and five *Chogi-Youhacksangs* participated in this study. Among these five *Chogi-Youhacksangs*, four of them came to Springville through a private placement center in Korea, which introduces Korean students to American schools and their families⁸. Three of them live with American guardians in Springville. One *Chogi-Youhacksang* lives with a Korean guardian because she has had some troubles with American guardians. The other *Chogi-Youhacksang* lives with her aunt's family. One of the *Girugi* families relocated in the U.S. because of the mother's job in Springville. The mother purposefully prepared and applied for the position in the U.S. for her children's education. The other family came to the city with their whole family for the father's occupation as a visiting scholar. One year later, the father went back to Korea and the rest of the family members stayed in the U.S. to continue the children's education. These families superficially seem to have different reasons for moving to the U.S. However, the mothers explained that they purposefully moved into the U.S. because of their children's education. For this reason, these families are considered *Girugi* families.

While snowball sampling facilitates access into a network, snowball sampling has some disadvantages, such as potentially low generalizability because participants are linked together. Heckathorn (1997) claims several disadvantages that may happen during snowball sampling data collection. The samples tend to be biased because the initiated individual refers to additional individual. The other bias issue could be brought up in snowball samples because they know each other and they may protect each other. In addition, the samples may be oversampled or excluded because the samples are from a certain linked groups of people.

However, it was almost impossible to recruit participants except by snowball sampling because of the nature of the participants. In addition, Eden school⁹ is the major school for the *Chogi-Youhacksangs* and *Girugi* families in Springville. As a result, students from Eden school

⁸ Private placement centers, in Korean, *Youhackone*, are the agencies that introduce schools in the U.S. to Korean students and their families. They generally provide information on schools and living conditions in the U.S., and deal with all application procedures for students or parents because Koreans are not familiar with the American school system. The services cost varies and depends on which schools students apply for. It costs around \$ 8,000 - \$ 15,000 for this procedure (sources from KBS, Korean Broadcast Station, News Report).

⁹ Due to VISA status, these Korean students are not able to enroll in public schools. They only attend schools that issue F1-VISA for them. Eden school is one of visa issuing schools for these Korean students in Springville.

represent the *Chogi-Youhacksangs* and *Girugi* students in Springville. Most of the participants attended in Eden school; however, two participants in this study did enroll in different schools. Therefore, they are able to provide a somewhat different experience from the students from Eden school.

I believe that snowball sampling in this study is the best strategy to recruit participants considering specifically sensitive research issue and the paucity of the population in Springville. Each participant and their schools are assigned a pseudonym to protect their identities.

Participants

The participants in the study were eight high school and middle school students, ages 14 to 18, who came to the U.S. for their education. There are five *Chogi-Youhacksangs* who live with guardians and three *Girugi* students who live with their mother in this study. Also, I interviewed their parents and guardians in the U.S. and Korea. I excluded American guardians in this study. There are two reasons why I chose to exclude them. First, most of *Chogi-Youhacksangs* in this study live with guardians assigned from the private placement center. These students live with their American guardians a comparatively short time because they change their guardians at least once or twice a year. This short time relationship makes it difficult to understand how guardians and students share the conception of American education as cultural capital transfer. Secondly, these students do not feel comfortable exposing their private lives to their American guardians, although they have a good relationship with them. Finally, when I asked whether I may interview their American host families or not, they said no. For these reasons, I excluded American guardians in this study.

Five female students and three male students participated in this study. Among eight student participants, six are high school students and two students are in junior high school. Six students attend Eden school, a private school in a wealthy neighborhood in the city. Two students are enrolled in public schools, Bell Spring junior high school and Kings high school which are known as very middle class and predominantly white students' school in Springville. A more detail description of each participant will be presented in the next chapter.

Data Collection

In this study, data was gathered by participant observation and structured observation, semi-structured interviews, research diaries, and field notes.

Participant Observation

To enhance the quality of data collection and analysis for the study, I used a participant observation method, which is a primary method for ethnographic study. Rossman and Rallis (2003) describe the researcher in qualitative research as “the means through while the study is conducted (p.5)”. Therefore, qualitative researchers take into the research fieldwork or participant observation methods in order to better understand the cultures and the people in research site. Patton (2002) particularly claims that the primary method of ethnography is participant observation. Researchers associate with the culture under study through intensive field work and participant observation. Moreover, LeComte & Preissle (1993) state that ethnography is not only a product but also a process. This means that ethnography includes stories of a group of people and methods of inquiry to lead to the product. Dewalt & Dewalt (2002) define “participant observation as a method in which a researcher takes part in the daily activities, rituals, interactions and events of groups of peoples as one of the means of learning the explicit and tacit aspects of their life routines and their culture (p.1)”.

DeWalt & DeWalt (2002) state that participant observation is important to conducting a qualitative study because living, working, laughing, and crying with the people one is trying to understand provides a sense of the self and the other that is not easily apprehended by interviews, surveys or other techniques. Patton (2002) also suggests that participant observation is important to utilize directly as much as possible in order to understand what it is like for another person to experience a phenomenon. To achieve this aim, I facilitated students’ discussion of how they perceive cultural identity and cultural capital and observed their interactions in the Korean Club Meeting.

This study explores how *Chogi-Youhacksangs* and *Girugi* families adapt to their new lives and how these students identify who they are within potentially conflicting cultural environments. To better understand the students’ experiences, thoughts, and feelings, the

researcher needs to be close to their lives and follow their routines. To meet these requirements of qualitative research, I used a participant observation method in this study. I designed the Korean Club Meeting (KCM) in order to gain a holistic comprehension of these students' experiences, thoughts, and cultures. I provided the students with readings and movie clips to encourage them to talk about how they perceive identity issues. Moreover, while I studied these Korean students and their families, I spent time with them and participated in their routine lives as much as I could in order to better understand their lives. Although both *Girugi* families and *Chogi-Youhacksangs* came to the U.S. to study with a similar purpose, their experiences may be quite different. *Girugi* students generally live with their mothers while the father remains in Korea to work and support the family financially. In contrast, *Chogi-Youhacksangs* stay in boarding houses under the care of guardians or they go to boarding school. Their different family structures, particularly parenting differences between *Girugi* families and *Chogi-Youhacksangs*, influence these adolescents' identity crafting though they are situated in similar places in the U.S., such as schools, homes and Korean communities.

Additionally, I conducted participant observations from various social association activities with these students and families. For example, I have invited them to my home, visited their homes, and we went out to dinner together. I offered social science tutoring and gave them rides. I was sometimes invited by these families to hang out with them. I stayed with one of the participants as a babysitter her while her aunts' family visited Korea.

In conclusion, I used an ethnographic approach to illustrate how these students and their families live in diverse cultural environments and I used a participant observation method of data collection to determine how they share their experiences and beliefs while living in the U.S.

The Korean Club Meeting (KCM)

The KCM were held at the Korean Church in Springville from early- February 2009 to the end of May 2009. We met on Sundays once a week or once every other week for the KCM. Since most of these students attend the church and they are juniors or seniors in high school, I did not want to give them extra work or pressure them to participate in this study. Also, participants told me that they are very busy during the weekdays because of their school work,

extra curricula activities and private tutors. For these reasons, Sunday afternoon was a convenient time for them to meet. This KCM was held almost every Sunday from the beginning of February, 2009 to the end of May, 2009. These meetings lasted around one to one and a half hours each.

During the meetings, I had them read a book entitled “*F is Fabulous*”, a book that reflects some of the same experiences that these Korean teenagers have experienced in the U.S. In the book, Jinha, a Korean immigrant female teenager, immigrated to the U.S. with her parents for her education. I posed several discussion topics related with book chapters. For instance, I asked about language issues, cultural shock, life in school, relationships with their parents, and everyday life issues which were described in the book. Jinha’s story was used to facilitate discussion in the KCM.

I also posed several discussion topics about Korean history and Korean tradition to probe how the students’ schema helped them come to terms with historical events. For instance, *Samil-Jeol* is on March 1st and it is the day commemorating the independence movement in Korea against Japan. During our discussion we talked about the history and the ceremony of the day. Coincidentally, the pastor in the church mentioned the independence movement day in his preaching. In honor of the event the Korean national flag was hung in the church that day¹⁰. The students described strongly how they felt as Koreans during these special days. Also, they proudly talked about what they brought from Korea like *Teaguk-gi*, the Korean national flag, Korean traditional musical instruments, and so forth to represent Korea.

I also brought some Korean current issues to them, for several reasons. First, I wanted to check to see how informed they are regarding Korean issues. Second, I wanted to know how these students understand and analyze Korean current issues and situations from outside of Korea. Finally, I wanted to probe whether their perceptions have been changed or not. For instance, in the beginning of June 2009, after the former Korean president passed away, I asked if they knew about it and how they learned of the news. From the discussion, I knew that every student had read the Korean news from the Korean news blog. Also, most of the students

¹⁰ In Korean tradition, Koreans hang the national flag in each house on special national holidays like the independence movement day, the Independence day, and the memorial day, etc.

checked Korean news every day. They knew the accident of former president's death in great detail and also tried to analyze how it happened and what would happen to Korea.

In the KCM, I also used a movie as motivation to recall their experiences. I showed a movie clip to discuss ethnic and racial stereotypes about other ethnic groups in the U.S. I had them watch a clip of *Harold and Kumar Escape from Guantanamo Bay*. This movie shows many scenes about how Asian-Americans are viewed based on their stereotypical images in the U.S. In the movie, Harold Lee, a Korean American, and Kumar Patel, an Asian Indian American, are friends. They are both born and raised in the U.S. In the airport, Kumar was stopped by an officer to search in terms of 'random check'. However, it was certainly not a 'random check' because Kumar's Asian Indian physical traits made him like a 'terrorist' from the Middle-east countries from the American perspectives. On this trip, Harold and Kumar are arrested because they are seen as terrorists because of racial profiling. Kumar was regarded as a member of Al-Qaeda because of his physical traits and Harold was regarded as a North Korean because of his Korean heritage. In the next video clip, Harold and Kumar's parent are called to an interrogation room controlled by the CIA. The parents, Korean Americans and Asian Indian Americans, talk to each other in English concerning their sons. The CIA agent brings the translator to the parents. The translator begins asking questions to the Korean parents in Korean. However, actually the translator cannot speak Korean; he just imitated Korean. The Korean parents talk to the CIA agent in English, but the agent does not listen and keeps asking the translator to translate what the parents are saying. After these students watched the movie clip, they talked about how they felt about the racial and ethnic stereotypes from their peers in schools or in the U.S. When they talked about this issue, all of the students brought up their experiences.

After I set up these discussion topics, the students started talking about their thoughts or their experiences in school, home, and church. The teenagers in this study know each other very well because they go to the same school or attend the same church. Therefore, they were actively involved in discussion, and they did not hesitate to talk about their thoughts and share their stories among others. For this reason, the KCM always took more time than I expected. The KCM generally lasted approximately one and half hour in each the meeting.

Since I am older than the participants and a Korean community member, they may hide

their feelings or hesitate to express their opinions due to Korean age- based hierarchy culture. In order to avoid this situation, I held informal conversations to make them feel comfortable with the researcher before I started the KCM. From my pilot study (Park, 2006), I found that Korean teenagers feel generally somewhat uncomfortable initiating discussion with older people. However, once someone in their group started talking, the rest of the teenagers actively participated in the discussion. I believe that if they are surrounded by similarly situated people, they feel more comfortable telling their stories. Therefore, the discussion in the KCM may make students more open for the in depth individual interviews. While the club meetings were going on, I observed how students behaved when they talked about their issues, and how they interacted with each other.

These club meetings were audio-taped and sometimes video-taped. I wrote field notes during the meetings and kept a research diary of what I observed in the KCM.

My Role in the Meeting. I had dual roles in the KCM. I was a researcher and a facilitator. As a researcher, I observed how they showed their emotions and how they interacted with each other while they were in conversations. Also, as a facilitator, I proposed several discussion questions or topics to them to talk about it. I often shared my own experiences on how I struggled with cultural differences, language barriers, and making friends just as they might face in their lives as Korean students in U.S. My story sometimes provided a clue to them to initiate their story and their experiences in the U.S. during the meetings. However, I carefully paid attention not to lead their conversation. For instance, I often explained that they might not have the same experiences as me and I asked them if they had any different experiences from me. Once the participants started telling their stories, I did not interrupt their conversation. The participants called the researcher a ‘teacher’, just as they called their youth group teacher, as a way to show their respect. Therefore, the researcher is often described as ‘teacher’ in the KCM and interview transcription.

Semi-structured Interviews

Interviews are one of critical tools in qualitative research to understand how participants experience and organize their worlds. Interviews are particularly very useful to unveil

participants' behaviors, feelings, interpretations which researchers cannot observe (Hatch, 2002; Merriam, 1998). Denzin and Lincoln (2003) suggest that we can also see interviewees' responses as cultural stories which serve to explain their actions in ways that otherwise may not be understood.

Merriam(1998) states that there are three different types of interviews; the highly structured, semi-structured, and unstructured interviews. The highly structured interview is a type of questionnaire-driven interview. The semi-structured interview is more likely mixed with less structured and open-ended questions. The unstructured interview is open-ended questions and informal conversation. The semi-structured interviews are widely used in qualitative research (Kaval, 1996; Merriam, 1998) because the semi-structured interview allows "the researcher to respond to the situation at hand, to the emerging worldview of the respondent, and to new ideas on the topic" (Merriam, 1998 p.74). Therefore, in an effort to better understand the potentially conflicting cultural environments that *Girugi* families and *Chogi-Youhacksangs* face and how they negotiate their identities, I used a semi-structured interview technique and prepared a set of preliminary questions to draw out the respondents' views on a number of topics related to their lives in Korea and in the U.S. I conducted two different sets of semi-structured interviews; parents and guardians, and students.

Interviews with Parents. For parents and guardians, I conducted face to face one time interviews with *Girugi* mothers and *Chogi-Youhacksangs*' guardians, and I also interviewed *Chogi-Youhacksangs* mothers in Korea by phone. I interviewed four parents and two guardians individually using semi-structured interviews. As mentioned above, these families may be hesitant to talk about their family circumstances and their status in the U.S. to a stranger. Furthermore, it would be somewhat embarrassing to share their own experience and their difficulties in the U. S. with other Koreans though they face similar problems in the U.S. For these reasons, individual interviews of parents and guardians were more effective methods than focus group discussions for this study. When I conducted interview with parents and guardians in the U.S., I initiate the questions about their lives in Korea briefly. Later, I focused on their experience and thoughts about *Girugi* families and *Chogi-Youhacksangs*. I interviewed mothers and guardians while the club meetings were in process since parents' interviews did not influence the KCM discussion or students' interviews. Therefore, I conducted interviews with

the parents at a time that was convenient for them.

From the interview with guardians and parents, I gained precious unexpected information. However, in order to avoid losing the direction of my interview, I sometimes asked direct questions. The interview with parents and guardians was followed by the interviews with students because parents and guardians can provide background information about their children and how they craft their identity in the United States. To avoid parental influence, I did not interview students with their mothers and their guardians to avoid situation in which students feel uncomfortable to talk about their difficulties and private lives with their parents.

Interviews with Students. I conducted two individual interviews with each student. I conducted the first interview with students before starting the Korean Club Meetings (KCM) in order to better understand each participant. After gaining background information about the participants, I could understand better what their perspectives were on the discussion topics in the club meeting. After all of the club meetings were completed, I conducted more in-depth interviews with students to ask their thoughts about how they feel themselves in the U.S. and how they consider American education.

While I interviewed each individual student, I often asked semi-structured questions in order to make the questions clear. Also, I tried not to use leading questions in order to make them feel comfortable, and I gave enough time for them to respond. For the second round of interviews with students, I was able to have more in-depth conversation about their thoughts and concerns about their lives in the U.S. because the students felt more comfortable with the researcher after spending approximately one year with me. For this reason, the students willingly opened their minds and shared their story with the researcher.

Although these students came to the U. S. and are Americanized in some aspects, they lived with their parents and are heavily involved in the Korean community. According to Korean culture, modesty and humility are two of the best virtues. In addition, respecting older people is good etiquette for Korean culture. Therefore, I explained the nature of interview procedure in detail to ensure that students understood. To increase internal validity of data I also explained that they did not have to say what they think that I may want to hear from them. From my pilot

study, I observed that Korean teenagers try to respond with answers they think I want to hear from them because they respect their elders.

The individual interview with parents and guardians took around one or one and a half hours. The first interview with students lasted approximately one hour. The second interview with students was around one or one and a half hours. All interview procedures were tape recorded. After the interviews, I took field notes and made entries into the research diaries, to avoid disrupting the interviews.

I designed and conducted interview with parents in Korean. Unlike the parents' interviews, I specifically designed the student interviews so that I could conduct the interviews in both Korean and English since language is a significant factor that may influence how students negotiate their identities. Some students might feel more comfortable speaking Korean while others who are fluent in English might be more comfortable answering questions in English. Therefore, students were given a choice of the language with which they feel most comfortable or allowed to use both. I believe that the interview procedures might show how English proficiency influences students' identity formation. If students prefer to speak in Korean, interview transcriptions were translated in English later. Also, I thought that I was able to observe any differences while students speak in Korean and in English. However, most students want to interview in Korean because they feel more comfortable speaking in Korean with a Korean elder, the researcher. I will discuss this issue in the next finding chapter. As a result, most interviews were conducted in Korean and needed to be translated into English later. During translating and transcribing process, I did a peer examination, working with a research assistant in order to enhance internal validity of data.

Audiotaping and Videotaping. In order to increase accuracy for transcriptions of interviews and club meetings, I audio taped the interviews and the discussions of the KCM. Hatch (2002) contends that videotaping can produce very detailed transcripts of what occurred during data collection in the research. I sometimes videotaped the KCM to observe participants' facial expressions and nonverbal communications which I could miss because it is difficult to observe and remember each student's reaction in the meeting to keep research dairies. Therefore, this video- taping can increase to ensure accuracy and to pick up subtle details in the study

(Hatch, 2002).

Field Notes and a Research Diary

Merriam(1998) states what is written down from a period of observation becomes raw data, which is analogous to the interview transcripts. Therefore, after each interview and observation, I wrote field notes to record key points that might not be captured by video and audio tape recording. Moreover, I kept research diaries while I conducted this study. Research diaries provide a deeper reflection about the interview and the observation for a holistic view to describe each situation and moment. Particularly, research diaries were a useful method to keep the records and information while I built on relationship with the participants. After I got close to these students, I had several chances to be invited to their houses and invited these teenagers to my house. While I visited their places and they visited my place, I could sometimes have very deep conversations about their thoughts and feelings about their life in new environments. Also, I could have very interesting anecdotes from observation. Furthermore, as a church member, I had multiple chances to have conversations with them informally in church. Therefore, after I had these informal conversations and observations with them, I wrote that down in my research diaries.

Analytic Procedures

Emerson, et al. (1995) contends that quantitative research coding is conducted deductively because the researcher constructed the questionnaire with categories derived from the theory. In contrast, qualitative research proceeds inductively because the researcher conducts coding based on the field notes reflecting the significance of events or experiences from the field. For this reason, coding in qualitative research is a way of opening up avenues of inquiry. In other words, the researchers identify and develop concepts and analytic insights after they very carefully examine and interpret the data. Miles & Huberman describe “codes as tags or labels for assigning units of meaning to the descriptive or inferential information compiled during study. Codes usually are attached to “chunks” or varying size-words, phrases, sentences, or whole paragraphs, connected or unconnected to a specific setting”(1994, p. 56).

After collecting the data, I transcribed and translated the data. While I transcribed and

translated the data, I made comments in order to organize coding and classifying data through repeated transcribing and translating procedures. Then, I read carefully through all my field notes, research diaries, transcripts of interviews and club meetings, and developed a manageable classification or coding scheme. Therefore, I classified and labeled themes in the data instead of individual subjects. I began the first level of analysis by coding participants' interviews. For parents' interviews, I took clusters of them that dealt with two major themes, the perception on American education and experiences living in the U.S. Later, I labeled several categories and sub-categories such as on decision making procedures of coming to the U.S., thoughts on the U.S. education and Korean education, concern on their children in the U.S., etc. For students' interviews, I began labeling two major themes like the parents; the perception on American education and experiences living in the U.S. Unlike the parents, I focused more on labeling categories on their experiences in home, school, and community than their perception on the American education. In the club meetings, I began developing the major theme on their identity issues. Later, I labeled categories based on their cultural backgrounds such as school, home, and the church. I labeled sub-categories such as peers, families, English, etc. I drew tables on these categories and sub-categories to manage the data. I also made comments on the participants' facial expressions, emotions, hesitation, etc.

To code and analyze the data, I had planned to use N*VIVO, a qualitative software program, but I made a decision not to use the computer software program in order to increase accuracy and reliability of data due to translation issues, Korean to English. While I interviewed and met Korean teenagers in club meetings, I observed that these students speak in Korean once they get together. For this reason, most interview and club discussion was spoken in Korean. Moreover, they often use Korean slang or Korean internet chatting words among themselves in the club meetings. It is a very important point to observe how these teenagers use their language with each other. These are difficult to translate into English. Therefore, I transcribed club meetings' data and individual interviews as they spoke in Korean and I translated them later into English. While I translated into English, I tried to directly translate their conversation and interviews in order to maintain their voice and tone. Most computer software programs can only recognize English. Consequently, I managed and organized coding the data myself. After I categorized and labeled the data myself, I used the Excel program to manage the data.

Moreover, in order to ensure credibility and ethical procedures for conducting this study, I have an approval from Institutional Review Board for human subjects from Florida State University. According to the human subject principals, I have provided the consent forms to the participants and they were agreed with the consent forms.

Reliability and Validity

Joppe (2000) defined reliability as “the extent to which results are consistent over time and an accurate representation of the total population under study. If the results of a study can be reproduced under a similar methodology, then the research instrument is considered to be reliable (p.1)”. In other words, reliability in a research means the repeatability of result (Golafshani, 2003). To increase reliability in quantitative research, researchers carefully check the instruments used to collect data. For instance, researchers administrate appropriate procedures for all the processes of collecting data including the test items, survey questions, or other measurement tools. On the other hands, in qualitative research, the researcher is the instrument (Patton, 2002). Therefore, the researcher’s competence, skill, and rigor in the fieldwork may influence the validity of study. Guba and Lincoln (1981) explained that “fatigue, shift in knowledge, and cooptation, as well as variations resulting from differences in training, skill, and experience among different “instruments” easily occur. But this loss in rigor is more than offset by the flexibility, insight, and ability to build on tacit knowledge that is the peculiar provinces of the human instrument, p. 113)” For this reason, I took field notes, audio and video taped while I participated in the KCM. I also audio recorded interviews. I kept research dairies after the participant observation or conducting interviews. In other words, I gathered multiple sources of data in this study, including interviews, videotape of the culture club meetings, field notes, and research journals in order to increase the accuracy of data.

Purposely selecting two *Girugi* families, five *Chogi-Youhacksangs* and their guardians provided in-depth data about their experiences. Therefore, I believe that these participants in the study can be the prospective representative of *Girugi* families and *Chogi-Youhacksangs* who are the main character of the ‘study abroad’ phenomenon.

Internal Validity. Validity refers to the correspondence between the way the

interviewee actually perceives social constructs and the way the researcher reflects these viewpoints (Brittain, 2002). To enhance internal validity, I tried to exclude any prejudices about these students as Korean teenagers from rich families and marginalized immigrant teenagers which I could observe in my communities or when I was in Korea. As a student who studied abroad, I may share some of the experiences of participants, encountering cultural differences in the U.S. Moreover, I am from the same ethnic group as Koreans. This experience would provide a better and deeper understanding about this phenomenon from the U.S. experiences and Korean experience of the researcher. Therefore, all these circumstance of the researcher help to increase the validity of the data gathered.

To translate the interviews and the discussions in the KCM, I tried to directly translate Korean to English in order to keep the participants' voices, tones, and nuances. However, I often faced the difficulties that their Korean expressions did not exist in English. Therefore, in these cases, I translated indirectly into English with trying to preserve the meaning. When I translated the transcriptions indirectly into English, I particularly paid attention not to hurt their original meaning.

In order to enhance internal validity of the data, I worked with a research assistant, a Korean American graduate student who is not involved with the Korean community in Springville in order to check the translation and transcription of the data. I particularly worked with her in order to keep the participants' confidential. She checked the transition and translation. Additionally, the findings, results and implications were shared with all interested Korean graduate students, scholars, the participant parents and guardians in Springville.

Summary

This study examines how a particular group of Korean students live within different cultural environments, and how their cultural experiences in the U.S. impacts the adolescents' identity negotiation. To answer the questions guiding the study, I use an ethnographic approach to qualitative methodology. In addition, the Korean Club Meetings (KCM) was designed to enhance the data collection for the participant observation method. This study was conducted in Springville, a medium sized city in the southeastern part of the U.S. Through purposeful and

snowball sampling, eight secondary Korean students who have enrolled in U.S. schools from two years to five year, participated in this study. Their parents and guardians also participated in this study. After building a relationship with the participants, the data collection of the study commenced in October, 2008. The first interviews with students were conducted from October, 2008. The KCM was held from February 2009 to May 2009 after the first interviews with the students were conducted. The second interviews with the students were conducted from June 2009 to July 2009. The interviews with the parents and the guardians took place while the KCM was in process.

CHAPTER FOUR

PRESENTATION AND ANALYSIS OF DATA

Introduction

There is a growing trend of Korean elementary and secondary students' studies abroad in the U.S. These students come to the U.S. with their mother, or sometimes they come by themselves and live with guardians. We refer to these Korean students as *Chogi-Youhacksangs*, students who live with their guardians, and *Girugi* students, students who live with their mothers in the U.S. These students and their mothers travel to the U.S. to study abroad for educational purposes and to gain cultural capital. Most Korean students and their families clearly understand that U.S. education and cultural experiences in the U.S. are valuable. This means that U.S. educational and cultural experience will provide economic benefits in these students' futures in terms of English proficiency, cultural experiences, and the benefits for the entrance examination to prestigious universities in Korea.

Enrolling in school is only the beginning of a long and sometime difficult transition for both the *Chogi-Youhacksangs* and *Girugi* students. In American schools, the students face several challenges to adjust to their lives in their new environments due to the cultural differences and language barriers. These challenges are multiplied by the fact that they need to maintain their Korean culture at home and in the Korean community while at the same time they are learning about and adapting to their new cultures at school or home with American host families. In essence, they are crafting a new cultural identity as Korean students in an American school while maintaining their Korean heritage. This study investigates how these students craft their cultural identity across different cultural boundaries in the U.S.

Overview of Study

To investigate the *Chogi-Youhacksangs* and *Girugi* students' cultural identity negotiation in new environments, I utilized sociocultural perspective on identity formation. Wenger (1998)

argues that an individual's identity is formed through participation in communities of practice, which is not demonstrated by holding a card or other forms of identification to indicate having membership to a group. Previous Korean literature on the *Chogi-Youhacksangs* and *Girugi* students has been focused on the social effects in Korean society, the academic ramification and parental experiences. However, it does not examine the students' perspectives and their experiences they spend time to acculturate themselves and negotiate their cultural identity in the U.S. A second perspective on this phenomenon is to consider the concept of consequential transition. Beach (1999, 2003) explores the concept of consequential transition to illustrate the changes in knowledge and identity that may or may not occur as a person moves across social contexts.

Phinney (1996) offers a perspective that immigrants adopt values in varying degrees leading to an integrative style instead of substituting one value system for another so that they become bicultural. I used the bicultural identity concept to illustrate the *Chogi-Youhacksangs* and *Girugi* students' cultural journey in their everyday lives between Korean and American cultures. Minimal research on the *Chogi-Youhacksangs* and *Girugi* students has been conducted in the U.S. Most research that has been conducted was performed in a predominately Korean town in a metropolitan U.S. area. The literature has focused on the student's school and English learning experiences in the U.S. Other literatures fix on mother's experiences in the U.S. Interestingly, most researchers use the term Korea Born Korean American, Korean American, Korean immigrants, or parachute kids for these group of Korean students and their families without any explanation or any distinction among Korean Americans and these temporary migrants. As a result, no research has been conducted on the experiences of *Chogi-Youhacksangs* and *Girugi* students in the U.S.

While borrowing from the theory of both consequential transition and the concept of bicultural identity, this chapter demonstrates how Korean students continuously negotiate their identities within transitions from school, home, and the community in their everyday lives. Additionally, with these conceptual perspectives, I will describe the benefits of an American education that Korean parents expect and the costs of an American education that the students are challenged by while studying in the U.S.

Research Methods

To examine how the *Chogi-Youhacksangs* and *Girugi* students live within two different cultural environments, and how their cultural experiences in the U.S. impacts their identity negotiation, I conducted an ethnographic study analyzing later the interviews. I designed Korean Club Meetings (KCM) to enhance the quality of data for the participant observation method. The KCM was held from February 2009 to June 2009. I collected the data from individual interviews, the KCM discussion and observation, research diaries, and field notes. Eight students and their parents and guardians participated in this study.

Based on my analyzing, I discovered that the Korean parents' concepts of an American education were based on the ability of their children to procure cultural capital and improved academic achievements. At the same time, the parents observed that their children were making significant efforts to integrate into their new environments. Although parents in Korea and in the U.S. are in different situations linguistically and socially, they do have similar purposes and procedures while making decisions for their children's study abroad programs. Also, they have many common opinions and concerns on how their children experience a new environment.

Research Participants

The *Chogi-Youhacksangs* in this study, students who live with their guardian, are Dongkyu, Minjeong, Mirea, Sunjea and Youri in the study. Mirea lives with her aunt and Minjeong lives with a Korean guardian. Dongkyu, Sunjea, and Youri live with American host families. Although Mirea and Minjeong are more likely to be exposed to Korean culture than Dongkyu, Sunjea and Youri at home, Minjeong and Mirea's guardians are Korean immigrants who have been in the U.S. for more than 20 years. The interactions with their guardians are not the same as when they are with their parents. Therefore I focused my research on how this situation, living without their parents in new environments, influences their cultural identity.

The *Girugi* students, Haneal, Hana, and Jinhee live with their mothers. Haneal and Hana are siblings. Jinhee has a brother but he lives in another town in the U.S. where he is attending college. Unlike *Chogi-Youhacksangs*, these *Girugi* students live with their mothers. However, their mothers are also very new in the U.S. Since these mothers spent most of their lives in Korea,

they are experiencing more difficulties in adapting to a new culture than their children. Since they have spent most of their adult lives in Korea, their mothers have been afforded less opportunities to be exposed to American culture than their children. Students and their mothers experience very different family roles in the U.S. compared to when they were in Korea. Therefore, I will address how these different family roles influence *Girugi* students' cultural identity.

Chogi-Youhacksangs and *Girugi* students experience slightly different living environments. This difference in exposure has led these students to face somewhat different degrees of cultural exposure between home/school and home/community cultures. Despite this fact, these students still need to incorporate the ability to shift between Korean and American culture when they move between home and schools or their community and schools in their everyday lives. At times it has been shown in my research that they have been forced to stand at the intersection between two cultures. As a result, these students have to develop coping strategies in order to negotiate their cultural identity among different environments. Moreover, since the "study abroad" phenomenon is a pervasive trend in Korea, students have certain opinions about studying in the U.S. Interestingly, after they experienced U.S.' schooling, they realized that American education is not exactly the same as what they expected. For this chapter, I will explain how these students considered American education in Korea and how their thoughts about American education have been altered after they moved into the U.S.

I begin this chapter first with a description of the study participants: who they are, how they made the decision to study abroad in the U.S., and the unique features of their perspectives of living in the U.S. Next, I will present the findings from the study.

Biographical Portraits

In this study there are eight students- five *Chogi-Youhacksangs* and three *Girugi* students-, their parents, and guardians in the U.S. and Korea. Since these students are major participants in this study, I will provide biographical information that will focus on the students' background. Please note that, as I stated in chapter 2, I use the term *Chogi-Youhacksangs* and *Girugi* students in this study because this study focuses on Koreans. My research will focus

primarily on five *Chogi-Youhacksangs* and three *Girugi* students. Four of the *Chogi-Youhacksangs*, came to Springville together in Fall 2008. At that time they were introduced to their new school, 'Eden' (a pseudonym), and their host families who were from the same *Youhackone*, a private placement center in Korea. Six of the eight participants were enrolled in Eden School. In order to protect the participants, I use pseudonyms to describe all persons and places.

Chogi-Youhacksangs

Five *Chogi-Youhacksangs* participated in this study: Sunjea, Dongkyu, Youri, Minjeong, and Mirea. Among them, Sunjea, Dongkyu, Youri, and Minjeong attend Eden high school through a Korean private placement. Also, they had one year exchange students experience before coming to Springville. They lived with host families. Mirea attended Bell Spring Middle School and lives with her aunt.

Sunjea Whang (Matthew) is eighteen years old and an 11th grade *Chogi-Youhacksang*. He has been in the U.S. for two years, including his one year exchange student experience. He attends Eden High School and lives with an American host family. Sunjea has had a very interesting journey to the U.S. In an attempt to gain better English language skills, Sunjea spent some time in Canada, the Philippines, and China to attend English camps for several months while he was in elementary school. According to Sunjea, he was unable to remember his stay at the camps due to the fact that he was too young at that time. He was able to recall that there were many other Koreans students in the English camps. After Sunjea went to China with his brother, his brother was left in China to go to college there. Also, his younger sister came to the U.S. as an exchange student in 2009.

In the Fall of 2007, Sunjea came to the U.S., where he attended a public high school as an exchange student. This was at the request of his father, who suggested that he study in the U.S. After a year of exchange student experience, he went back to Korea in the summer of 2007. Then his father suggested that he return to the U.S. and continue his studies. In the fall of 2008 he returned to the U.S. to continue his studies. Through a *Youhackone*, a private placement center in Korea, he was able to enroll at Eden. When Sunjea moved to Springville, he was placed with an

American host family who was assigned by the center. He had subsequently moved into one of his teachers' houses about the time he participated in this study. Sunjea was one of the most active participants in the Korean Club meeting, and he attended every club meeting. He, along with Minjeong and Jinhee, is one of the oldest students in this study. He is a very thoughtful and a very hardworking student. He wants to go to college in the U.S. Sunjea's father is a successful businessman and his mother is a housewife. Both of his parents graduated from a college in Korea.

I met Sunjea in September 2008. At that time, he lived with an African American host family in a small town 20 miles from Springville. After I introduced the study to him, he wanted to join the study and wanted to attend the Korean Church at Springville. He is a Christian and he often attends a church with his host family in that small town. He felt somewhat odd in the church because the church is predominantly African American. Sunjea decided to go to the unfamiliar atmosphere of the African American church because he had nothing to do in the small town on Sunday. After meeting me he said that he wanted to attend the Korean church with me. Since I met Sunjea, I have been giving him a ride every Sunday morning until the club meetings are completed. That way, I was able to spend more time with him than the other participants in the study.

Dongkyu Cha (David) is seventeen years old and an 11th grader *Chogi-Youhacksang* at Eden School. He has been in the U.S. for two years, including one year as an exchange student. He is currently living with an American host family in Springville. Like Sunjea, he came to the U.S. in the fall of 2007 as an exchange student on the request of his mother. Dongkyu has focused a great deal of his education on studying in English since he went to an elementary school in Korea. This is based on the notion that if he spoke fluent English, he can have a better chance of attending a prestigious college. He has attended several cram schools, which focus on TOEFL (Test of English as a Foreign Language) with a strong emphasis on speaking and grammar since he was in 4th grade. Since he knew the significance of English for his future, he returned to the U.S in the fall of 2008 to study and attended Eden.

Dongkyu was also introduced to the Eden School and assigned an American host family from the same private placement center in Korea. He seldom attended club meetings because his guardian

does not want him to attend the Korean church. However, after he moved into the new host family's house, he has since joined the church and has become more active in the church and the club meeting. He plays a guitar in the youth group band at the church. After he graduated high school in the summer 2010, he went back to Korea. His father is a medical doctor and his mother is a house wife in Korea.

I met Dongkyu in September 2008. He was the first student who I met for this study. After I introduced the study to him, he wanted to participate. Also, he wanted to attend the Korean church because he was a Christian and wanted to hang out with Sunjea on Sunday. In order to accommodate his needs, I provided transportation for Dongkyu on Sunday morning. He played a guitar in the youth group with Sunjea. However, he was not able to attend the church for a while because his host family did not want him to be outside of their control. About one or two months later, he persuaded his host family and was allowed to join the club meetings. He is an easy going person. He also pays attention to his style because he likes to show up. So, he often changes his hair style, such as Reggae style, long hair style, and permanent hair style, high school students in Korea are not allowed to do. Dongkyu and Sunjea are very close friends but interestingly Sunjea always wanted to behave in an older brother manner to Dongkyu since Sunjea was born several months ahead of Dongkyu ¹¹

Minjeong Joo (Julie) is an eighteen year old 9th grader *Chogi-Youhacksang* at the Eden High School. She spent two years in the U.S. including one year as an exchange student experience. Based on her age, she is supposed to be in 12th grade or 11th grade like Sunjea and Dongkyu. Prior to her arrival to the U.S in 2007, she was in 10th grade in Korea. However, when she came to the U.S. later in 2007 as an exchange student, she was placed into 8th grade. It was the decision of the administration of the school where she was attending that she would not be able to follow the 10th grade classes in the U.S. because of her lack of English proficiency. This decision was made also by her parents in collaboration with the private placement center in

¹¹ Sunjea was an year older than Dongkyu. When Sunjea enrolled a U.S. school for the first time, he repeated a semester in the U.S. school. In Korea, the academic year begins in March and finishes in February. Due to difference of academic year, Korean students sometimes repeat a semester or skip a semester in the U.S.

Korea.¹² This is why she is in 9th grade now at Eden.

When Minjeong was in 9th grade in Korea, she visited the U.S. for an English summer camp. This experience gave her a positive and strong impression about studying in the U.S. compared to studying in Korea. So, she asked her parents to send her to study abroad in the U.S. Due to her good experience while attending the English camp, she started studying in a private school as an exchange student in the Midwest of the U.S. in the fall of 2007. However, she had a very difficult time when she was in the Midwest because of her American host family, who had been assigned by the private placement center in Korea. According to her, the host family gave her house chores like other children in the family. At first, she accepted and tried to follow the family rules. However, she could not understand her host family's rules because she was asked to do house chores even when she was sick. She asked her host parents to take her to a hospital because she felt back pain. However, her host parents did not take her to a hospital because they were busy. She has suffered from her back pain since that time. Unfortunately, she remembered this as a tragic misfortune because she was asked to do her duties even she was very sick¹³. For this reason, she does have a traumatic memory about the American host family.

When she returned to Korea in 2008, she did not want to study in the U.S. based on her traumatic experience. However, her mother strongly suggested that she continue studying in the U.S. to improve her English since her mother already paid the tuition for Eden. Minjeong did come back to the U.S. in 2008. In Springville, she was assigned to another American host family from the center in Korea. However, she also had troubles with that American host family in Springville. She said that her host parents were very strict. According to her, there are so many rules about what she cannot or should do. For instance, she should go to bed around 10 P.M. She

¹² Many Korean and immigrant students tend to be held back in their grade in U.S. schools. As I explained already, Korean academic year is different American academic year. Therefore, Korean students often repeat a semester or repeat the grades in the U.S. because of this reason. Also, they often repeat the grade in the U.S. because of their limited English proficiency. The decisions are sometimes made by schools or their parents. For instance, Mrs. Ko, Jinhee's mother, explained that Jinsuk, her son, was almost placed a year behind in his middle school for the first time. However, she argued against the school's decision and she brought all the tests and curriculum materials that Jinsuk took in Korea to prove his academic ability. Therefore, Jinsuk could enroll in the middle from school. On the other hand, Sunjea, Haneal, Hana and Yuri repeated a semester in the U.S.

¹³ In general, Korean parents do not ask their children to do house chores. Particularly, if their children are in middle or high school, parents do not ask them to do house chores because the parents think that their children need to focus on studying. These students are from wealthy families. These students are certainly raised like princes/princesses at home. Therefore, Minjeong could not understand the situation with her host family.

cannot use the internet and watch TV more than one hour per day at home, and she cannot use a telephone after 9 P.M., etc. These house rules made her very uncomfortable and unhappy because she used to do whatever she wanted to in Korea. Particularly, she could not accept the internet usage rule because the internet was the way she communicated with her friends in Korea. She finally thought that she could not get along with American host families anymore. Therefore, Minjeong's mother looked for a Korean host family through the Korean community in Springville. She was finally able to stay with Mrs. Park, a widow who had come to the U.S. thirty years ago. Minjeong is the only student who stays with a Korean host family among these students from the center.

Based on her bad experiences with American host families, she does not like Americans and American culture. She prefers to not hang out with any American friends while she has lived in Springville. She only hangs out with Youri and other Korean students. Interestingly, it seemed that she was interested in the club meetings, but she has never attended the meetings. Later, I was told that she felt uncomfortable coming to the church for several reasons. First, she was almost forced to attend a church by her host family when she was in the Midwest. It made her want to stay away from the church. In addition, she had a bad impression about the youth group in the church in Springville from the very first day because most of students in the youth group looked like Korean Americans. Therefore, she was uncomfortable coming to the church and participating in the club meetings despite the fact that she liked speaking in Korean. She has not completed her high school coursework at Eden. She went back to Korea in summer 2009. Her father is a business man and her mother is a house wife. Both of them have graduated college in Korea.

Mirea Shin (Katie) is fourteen years old and a 7th grader *Chogi-Youhacksang* at the Bell Spring Middle School, a public middle school in a wealthy neighborhood. She has spent four years in Springville. She lives with her aunt, Mrs. Song. Mrs. Song and her husband, Mr. Song came to the U.S. thirty years ago to pursue their higher education. Mrs. Song is a librarian in the State Department and Mr. Song is a professor in a university in Springville. Mirea is able to attend Bell Spring Middle School, one of the best schools in the town due to the fact that her aunt and uncle live in a very nice area in Springville. Also, she can enroll in a public school because of her U.S. citizenship. Katie was born in the U.S. while her parents pursued a degree in higher

education in the U.S. After her father had obtained a doctoral degree, her family moved back to Korea when she was three years old. Later, her parents were divorced and she lived with her father in Korea. Mirea was not good at school in Korea because she was bullied. So her father decided to send her to Springville to stay with her aunt, Mrs. Song, and attend an American school. Her father is a CEO of a computer company and her mother is a curator in Korea. I was not able to reach her parents in Korea because they are divorced. Mrs. Song, her aunt, does not want me to contact her parents in Korea. I also felt that she did not want to unveil Mirea's family issue. In general, Koreans try to hide family issues that give an unfavorable impression to others because Koreans are very concerned about what others think about them. Therefore, I interviewed her aunt, Mrs. Song, instead of her parents. At first Mirea was somewhat reserved, but she became very friendly and talkative after she spent time with the other participants in the study. Also, I had a chance to stay with her in the summer of 2009 while babysitting her while her aunt's family visited Korea.

Youri Lee (Jenna) is seventeen years old and an 11th grader *Chogi-Youhacksang*. She is enrolled at the Eden High School and is currently living with an American host family. Like Minjeong, Sunjea, and Dongkyu she was introduced to Eden from the private placement center and she also has exchange student experience. She also has been two years in the U.S. like Sunjea, Dongkyu, and Minjeong. Her parents are school teachers. Her father teaches in a high school, and mother teaches in an elementary school. Youri had watched many Hollywood movies and listened to American pop songs at home since she was very young because both her parents were working. Then she became fascinated about American life, culture, and English. The movies and pop songs helped her focus on studying her English in Korea. Moreover, it helped her to make a decision to come to the U.S. to study.

Initially Youri did not participate in the KCM for two reasons. First, it was my understanding that her host family was very strict and did not want her to associate with the Korean community. Perhaps it is due to the fact that her host mother is a director who has the responsibility of organizing and taking care of the Korean students who are assigned in Springville. The host mother has a direct association with the private placement center in Korea. Secondly, Youri is not a Christian; therefore, she believes that there is no reason to come to the church on Sunday. Despite this, she did come to the church picnic with Minjeong and Mrs. Kim,

Minjeong's guardian who brought both of the girls to the picnic. It was at the picnic where I first met Youri. Afterwards I discussed the study with her. She seemed very interested and excited about the study. She began attending church because of the club meetings. After attending the church, she seems to enjoy hanging around other Korean students and likes the discussions. She is very thoughtful and eloquent. She liked discussions and expressed her opinions to others so that she became one of the very active participants in the club meetings.

***Girugi* Students**

Three *Girugi* students participated in this study: Haneal, Hana, and Jinhee. Haneal and Hana are siblings. They live with their mother in Springville. Jinhee came with her mother and brother in Springville. Her brother left Springville to attend a college in other city. For this study, I excluded her brother because he is out of the participants' criteria in this study and he is not in Springville.

Jinhee Ko (Chelsea) is eighteen years old and a 12th grade *Girugi* student. She attends the Kings High School, a public school in a wealthy neighborhood. She was born in the U.S. during the time her father pursued his doctoral degree in the U.S. She went back to Korea with her family when she was three years old. Her family visited one year in the U.S. while her father took a sabbatical year. Then, she came back to the U.S. with her mother and her older brother for educational purposes in 2003. So, she has actually been in the U.S. for nine years. That means that she spent a half of her life in the U.S. Her mother, Mrs. Ko has obtained a job in the U.S. so that her children could continue their education in the U.S. Now, Jinhee lives with her mother in the city because her brother left for college in another city in the U.S. Her father has obtained a doctoral degree from the U.S. and he is currently a professor in Korea. Her mother is a pharmacist. Jinhee did not attend any club meeting because she was very busy preparing to go to college. She is a little bit shy and very thoughtful. She is a very smart and hardworking student. She is particularly very good at math. Thanks to her gift in math, she was admitted to a prestigious college in the U.S.

Haneal Park (Charlie) is sixteen years old and a 9th grade *Girugi* student in the Eden High School. He lives with his mother, Mrs. Park, and his younger sister, Hana Park. He came to

the city in December 2007 with his family for his father's sabbatical year. Haneal's father is an architect and a professor in a university in Seoul, Korea. Haneal and Hana have been in the U.S. for less than two years. After his father's sabbatical year, Haneal's father went back to Korea by himself, but his mother, sister and Haneal remained in the city so the children could continue their education. Haneal's mother, Enyoung Park, attends a language school to maintain her visa status. During his father's stay in the city as a visiting scholar, Haneal was enrolled in the LEE Middle School, a public school in the city. Prior to attending schooling in the U.S., Haneal had finished a middle school in Korea. However, due to his lack of English proficiency he was placed into 8th grade at LEE Middle School. After his father left, Haneal transferred to the Eden school because of his visa status.

When he was in Korea, Haneal had a clear future goal to be a movie director. He said that he did not study at all and he was not good at school in Korea because he just wanted to be a movie director. He spent most of his time focusing his efforts on making his own films. In his mind, he did not need to study any other subjects in school except Korean for writing movie scenarios. When he recalled his school life in Korea, he was very happy and satisfied because he could hang out with many friends in school although he was not good student academically. Haneal believed that since he had a clear future goal as a movie director, it was not important for him to obtain good grades in school. Due to his clear future goal in Korea, he did not want to come to the U.S. However, after he attended an American school for one year, he changed his mind to study in the U.S. because he liked the American school system. After his father's sabbatical year was completed, his family made a decision to stay in the city without his father.

Haneal is one of the major participants in the club meetings and attended every club meeting. He is very easygoing and outgoing. He really enjoys discussions and expresses himself to other. Thanks to his outgoing personality, I was able to recruit the other participants in the study.

Hana Park (Sally) is fourteen years old and a 7th grade *Girugi* student at the Eden Middle School. She lives with her mother, Mrs. Park, and her older brother, Haneal Park. She came to the U.S. in December, 2007. When Sally came to the U.S. with her family for the first time, she did not have any choice. This was based on the fact their parents made the decision to

live in the U.S. because of her brother. Unlike her brother, she has struggled to make friends and adjust to American schools. However, she is very active, talkative, and outgoing in the club meetings with other Koreans.

It is interesting to note that Hana and Mirea were the youngest female participants in this study. I was concerned that they would not express their opinions in front of other older male students because of the Confucian tradition in Korea. This tradition is based on an age and gender oriented hierarchy. However, Hana and Mirea were actively involved the club meetings. They actually enjoyed participating in this study.

Findings

This chapter presents findings in two sections: first parents' perception on American education and second students' cultural identity crafting. I will describe how the parents' perception on American education influences their decision making processes regarding their children's study abroad in the U.S. I will also present how they observe their children's life in the U.S. For the students, I will describe how they negotiate their cultural identity among different environments in the U.S. In order to analyze students' interviews and observation in detail, I will discuss the findings based on several highly influential aspects of their daily lives such as families, home, church, school, peers, the English language, and their adjustment efforts.

Parents-Perceptions on American Education

Education has been emphasized in Korean society traditionally and culturally based on Confucian values (Haboush, 1991). As I already explained above, the university entrance examination is one of the most crucial issues for students in Korean society because it is well known that a prestigious university graduation is a guarantee for obtaining good jobs, high wages, high social status, and even a good marriage (Bea & Lee, 1988; Han, 1990; Lee & Larson, 1999)¹⁴. For these reasons, education has been seen as the most powerful tool for social mobility in Korea. Also, education in Korea can be explained as a clear form, or an institutionalized form, of cultural capital. Furthermore, Korean parents try to take full responsibility for their children because they consider their children as an extension of themselves (Ahn, 1994). For these

¹⁴ *Asia times*, the reporter described the national entrance exam as "life and death exam in South Korea".

reasons, Korean parents carefully pay attention to their children's education. I will describe how these Korean parents support their children's education in this section. But before I discuss the Korean parents' thoughts about American education, I will introduce how participants in this study came to the U.S. and who made the decision to study abroad in the U.S. This is a backdrop to illustrate how these families and students consider American education as a significant tool to increase cultural capital.

Decision Making

All of the parents in this study responded that the primary reason for sending their children to the U.S. is based on their children's education. As KEDI reported (2005), these parents highlight that studying English and the better environment in American schools are major benefits for their children. Also, some parents added that their children were not good at academics in Korea so that these parents wanted to motivate their children to study by providing a new environment. In other words, parents hope that there would be an academic improvement if their child attended an American school. Therefore, parents in this study apparently see that an American education is better for their children's future.

Moreover, most parents made the decision for their children to study abroad and persuaded them to study in the U.S. For instance, Haneal's family came to Springville in December 2007 because her father, Mr. Park was offered a sabbatical year in the U.S. Then Mr. Park left for Korea one year later and Hana, Haneal, and Mrs. Park decided to stay in Springville because of the children's education. Jinhee also came to Springville with her mother and brother. Her mother, Mrs. Ko, applied to a position in Springville and brought her children because of the children's education. On the other hand, Youri was the only student who asked her parents to send her by herself to the U.S. to study abroad. She joined the private placement center and gathered information by herself about studying abroad. Later her parents became very supportive of Youri's decision because they thought that an American education could provide a better future for their daughter. As a result, this study demonstrated that the parents in this study decided to send their children to study abroad in the U.S. because they expect that an American education will bring more benefits for their children in terms of English proficiency, cultural experiences, or an educational shelter.

“We came to here [The U.S.] as visiting scholar. But we concern our children’s education because at that time was very important to our children. The primary reason why we come to the U.S. is because of their education. We thought any other countries, Britain, Australia, New Zealand, like counties which speak in English, but we consider if my son wants to go to colleges. Then, the U.S. will be better for him. So, we choose the U.S. Particularly, we consider my son because he is a high school student. You know, if you are in Korea, if you were a mother of children who go to middle school or high school. Then, you could just hear about it [study abroad]. Korean moms talked about it a lot. Also, in the mass media, they talked about very successful stories of study abroad students. Since I have a high school student son, so I became interested in watching and get information on that.”- Interview with Mrs. Park (Haneal and Hana’s mother)

“After I married, I stayed here in the U.S. for five years. So, I have experienced here, and at that time, Jinsuk, my son, went to preschool in here. Also, when my husband had a sabbatical year at 1999, we came to the U.S. and my children went to elementary school here. It seemed that they like American schools. After we returned to Korea, they went to elementary school and middle school in Korea. Then, I thought that it might be good for them to go to school in the U.S. That’s why I came to the U.S. However, if I am not a pharmacist, we cannot do that. We cannot afford it although my husband is a professor in Korea. It is not sufficient to support. You know what? In Korea, how mothers support their children to go to prestigious universities? They planned deliberately a daily schedule for their children going to school, several cram schools, and private tutors, etc. To make their schedule, mothers drive all day to give their children ride, attend some conferences to gather information, and study about it. I thought that it was ridiculous but, I have witnessed that those students finally go to prestigious high schools or universities. But, I cannot do that like their mothers because I had a job. It made me very anxious and I was worried about my children’s education. I was doubt whether my son can go to college or not. I knew that mother supports can change their children’s futures. Of course, all the parents in Korea are not like that. But, you know, in Korea, that supports are very important. If parents cannot support their children’s education, parents feel guilty in Korean society. It became that way. So, I made a decision to study and obtained a license

of pharmacy for working in the U.S., then, I brought them into the U.S. because my husband and I cannot afford it unless working in the U.S. That's my support for their education. That is my best support for them" – The interview with Mrs. Ko (Jinhee's mother).

As these quotes demonstrate, parents in Korea are very concerned about their children's education and make huge efforts to support their children. Particularly, Mrs. Ko explained how Korean mothers are actively involved with their children's education and how that involvement generally leads to a high degree of educational success for their children. In other words, educational success in Korea is clearly associated with parental involvement. However, all parents in Korea cannot make the same degree of involvement as the families in this study did. Only a few families can actually make this happen for their children to study abroad in the U.S. like these families, wealthy and well educated. Therefore, when they make a decision for their children to study abroad in the U.S., it is with the specific idea that their decisions will provide better educational environments for their children. Although they do not know exactly about American education they are convinced that an American education brings more benefits for their children's future.

Symbolic Credits and Cultural Capital

Bourdieu (1977) described cultural capital as symbolic power that can be transferred into economic power. He also illustrates that language proficiency, taste of high cultures, cultural experiences, and higher educational degrees are associated with formation of cultural capital. As I already pointed out, the parents in the study said that one of primary reasons for coming to the U.S. is to gain a higher degree of English proficiency because English is one of the major factors in acquiring a better advanced education and increasing the chances within the job markets in Korean societies (Park, 2004). In Korea, English is a critical tool for success. In other words, English proficiency is seen as a form of cultural capital in the society. Obviously these families hope that their children will obtain this powerful tool from American schools. However, it seems that they also consider their children's American education more than just English studying and a salient way to improve their cultural and symbolic capital through English and American education. If Korean parents want to improve their children's English, they might send their

children to study abroad in India, South Africa, or the Philippines, countries where English is spoken. In another, they might hire private tutors for English similar to what they do for all other subjects in Korea. However, Korean parents prefer the study abroad experiences and they want to send their children in the U.S., which is one of the most advanced and powerful countries in the world. Korean parents' preference shares that they clearly see study abroad in the U.S. as improving English skills and developing their high cultural knowledge as well.

I found interesting insights from the parents' in the study about American schoolings. None of these parents experienced K-12 schooling in U.S., although some of the parents in this study pursued their higher education degree in the U.S. institutions. They did not exactly know about American schooling at the K-12 level. However, surprisingly parents often fantasize about schooling in the U.S. based on what they have gained mainly from the news media or internet blogs. The following interview segment demonstrates how the study abroad program in the U.S. is symbolic power in Korean society

“Since Youri was in elementary school, she wants to study English. She wants to go to the U.S. to study English. She was always fantasized to America. Actually, last year when she went to the U.S. as an exchange student, I did not expect. It was very a sudden chance for her because in last moment, we were informed from the private placement center that she could do it. I was so proud of her because I think that Youri might make our dream come true which my husband and I could not achieved. And also, I think that America will be better place to make her dream come true, although I've never been to the U.S., I guess from what I've heard from Youri.” –The interview with Mrs. Lee (Youri's mother)

From the interview with Youri's mother, I found that Youri's parents also consider an American education as a chance for social mobility for their daughter. Ironically, however, they do not exactly know how an American education system will benefit their daughter. During my research I found that Youri's parents somewhat 'romanticize' about living their lives and attending schooling in the U.S. based on the information from Youri and the news media. However, they certainly believe that an American education is more valuable for their daughter than a Korean education. This is not only Youri's parents' opinion, but also most Korean

parents' beliefs. Furthermore, since going to a prestigious university is one of most important issues for students in Korean society, Korean parents really make a strong effort to support their children's education.

This interview clearly indicates how Korean parents highlight how important it is for their children to attend good schools. It also demonstrates how Korean parents regard studying in the U.S. as a better path to obtain a successful life in Korea for their children. Additionally, during Mrs. Ko's interview she implies that it is equally important as to who comes to the U.S. to study and how parents demonstrate their support of their children in order to study in the U.S.

“Well, study abroad--- because English is emphasized in Korean education. That's why parents send their kids to study abroad, I think. So, children can have abroad experiences from that. You know, the upper class or high status people in Korean society send their kids to abroad in the U.S. because of that.” From the interview with Mrs. Lee (Youri's mother)

As Mrs. Lee, Youri's mother, pointed out that studying abroad experiences in the U.S. is a kind of exclusive experiences of the upper or high SES families in Korea. Mrs. Ko, Jinhee's mother, also explained the trend in Korea.

“My husband got the Ph. D degree in the U.S., and I am a pharmacist. My sister and my brother in law are professors in Korea. I think that once they tasted American water, they return to the States. Once they experienced in the U.S., they return to the States- because children like it. Children have experienced in Korean schooling. They know how Korean school is tough, and so they do want to be back to the U.S. Like Jinsuk [her son]'s cousins come back to the U.S. because they stayed in the U.S. and their parents can afford to their children's living in the U.S...” –From the interview with Mrs. Ko (Jinhee's mother)

It became apparent during these interviews regarding which parents are able to provide additional study in the U.S. experiences for their kids in Korea. In other words, study abroad in the U.S. becomes a trend among upper middle class families in Korea. This exclusive trend among upper middle class becomes very critical cultural power for their children's future in the

Korean society.

As a result, parents in the interview portion of the study unveiled how Korean parents are eager to send their kids to study abroad and have often fantasized about living and gaining a valuable education in the U.S. Parents in Korea are not sure what the American education system is and whether American schoolings fit the personal lives of their children or not. However, they certainly believe that obtaining American education experiences and English fluency are gigantic benefits for their children. Therefore, study in the U.S. becomes a kind of symbolic credits and cultural power in Korean society.

Educational Shelter and Educational Ladder

These Korean parents agree with the idea that to study abroad in the U.S. is an experience that improves cultural capital. Interestingly, they expect that an American education will provide better educational environments and provide opportunities to achieve academic success, that it is an educational shelter and educational ladder as well. As I already explained above, education is one of most prominent values in Korea. Therefore, schooling is highly competitive and a test oriented system in Korea. Korean schools also encourage the competition for the national entrance examination. Therefore, Korean students spend large amounts of time studying to prepare for the exams (Lee & Larson, 2000). So, Korea is often referred to as ‘the examination hell’ for students.

Considering this atmosphere in Korea, we can anticipate what would happen if students are not good at school, in other words what can happen to them and their families. In that case, parents will want to seek an alternative place where their children can avoid this high level of competition or provide an educational shelter for their children. This competition is explained by students who are not good at school and students who are good at school. If students study in the U.S., they can avoid the high degree of competition in preparation for as well as going to college and they can be released from the highly stressful burden of studying compared to what they would experience in Korea. As a result, American education provides a direct and indirect benefit for Korean children. Therefore, these parents seek a shelter which is less stressful and less competitive for their kids as well.

“My son, he was teenager that time. So, I think that he feels difficulties for studying. He wants to do others. He wants to be a movie director. You know, I cannot accept it. You know the situation in Korea. I do not think that I can accept that he does not focus on studying. So, probably I had a dream for him. Maybe the American education fit better to him as I just heard from other people. So, I have gathered some information and studied about American schools” –Interview from Mrs. Park (Haneal and Hana’s mother)

Mrs. Park’s quote above clearly indicated how she expected that an American education helped her son to obtain a better academic performance. Below is another quote that demonstrates how parents want to improve their children’s academic performance in the U.S. from Mirea’s aunt.

“Well, Mirea is my niece. She is a daughter of my brother. She was born in the U.S. while my brother studied in the U.S. After my brother obtained a doctoral degree, they came back to Korea. When Mirea was in Korea, she was not good at school. Both of her parents work, so they cannot take care of her. That’s why I think that Mirea was not good at school, and she was very fat in Korea. So, I guess that she was bullied because of that. So, my brother wants to send her to the U.S. to study. Anyhow she has the American citizenship.” –The interview with Mrs. Song (Mirea’s Aunt)

Like Mrs. Song, Mirea’s aunt, mentions that Mirea’s parents seek a better educational place for their daughter who did not get along with in Korean schools.

“You know, in Korea, universities and education is really important. If people did not graduate prestigious schools, they were kind of discriminated compared to those who graduate prestigious schools. So, parents really concern on their children’s education. Like my sister, she sent her kids to the U.S. and they go to boarding schools. Most my friends when I met in the U.S., they come to the state like me because of their children’s education. Their husbands in Korea support the families in the U.S. Well---if children do not have the citizenship, then they probably try to stay in Korea. But, most of them do have citizenship, so, it is easy to come to the U.S. or I think that mostly they come to the

U.S. as visiting scholars and they left in the U.S. I think that most common case is like it.” –The interview with Mrs. Ko (Jinhee’s mother)

In Haneal and Mirea’s case, their parents seemed to seek an educational shelter for their children in order to encourage studying. They expected that American schools could meet their educational needs and desires for Haneal and Mirea. In other words, both parents want their children to succeed in school by providing a new environment in the U.S. Therefore, these parents consider the American schools an educational shelter and an educational ladder as well.

In sum, obtaining an education is one of the most valuable virtues in Korea so education is very competitive and stressful for students. Moreover, English is one of the most valuable assets in Korea. Therefore, study abroad is called ‘a new icon of 21st century’ in Korea (*Yonhap* News Agency, 2010). It means that most Korean parents wish to send their children to study abroad although there are not many parents in Korea who can afford it because of the cost and the lack of knowledge about the study abroad program. As a result, Korean parents romanticize about the study abroad program, particularly, an American education as an investment for their children’s future.

Cultural Identity Negotiation of *Chogi-Youhacksangs* and *Girugi* Students

Theory

This study explores how Korean students in secondary schools in the U.S. negotiate their cultural identity among their different living environments. Based on this research, these students show different behavior patterns when they are at home, community, and school in order to participate in their cultural boundaries. The students seem to have clear cultural boundaries set by using languages, practicing cultures, interacting with others, and staying with families in their lives.

Wenger (1998) argues that a person’s identity is formed by various social and cultural interactions through participation in communities of practice. He describes participation as the social experience of living in the world in terms of membership in social communities and active involvement in social enterprise. As Wenger pointed out, the *Chogi-Youhacksangs* and *Girugi*

students experience various social practices and participations in the U.S. from home to school and community. These students experience consequential transitions that Beach (1999) identified as “a developmental change in the relation between an individual and one or more social activities (p. 114).” He provided the example of the transition as a daily movement between home and school, participating in part time work after school, and moving the between language arts and science classes during the school work. The participants in this study participate in the various cultural environments such as school, home and communities. These students experience a collateral transitional journey among different cultural places in the U.S.

Phinney(1996) claims that immigrant youths often maintain their own culture or adapt to the dominant culture. Phinney and Dupont (1994) illustrated bicultural identity as identification with both the ethnic culture of one’s origin and the mainstream culture and as well as what one makes of his/her exposure to the two sets of culture in the society. While the *Chogi-Youhacksangs* and *Girugi* students travel among different cultural sets, they also face conflict and contradiction since there are significant differences between Korean and American value systems. This circumstance apparently influences these students cultural identity negotiation.

For instance, these students attend American schools and they practice their school cultures by participating in activities with their American peers. The *Girugi* students and some *Chogi-Youhacksangs* who live with Korean host families will practice the Korean culture after returning home to Korea. Some *Chogi-Youhacksangs* who live with American host families will practice their understanding of the American culture at their American home. In addition, these students explicitly and implicitly participate in Korean communities in the U.S. These Korean students participate in various social and cultural communities and practice different communities’ cultures in the U.S.

Girugi students and *Chogi-Youhacksangs* come to the U.S. for education and culturally privileged experiences. The purpose of this opportunity is to try and learn English and the nuances of the American culture as soon as possible in a new place. However, immigrant youth studies in the U.S. (Kwak, 2003; Vyas, 2004; Shin, 2009) often claim that Korean immigrants tend to maintain strong Korean identities and practice their cultural beliefs although they face conflicts between Korean cultural values and American cultural values while living in the U.S.

As many researchers who study the Korean culture have indicated, there is a strong need to immediately adapt to their new cultural surroundings while simultaneously trying to strongly hold on to their Korean identity and preserve their Korean cultures in the U.S. As a result, these students have developed a sense of clear cultural boundaries in the U.S that they are able to work within.

Key Aspects Found in the Students Cultural Identity Crafting

Cultural identity formation for the *Chogi-Youhacksangs* and *Girugi* students is a fascinating and under researched area of concern. My research on the multiple facets of this significant process will present new information for multidisciplinary research and prepare a new basis of understanding and comprehension of the *Chogi-Youhacksangs* and *Girugi* students.

During my research, I found several highly influential aspects of cultural identity formation during the time the students crafted their cultural identity among the different cultural boundaries. The most crucial factor for these students is family because they are teenagers and they are completely or partially separated from their families. Moreover, since the participants are apparently aware of their family' supports for their education, the family is one trigger point for these students. Second, their different environments in the U.S., home, school, Korean community (the church)- provide very different and unique cultural boundaries. These students craft their cultural identities across these cultural boundaries daily. Peers are another significant factor in how they negotiate their cultural identities due to the fact that they are adolescents. Adolescents develop their identity from various social interactions, particularly from peer relationship. I found that these students will make extraordinary efforts to adjust their lives into new environments. Their adjustment efforts sometimes facilitate as well as impeded their cultural identity negotiation in the U.S.

In the following section, I will present the findings on each of these influential factors, such as families-including their parents and their host families, their perception of home (both Korea and the U.S.), their conception of what it means to be Korean; the influence of the church; the relationship with their peers while gaining an education; their cultural experiences; and finally learning English.

Family

While the *Chogi-Youhacksangs* and *Girugi* students traverse through their cultural transitions among home, school, and community, they are implicitly and explicitly impacted by various factors to craft their cultural identities. Since they are adolescents, family is one of most crucial aspect that will influence their identity formation. Researchers (Marcia, 1980; Newman and Murray, 1983) have argued that family and parents' role are very important and influential during the time that the students construct their identities, particularly in an early adolescent age. Research (Grotevant and Cooper, 1985; Waterman, 1993) found that the relationship between the parent and the adolescent often fosters a positive influence during the development of an adolescent identity. Therefore, the absence of parents for these students is inevitably one of most significant impacts to negotiating their identity in the U.S. In other words, if during the time children who are going through adolescence and the parents are absent, then there could be a potential for an unforeseen impact that could impinge upon the development of the child's emotional, social and psychological health.

Parents

I found that family is one of the strongest trigger points that bring about the greatest degree of nostalgia about Korea for these students because all of the students are separated entirely or partially from their family. For instance, *Girugi* students are separated from their fathers and *Chogi-Youhacksangs* are separated from their entire family. Nevertheless despite the separation from their families, these students are very attached to their parents. For instance, Minjeong talked with her mother in Korea almost every day, and Haneal and Hana also chatted with their father every day. Sunjea, Dongkyu, and Youri also regularly talked with their parents in Korea every week.

Particularly, these students know that their families, specifically their parents, have sacrificed a great deal for their children's education. The students demonstrated a strong appreciation for their parents' support and sacrifices. Therefore, the students were very sensitive and became very emotional when they were asked to talk about their families. Moreover, these students feel a strong sense of motivation and pressure to perform well and receive good grades

in school in order not to disappoint their parents. Interestingly, their strong attachment and appreciation of their parents tie these students to their interpretation of what they believe to be the proper Korean cultural boundaries rather than experiencing some American cultural practices due to the fact that these students want to be ‘a good son and daughter’. The concept of being a good son and daughter is apparently originated from a Korean traditional value, filial piety, such as being obedient, studying hard, etc. Their families, whatever they live with them in the U.S. or not, strongly influence their cultural identity negotiation in the U.S. In other words, since these students are certainly aware of the financial cost that their parents pay for them, they try to compensate for the cost by having good grades.

I observed very interesting conversations about their families in the KCM. Sunjea, Dongkyu, Youri, and Hana talked about how their parents support them financially and psychologically and how they feel about it.

Sunjea: While I managed money by myself, I realized that how it is difficult to make money. Then, I admire my parents how they make money.

Youri: Right, I realized how making money is difficult while I managed big money in here.

Dongkyu: Right. Actually, that money is not mine, it is my parents’ Here, many students work to make money. But, my parents send me money to pay tuition, living cost, allowance, etc. That’s very expensive. I became aware of that my parents are really sacrificed and invest a lot for me.

Sunjea and Youri: Yes. I feel that way.

Youri: Well, that might be natural. But, I feel really sorry to them.

Dongkyu: Right, here, the parents do not support their children like parents in Korea.
[Students are in silence]

Youri: Yes. I am really sorry for them financially... So far, I am okay with my grades. So, I am sorry about that part.

Dongkyu: My mom sent me a family picture. My sister lives other city to attend a college in Korea. So, only my parents live in my house now... then, my mom sighed that she could not take family picture because I am not there. So, she sent me a family picture,

only my parents in the picture. It is so sad that I am not living with parents and it cannot be the same as the past any more.

Hana: My family has a quiet big house in Korea. We all used to live that big house but, now only my dad and my grandma live that big house. Then, I cannot imagine how that house looks empty. I am so sorry to have my dad live there without us.

Sunjea: I feel sorry to my parents because I give them huge financial burden. I think that I am blessed to study in the U.S. You know, there are many students who want to study in the U.S. cannot make it. If I cannot succeed in here, I mean fail in school, I cannot imagine. I even do not want to think about it. Although I knew that my parents spent huge money and I need to be separated with them, I came to the U.S. for studying. If I cannot succeed [he cannot finish his sentence]. So, when I hang out with friends, I suddenly asked myself what I am doing now. Then, I feel that I need to study harder.

Dongkyu and Hana: Right! I feel that way too!

[students stop talking for a while, they do not look each other and they looked down-in Korean sense, if people become emotional, they often looked down and silence]

Researcher: What do you mean ‘successes’?

Youri: Well, I am not that high achieving student in school like Sunjea. But, I think, that is not bother my parents. [Dongkyu interrupted, you should be shameful about it!] I want to do what I want and make money to support my families. That is success for me...

Sunjea: Well, I feel like that. If I am happy, my parent would be happy too. If I succeed, they would be happy. So, if I go to a good college, my parents will be very satisfied with that. So, that becomes my objective for studying in the U.S. now and I just try to do my best for that. Anyhow, my parents seem to be very happy about me [my grades].

Donkyu: Yes, my mom really likes my grades because I have much better grades in the U.S.

Sunjea: I do not want to disappoint them.

Hana: Yes. If I do not have good grades, I feel really sorry to my parents. Then, I make excuse to my mom. Every boy did not well at this exam [laughing, other’s laughing, too.]

Sunjea and Dongkyu: Yes, right. I do the same thing.

-The KCM, May 2009

This conversation demonstrated how these students believe they need to behave in the U.S. while thinking of their parents supports. This strong attachment and appreciation for their parents gives them a guideline for the way they need to live and behave in the U.S. For instance, I heard an interesting conversation between Sunjea and Haneal in the KCM. Haneal described how his mother reminds him what it means to be Korean and asked him to behave like a good Korean. She tries to educate him in the traditional ways of being Korean even though she wants him to get along with his friends in school.

Jinhee explained the reason why she speaks Korean with her mother at home is because she wants to have conversations with her mother. Jinhee is the most fluent English speaker among the participants because she was born and raised until age six in the U.S. It is interesting to note that, her mother, Mrs. Ko has been in the U.S. for a while and is currently working as a pharmacist in Springville. That means that both of them are able to communicate with each other in English. However, Jinhee speaks to her in Korea because she considers her mother's level of English proficiency.

“When I come back home, I never speak English to mom because my mom does not speak English like me. I used to communicate with her in Korean. I want to talk to her. So, I never speak to her in English. Also, when I meet any Koreans in the town, I speak Korean because if I speak English to them, they might not understand or they think that I am a spoiled Korean. They are older than me and they might not to speak English very well.” –The first interview with Jinhee, 12th grader female *Girugi* student.

From her interview, I also found one more interesting point that concerned her regarded how other Koreans might see her as spoiled child. That is definitely not good for her and her parents as well. As a result, Jinhee speaks Korean at home and with Koreans because of her parents. She does not want to demonstrate improper behavior that would lead to a bad reputation of her and her parents.

These students are separated from their families across the Pacific Ocean yet they still feel a strong attachment to their parents in Korea. Therefore, their attachment to their parents

often guides how to live and behave in the U.S. They need to study hard for their parents' financial support and behave well as a Korean for the parents' reputation. In other words, these students may need to remain within Korean cultural boundaries. Therefore, the families strongly impact their cultural identity negotiations among different cultural boundaries in the U.S.

Host Families

While they frequently talked about their biological families and express appreciation for their parents, they barely mentioned their host families. The *Chogi-Youhacksangs'* American host families are one of the most important agents to introduce American cultures to these students. But, unexpectedly, these students do not seem to have very close relationship with their American host families. Some students have experienced difficulties because of cultural differences and language barriers. Particularly, Minjeong has had bad experiences with her previous American host families. That's why she lives with a Korean host family now. Strikingly, her bad experiences with American host families have impeded her from learning and accepting the American culture except when it comes to learning English. For this reason, Minjeong tries to stick to the Korean cultural boundary and maintain her Korean identity although she needs to make a different cultural journey in her everyday life between school and home. She recalled an experience with her first American host family when she attended a school as an exchange student in another city.

"The first day, I had dinner together with my host families. They asked me several questions and I responded. Then, they did not understand me. I said something but, they [host families] did not understand what I said to them. Then, they did not ask any more questions to me. That night, I was very demotivated and depressed. I felt very lonely and I felt like a loser. I was so sad and cried... I do not like Americans' individualism. They [Americans] do not care about others. You know, I told you, when I was sick, they [host family] just asked me how I felt. They did not bring me a hospital because they were busy. They just kept asking me how I felt. It was bad. I do not like their attitude. I think that they are very selfish. I don't like it... I had a difficult time with my host family even in Springville. They are very strict. It says that America is a free country but I cannot do what I want to do. It makes me mad. I have to do what the host said. I do not like it. I do

not know why, but whoever I met, they [Americans] are not that good to me. So, I get along quite well with Chinese or any internationals, but not Americans. I want to have some distance with them because I think that they [Americans] are very different from me. I really had difficult times with all my American host families... So, I do not like them at all. I also never try to be close to them". –The second interview with Minjeong, female 9th grader, *Chogi-Youhacksang*

For these reasons, she seemed to be indifferent in her willingness to adapt to the new culture in the U.S. compared to the other students. On the other hand, she tried to maintain her own inherited Korean cultural identity and preserve her personal Korean culture. Also, she seemed to marginalize herself while in the U.S and reduce her opportunities to be exposed to American cultures. For instance, she mostly speaks in Korean except when she is in her classes or when she needs to speak in English. She speaks in Korean to other Korean students in her school even if she is surrounded by other American peers. She also barely interacts with American peers in school. She explained that it is a result of her bad experiences with Americans. She told me that she tried to accept and understand Americans and the culture but she felt adapting to the American cultures was really difficult. Thus, at times she seemed to adapt partially to the American culture and at other times even deny integrating herself into American cultures.

Interestingly, Minjeong explained that her very first host family, who lived with her in a month while she attended summer English camp in California, 2006, were very nice and got along with her very well. However, she has experienced difficulties while she spent longer time with her host family in 2007. This fact implies that Minjeong was not ready to appreciate new culture and was not able to understand her host family.

Based on Minjeong's bad experiences and misunderstanding of American host families, she has a somewhat negative opinion about America. For instance, she complained that American fashion styles are not fancy at all compared to Korean styles. She prefers any Korean styles to American style. She perceives this action will demonstrate her preference to her Korean identity.

“I think that I am very Korean. I do not fit in America. I dislike people [Americans] because they are bad... I do not like English, either...” -The first interview with Minjeong, female 9th grader, *Chogi-Youhacksang*.

Moreover, the findings demonstrated that the students often felt embarrassed and uncomfortable because of cultural differences between Korea and the U.S. Particularly, since the students maintain Korean cultural practices, they are often misunderstood by American peers because of cultural differences. First of all, the students explained that they have experienced some embarrassing moments because of Korean foods. In the KCM, Sunjea told his experience of why he threw away the Korean foods that his mother had sent to him from Korea.

“My mom sent me several Korean dishes. One of them is ‘stir fried anchovies¹⁵’. This is one of my favorite dishes in Korea. I really like it. But, when I showed that to my [American] host family, they were very surprised and looked at me like an animal. They asked me how I ate them. I did not feel good. Although they do not say that way, but I felt like that I was like some Chinese who eat worms or any weird stuffs. It’s yucky. So, I throw them all. I had to do”. While Sunjea told his story, Haneal and Hana looked at him with sympathy and talked about their stories. Haneal and Hana do not eat *Kimchi*¹⁶ before they go out with American peers or go to school because they are afraid of having a garlic smell. Haneal heard from his friends that sometimes he smelled like garlic. He added that his friends often made jokes but it did not really hurt him at that time. Haneal and Hana did not want to hear any comments about their foods because they felt embarrassed.

Sunjea, Dongkyu and Youri are not able to bring Korean foods to school as lunch because they live with American host families, but Haneal, Hana, Youri, and Minjeong, who lived with their family or Korean host family, prefer to bring sandwiches or American style foods. In previous section, the students indicated how they feel a strong sense of pride regarding Koreans and how they enjoy practicing Korean cultural habits even though they are in the U.S. However, the students indicated that they often feel embarrassed or humiliated because of Korean cultures at the same time.

¹⁵ One of very common Korean side dishes.

¹⁶ Pickled cabbages, one of very well-known traditional Korean dishes.

I observed that the students often understood the cultural differences as the differences between Americans and Koreans. Sunjea brought up an interesting story about his host family. Sunjea complained that his host father could not understand the reason Sunjea studied so hard at home. When his host family went out, they brought him. However, he did not want to go out with them because he wanted to stay home to continue studying.

“Teacher[researcher] , I do not have enough time to do that [spend time with host family]. I really need to focus on studying now, you know. Can you imagine? Any Korean high school students have time to enjoy going out family dinner and etc. But, they [American host family] do not understand it. This is really important time for me to prepare SAT, maintain good GPA, and etc. There are tons of things to do to go to college. I do not have time to hang out with my American host family. I do not understand why they asked me to go out with them and why they said that I do not need to study hard. They are weird. Really, they are. Teacher [Researcher], you can understand me, can’t you?”

Sunjea complained that he could not make his host father appreciate his position because his host father did not understand Sunjea’s situation at all. His host father insisted that Sunjea go to bed at least by 10 pm. Therefore, Sunjea had to wake up very early in the morning to study by himself because he did not want to be seen as going against his host family’s wishes. Additionally, Sunjea described his American peers as a group of selfish people. While Haneal, Hana, Dongkyu, Mirea, and Youri listened to Sunjea’s story, they nodded their head with understanding of how Sunjea had a difficult time staying with his American peers. The students agreed with the opinion that Americans do not care about other people. Minjeong, Youri, and Hana explained that Americans do not know how to care about others because Americans do not have ‘*Jeong*’, or ‘affection’ among friends, relationships, and their cultures. They often feel hurt from Americans because Americans do not take care of each other, which translate to ‘*Joeng*’ in Korean culture. Youri also shared her story regarding her previous host family in other city.

“I feel that Americans are very different from Koreans. You know that we [Koreans] take care of each other, but not Americans. Last year, I went out to dinner together with my host

family in a small restaurant. I accidentally hit some guy's face. I said sorry to him but he just stared at me without any words. I was so scary at that moment. My host family realized that something happened. Then, my host asked me what happened. Then, the guy replied to my host, 'That Asian girl in black hit my face'. I did not do it purposefully, I did it accidentally. I said sorry to him but he did not receive my apologies. My host did not even ask me why I did it. Later on, that guy just laughed and went away. I was so scared because I was surrounded by strangers and no one helped me. I was so sad and disappointed my host. They do not care how I felt at that moment." - The first interview with Youri, 10th grade female, *Chogi-Youhacksang*

From these students' experiences, I infer that *Chogi-Youhacksangs* have a somewhat distant relationship from their American host family because of the cultural differences and language barriers. It may be understandable to expect that if these Korean students live with American host families, they might easily acculturate into the American cultures because these students have more opportunities to be exposed to American cultures. Unlike the expectation, these findings strikingly detects that these students have developed a somewhat distant attitude in their acceptance of the American cultures because of their American host families' misunderstandings or misinterpretations of the cultural differences that these children feel but are unable to express. Conversely, these students were not able to understand their American host families because they were not ready to appreciate different cultures. Since Korea is a culturally and ethnically homogenous country, these students do not have many chances to be exposed to various cultures other than what is dominant in Korea. For these reasons, these students are not able to understand how Korean cultures are seen by American host families. Moreover, the cultural differences and language barriers hinder the students from being blended into their host families. Particularly, Minjeong has developed a strong perception regarding Americans and American cultures based on her experiences with her host families. Decisively, her experience and perception creates a barrier that influences her decision to stay away from American cultures and remain within the Korean cultural boundaries in the U.S. For other *Chogi-Youhacksangs*, the distance from their host family does not seem to massively influence their cultural identity negotiation as in the case of Minjeong. As a result of this disconnect with the host families, most of the students in the study have expressed a deeper and stronger bond to Korea as their true home, rather than where they are currently residing.

Home

Home is the place where these students spend most of their time in the U.S. Also, home is a place to practice Korean cultures for some students and American cultures for some other students in this study. For instance, Haneal, Hana, and Jinhee, *Girugi* students, and Minjeong and Mirea, *Chogi-Youhacksang* who live with their Korean host families, speak Korean, behave in a Korean way, and eat Korean foods. On the other hand, Sunjea, Dongkyu, and Youri, *Chogi-Youhacksangs* live with American host families and practice the American cultures in their home in the U.S. However, the findings in this study show that these students do not quietly involve themselves with their American host families. For this reason, these students often miss their home in Korea. In this section, I will present ‘home’ in the emotional meaning rather than physical meaning and I will discuss how their emotional home impacts their cultural identity negotiation.

Korea is My Only Home

Since all these students are away from their native home, they always miss their home in Korea. I found that these students often state that Korea is home. That means that Korea is a metaphorical and emotional home for them. Their strong feelings about Korea as home makes it more apparent as they cling to Korean cultures and maintain Korean identity. In the KCM, I heard many interesting conversations among the students. Also, I observed how they became very serious and emotional when they talked about being homesick for Korea.

Youri: Well, you know what, I had home sick in the last year. I really missed my family in last year. I thought that I could live in the U.S. if I lived with my family in here. However, I really miss Korea this year. Korea, where I was born, is my country. I really miss her. You know, it says even salmons instinctively return to where they were born. Adoptees also want to return to where they are from. I heard that, you know, Daniel Henney¹⁷ also feel that Korea is his home.

Researcher: how about others?

Sunjea: I feel exactly same with Youri. I do not need to add any comments.

¹⁷ A movie star, he is a half Korean. His father is a British and his mother is a Korean.

Mirea: Well, [pause] I am, [Haneal interrupted]

Haneal: Well, I would be blamed on if I said like that. But, it is too tough to live here although I am with my mom. Living in other country is really tough.

Youri: I think that it would tough to live even though I live with my mom in here. I feel really tough to live here. I think that immigration would be as much as tough like now.

Haneal: Yes, anyhow here is not my country. It is so tough to live in a foreign county.

-The KCM, April 2009

Youri, Sunjea, and Haneal showed that they were very home sick for Korea. They have expressed that America is not their home and only Korea is the home. Their strong belonging to Korea seemed to resonate with how they feel as Koreans although they live in the U.S. They feel that they are foreigners in the U.S.

One day, Sunjea seemed to be very happy in the KCM. I asked him why he looked so happy. Then, he began talking. "I am very exciting to visit Korea this summer. I cannot wait it. I cannot explain it but, you know, I am just exciting the fact I am in Korea. Stepping in Korean territory, being in Korea, and staying my house, that's all exciting!" Haneal interrupted, "Right! Right! Even Korean air is different from here!" -The KCM, March 2009.

Chogi-Youhacksangs, Sunjea, Dongkyu, Youri, and Minjeong, may feel that Korea is their home because the rest of their family lives in Korea. It would be logical to assume that they might be homesick because of their family in Korea. However, they expressed strong feeling about Korea as their home country. They miss not only their families in Korea, but also Korea as their home country. Moreover, Haneal and Hana, who live with their mother, also felt Korea was their home. Most of students, Sunjea, Dongkyu, Youri, Minjeong, Haneal, and Hana want to go back to Korea ultimately even though they continue to study in American colleges. Minjeong and Dongkyu already went back to Korea. The students felt that America is not their country at all, and they are foreigners in the U.S. even though they have spent many years in the U.S. Thus, they want to go back to Korea in their future.

Compared to the other students, Jinhee showed a somewhat different attitude about visiting Korea. She seemed to be excited and worried at the same time because she actually had

not been in Korea for a while after she settled in Springville. She was born in the U.S. and lived in the U.S. until six years old with her families while her father pursued the doctoral degree. Then, she came back to the U.S. with her mother and brother for their education when she was twelve years old. That means, she actually spent her most of life in the U.S. Moreover, her father, Mr. Ko, comes to the U.S. approximately twice a year. Mr. Ko is able to travel to the U.S. in summer and winter vacation in Korea because he is a professor in a university. For these reasons, Jinhee expressed a somewhat different thought about Korea as her home. She certainly misses Korea and Korean cultures such as foods, friends, Korean shops, etc. Interestingly, I found that she was afraid of readjusting herself to the Korean lifestyle if she were ever to return to Korea because she had not been in Korea for a while. In addition, she felt that she has changed and become Americanized. I will discuss how the students feel that they are ‘changed’ and ‘Americanized’ in detail in the later section.

I am Korean

The students have demonstrated a very strong affiliation to Korea and often participate in Korean cultural activities, although they try to make an effort to learn about the American cultures and attempt to integrate within the U.S. Interestingly, all the participants identified themselves as Koreans based on the fact that they speak Korean and eat Korean foods. Haneal, Hana, and Jinhee, the *Girugi* students who live with their mothers, and Minjeong, the *Chogi-Youhacksang* who live with a Korean host family and Mirea, *Choigi-Youhacksang* who lives with her aunts’ family explain that they practice Korean culture every day at home although they live in the U.S. Based on this personal cultural identity action, they are assured that they are Koreans. Surprisingly, Youri, Sunjea, and Donkyu, the *Chogi-Youhacksangs* who live with American host families, also showed a strong affiliation to Korea even though they do not practice Korean culture on a daily basis. They said that they are Korean because they speak Korean and prefer to speak Korean and eat Korean foods in the U.S. Therefore, practicing the Korean culture such as speaking Korean and eating Korean foods is the most critical method for them to identify themselves as Koreans.

As stated in Wenger’s argument on identity development through participation in communities of practice (1998), these students have experienced various cultural and social

interactions in the U.S. and they are also able to hold multiple memberships from their social communities. Among their various memberships, these students strongly demonstrated the Korean membership and they primarily identified themselves as Korean. Interestingly, the students try to distinguish themselves from Korean-Americans, who are born and raised in the U.S based on the fact that they perceive Korean-Americans as not Koreans. The students considered if there are any Koreans who cannot speak Korean, they are not Korean. Therefore, these students do not want to be identified as Korean-Americans. Jinhee, the 12th grade female *Girugi* student, identifies herself as somewhat of a Korean-American or Americanized. She definitely wants to distinguish herself from other Korean-Americans because she can speak Korean and speaks Korean at home.

Researcher: How do you introduce yourself to others?

Jinhee: Well, [hesitated and very soft voice]. I am a Korean-American.

Well, I introduce myself from Korea. But, I do not say I am from Korea. I just say I am from Florida. If I say I am from Korea, others think that I just came from Korea.

I feel that I am Korean when I eat Korea foods. But, I think that I am more likely Americanized Korean. But, I am different from Korean American because they do not speak Korean. But, you know, I do. I do speak Korean. I feel that I am just Americanized, that's all". -the second interview with Jinhee, 12th grader female *Girugi* student

Jinhee pointed out that she is an Americanized Korean. Jinhee sometimes does not understand Koreans, particularly the Korean elders. It is at these points in time when she considers herself as Americanized. However, she stated that she wants to accept the Korean elder's opinion because she did not want to make any trouble with the elder because that would be rude from Korean perspectives. From a young age she was told and taught that going against the elder is not good. Jinhee is not alone in this perspective. Other students said that they felt that they have become somewhat Americanized based on various perspectives. I will discuss 'being Americanized' in the later section in detail.

In addition, these students had a duty of strong Korea citizenship, although they are in the U.S. I heard a very interesting conversation between Sunjea and Haneal on how strongly they feel that they are Koreans. Sunjea brought the issue of the pledge of allegiance to the U.S. flag in

one of the KCMs.

Sunjea: Well, it sounds very silly, but when I play soccer. Before play the game, you know, the national anthem is played. Then, I am not sure whether I need to pledge allegiance to the U.S. flag or not. I never do that so far. I still cannot figure out whether I need to do it or not. I think if I need to pledge allegiance, I would to it for the Korean flag. So, I do not do it and just imitate what they do.

Haneal: I was unsure about it, too. So, I asked my mom about it. Then, my mom said that it is etiquette for the flag. So, I just do it. If Americans do not pledge allegiance to Korean flag in Korea, we do not feel good about it. That is just respect to others, so, I do.

Sunjea: I think that I need to respect to the U.S., so, I stand up for the national anthem. But, I do not need to pledge allegiance to the U.S. flag because it is an oath. So, I do not think that I need it. I am not American. I am Korean.

-The KCM, March 2009.

This conversation exemplifies how these students face their conflicts between maintaining Korean tradition and accepting new cultures at the same time. These students indicated their concerns about the duty of Korean citizenship in the U.S. No matter how these students successfully acculturate and integrate to American culture, all of these students have a strong affiliation to the Korean culture and identity. Youri, the 11th grade female *Chogi-Youhacksang*, also seems to have a very strong feeling of Korean identity although she is well known as one of the most successfully settled students in Springville among all of the participants in this study.

Jinhee and Mirea are born in the U.S. and have American citizenship. Regardless of their American citizenship, they feel that they are Koreans because they practice the Korean culture on a daily basis. When I interviewed Mirea, she responded that “Well, I have U.S. citizenship. I think that my body is in the U .S. I am Mirea, my mind is in Korea. When I speak Korean and eat Korean foods, I feel I am a Korean.” Mirea did not clearly express her Korean identity or how she identified herself. However, I observed that she also felt strongly attached to the Korean culture and her Korean identity. In the KCM, the students talked about how they feel as Korean’s in the U.S. Mirea said, “I am very surprised at hearing English while I think in Korean. I think in

Korean. Then, I look around to figure out where I am. I feel weird why others do not speak Korean. Then, I realized that here is not Korea.”

Surprisingly, I found that they have a strong attachment to the Korean culture through the internet. The day after the former president in Korea passed away, I asked several questions regarding whether they know this or not in order to probe how the students are sensitive to current Korean issues. All of them in the KCM, Dongkyu, Sunjea, Haneal, Hana, Youri, and Mirea, knew about it. They said that they had the information from the Korean news blogs because they checked the Korean news blogs every day. Furthermore, most of the students, except Jinhee, use ‘NAVER’, a Korean News blog, as their internet homepage. As a result, the students catch up on Korean news and trends such as Korean teenagers’ slang or chatting languages from the internet although they are far away from Korea.

I am Korean Forever

All of the students in this study identified themselves as Koreans. Interestingly, the students perceived that their Korean identity cannot be changed. Particularly, Sunjea explained that Korean membership and identity cannot be changed, no matter where he lives.

Researcher: Have you ever thought about your identity?

Sunjea: Well, I do not think about my identity. But I try to do like an American. I did make an effort to do that. But, I sometimes really miss Korea. So, I am obviously a Korean.

Haneal: My mom keeps reminding me that I am a Korean. I really wanted to tattoo in my arms. Even though when I was in Korea, I have thought about the pattern of tattoos. But, my mom said that Americans are generous to Americans but Koreans are not generous to Koreans here. So, I have to give it up. I know a person who comes to the U.S. for studying and has a child. But that child does not speak Korean. So, they speak in English at home. It is really strange.

Sunjea: Well, I did not want to speak in Korean because I will go to college here [the U.S.]. You know, although I am not speaking Korean, I will never forget about it. So, I think that it is fine to speak in English at home. But, I think that they should teach Korean

to their children because they are Korean. Then, I do not care about my identity, because I am Korean, anyhow.

Haneal: Identity? Well, I do not know. I thought many times about it, my identity. I am sometimes confused who I am.

Sunjea: Why are you confused about it? You are obviously a Korean. I am always a Korean. I am anyhow Korean, so I do not care whether I will be Americanized or not because I am a Korean. It cannot be changed forever. Why do you think that seriously? You are a Korean. It will not be changed forever, so, [Haneal seemed to become very serious. Sunjea looked at Haneal very curiously].

-The KCM, May 2009 and the research diary

Sunjea highlighted that his identity as Korean cannot be changed and it will last forever although he would live in the U.S. or he would not speak Korean in the U.S. Therefore, he tried to adapt to the American culture in order to survive and accomplish his goals in the U.S. He perceived that an inherited Korean identity cannot be affected by adapting to a new culture, such as the American cultures. On the other hand, Haneal thought that an inherited Korean identity could be influenced by new cultures in the U.S. Haneal seemed to think identity as more of a flexible frame than Sunjea did because Haneal experienced a collateral transition(Beach, 1999, 2003) from a Korean son/brother to a student in a American high school during his everyday life. In an American school, Haneal tried to assimilate into the school cultures and do as his American peers did. Sunjea also experienced the collateral transition between home/ school and church such as any student who attends an American high school and is a Korean teenager. Sunjea had less of a transition from Korea to the U.S. in his daily life. Haneal lived with his mother and younger sister, Hana. His mother seemed to push to preserve their Korean values, which often conflict with American values. I could hear that he often mentioned how his mom emphasized disciplining as an issue. For instance, Haneal said, “My mom said that I should behave like Korean, even though I am in the U.S. She always said to me that way.” Therefore, Haneal’s mother seemed to have her children maintain their Korean identity as primary. Haneal seemed to be confused between Korean cultural values and American values.

Pride as Koreans

The students exhibited a strong desire to preserve their Korean culture and identity in the U.S. They are also very proud of Koreans and want to maintain a good Korean image in their schools and the community. According to the Confucian tradition, a good reputation is one of the most precious virtues for Koreans. I found that the students are concerned with how they are perceived by Americans and Koreans as well. Hall (1990) highlights how the others position 'us' is also necessary to form one's own cultural identity. Therefore, the students put forth strong efforts to be good Koreans and maintain a good reputation of Koreans in the U.S.

The students often stated that they became Korean patriots in the U.S. because they began thinking about Korea and they want to be considered good Koreans. They pointed out that they have never thought this way when they were in Korea. In the KCM, the students often mentioned how they felt proud when they talk about how prosperous the Korean economy is or other good examples of Korea to their American peers. Dongkyu said, "Whenever, I found the billboards or advertisements of Korean companies in the TV, such as Sam Sung, Hyundai, LG, and any others, I always mentioned that they are from Korea. I felt so good!" Hana and Youri agreed enthusiastically, "if I found, they [American peers] have LG or Samsung cell phones, I told, that's from Korea". Haneal added "I feel really great if Americans would speak to me in Korean. I really love it." In another KCM, the students complained about the misperception that Americans generally have about Korea.

Haneal initiated the conversation, "I do not like that they [Americans] perceive Korea as a rural area. So, I showed pictures of Seoul, then they [Americans] were very surprised at..." Youri also told a story. "This is not my story, but Youna *Unnie*[older sister]'s story. She told me. One day, her English teacher, who has been to Korea long time ago, talked about Korea in her class. The English teacher described Korea as a country where people still wear traditional customs, there was no cell phone and no television, etc. When I heard that, I blamed on Youna *Unnie* why she did not say anything against her teacher. If I were there, I would not just take it. I would defy against her. And another day, the teacher talked about Korea that way in my class. So, I stared at her and she stopped it. If she continued to talking about Korea that way, I would really argue against her. It really irritates me." While Youri told this story, all the students in the KCM, Sunjea, Dongkyu, Haneal, Hana, and Mirea were somewhat upset as though they have really experienced similar experiences. Therefore, the students showed a strong sensitive sentiment

against American's misperception about Korea. That's why the students said that they will become a Korean patriot and that they love being Korean in the KCM. Despite these situations, their academic performances were not hindered.

All of the students experienced academic improvements in the U.S. schools. The students pointed out the reason how they achieved higher academic performance. First, the American education curriculum is much easier than the Korean curriculum. I will discuss more about this issue in the next section. Second, the students claimed that they were motivated to study because they want to maintain a good reputation as good Koreans. The students addressed how they were very proud of being Korean, especially when they are considered to be 'smart Korean students' by American friends or teachers. Therefore, 'being a good Korean' or being 'a good model of a Korean' motivated them to study hard to maintain their image as 'a good Korean'. In addition, students described how they are often labeled as 'a genius from Asia' by their classmates and teachers in school. Being a Korean motivated them to study hard and have good manners in school.

"After I came here, I have a motivation to study because I am Korean. When I was in Korea, I did not study because I am not interested in studying. I want to be a movie director. So, I did not study. I made films with my friends. But, after I came to the U.S., I started to study very hard because I don't like to hear that I am bad or I am inferior to Americans. I really dislike hearing that. Also, I do not want to be a bad example of Korean. It will be hurt to other Koreans in school. That is why I study harder than when I was in Korea, because I am Korean" –the first interview with Haneal, 9th grader male *Girugi* Student.

Most participants in the study share Haneal's strong feeling that they should maintain the high reputation of Korean students; they feel this to such a strong degree in that they see this as their responsibility to maintain a good reputation. Since the students understand their status as minority groups, guests, or temporary migrants, they felt that they need to be good people in the U.S. Another reason they mentioned for studying hard is that they are concerned about how other

Koreans consider them in their community. Ironically, ‘being a good Korean’ can be a motivation and a pressure at the same time to negotiate their cultural identity. I will discuss this issue in the model minority section in later.

Palmer & Jang (2005) observed that racial minority immigrant students have certain disadvantages in classrooms because of cultural disconnection between their home and dominant school cultures in the U.S. For this reason, the immigrant students are often explicitly and implicitly regarded as being wrong or inappropriate in their classroom manners. The participants in this study recognized this perception about minority immigrant youth and experienced it. Therefore, they want to be separated from other minority immigrant groups.

Researcher: If people do not distinguish you as a Korean, Japanese or Chinese, how do you feel?

Hana: It bothers me.

Dongkyu & Haneal: Well, it is okay to me.

Mirea: Well, one of my friends in school asked me how they can distinguish Korean, Japanese, and Chinese.

Haneal: I think that it is okay if they ask me where I am from.

Hana: Well, it might be the same as what we cannot discern.

Haneal: German or Italian, French like that. Well, however, when I am walking on the street, if I was called as ‘Hey Chinese!’ It irritates me! [Everybody say, “yes it is, right” – agree with what Haneal said], last time when I went to a restaurant, a group of black people looked at us and said that ‘hey, Chinese are coming’. When I heard that, I was really pissed off. They just make fun of us! [He became very emotional].

Mirea: Well, by the way, many people do not know about Korea. One day, a guy came to me in school, he asked me if I am Chinese or Japanese, then. He asked me where I am from. They do not ask me whether I am Korean or not. They do not know Korea.

Haneal: Yes, one of my friends told me her story. Someone asked her where she is from. He/she asked her if she is from China, Japan, or Vietnam. Then, my friends said no. Then, he/she asked her where she is really from.

Dongkyu: That is shameful and ignorant!

Youri: Right! If I was called as Chinese not Asian, I dislike it.

Researcher: Why?

Haneal: Well, kind of pride as a Korean?

Donkyu: Well, Koreans are very proud of themselves. Koreans think that Korea is one of the developed countries and we are proud of our country [The students become very serious. Then, Haneal interrupted the conversation].

Haneal: Hey, calm down! Calm down!

Youri: Well, because of Korean identity? I do have my own country, we call Korea. But, if they call me an Asian instead of calling me a Korean, it bothers me a lot. Even more, if they call us as Chinese. It makes me upset. We have our country, Korea, they just call Asian as Chinese. I don't like it. I do not like people to call Asians as just Chinese.

Haneal: That is ignorant!

Researcher: Then, how about if anyone ask you whether you are Japanese or not.

Haneal: If someone asked me, it would be okay because they do not know. But, if they call me just as Japanese or Chinese, I don't like it, because others just label us based on their judgment.

-The KCM, May 2009

As a result, the students seemed to have a strong sense of pride of being Korean. They want to be separated from other Asian-Americans because of their pride as good Koreans. They try to maintain a good reputation about Koreans in the U.S. Therefore, they are sensitive of how they are considered by others. For these reasons, the students are very well aware of the issues of other races or ethnic groups in the U.S.

To conclude, the students identify themselves as Koreans and they still practice Korean cultural habits at home, community or when they are get together. Practicing Korean cultural habits made them feel closer to Korea and themselves as Koreans. In the next section, I will present how they practice Korean cultures in the U.S.

Practicing Korean Cultures

Speaking Korean. Swartz (1997) illustrates the concept of cultural capital as various resources including verbal facility, high cultural knowledge, and educational credentials.

Bourdieu(1986) stresses that language is a critical element of cultural capital. Moreover, language is one of most salient factors to identify how a person perceives themselves. Anderson (2008) claims that social structures, political legacy, and cultural heritage form an individual's linguistic and cultural practices and these practices describe how they recognize themselves. In other words, language is a cultural passport to describe where individuals belong.

The primary purpose for many students to experience the extensive travel from Korea to the U.S. is because of English. When they speak English or Korean in their daily lives, the decision to speak a certain language such as speaking English only is predetermined by when they are with their American peers or when they are in school. They generally do not speak in English to any other Koreans in the community because they feel uncomfortable and rude if they speak English to Koreans. They believe that the Korean language is a strong tool to maintain their Korean identity. Therefore, the students speak Korean in order to communicate with each other during the KCM and interviews. I asked them to speak any language that they felt more comfortable with. Then, they began speaking Korean without any hesitation. They also think that they feel very rude if they speak English to Korean elders. Not only for the elders in the community, but also among themselves the students feel uncomfortable speaking English. Haneal is the youngest student among the other high school students in the study, Sunjea, Dongkyu, Youri, and Minjeong. So, he feels sometimes uncomfortable speaking English to the other Korean *hyung*[older brother] and *noona* [older sister]in the school.

“When I meet Sunjea *hyung* [older brother], Dongkyu *hyung* [older brother], Minjeong *noona* [older sister] and other Korean *hyung* and *noona* in school, I speak English to them if they are with any other friends [American]. But if there are no Americans, I speak in Korean. Sometimes, I am sorry when I need to speak in English. They are older sisters and older brothers to me. When I play soccer with Matt *hyung*, I feel confused at how to call him. When I ask him to pass the ball, I say that “Sunjea *hyung*, *Hyung* pass me the ball” unconsciously then, I say again “Hey Matt [Sunjea], pass me the ball”. When I say, ‘Hey’, ‘You’, or ‘Matt’ pass me ball, I feel really sorry. ” –The first interview with Haneal, 9th grader Male *Girugi* student.

In Korean, there are several ways to address each other based on age and gender. Among

females, Koreans can say either *unnie* or *oppa* for the elder people. Females call *unnie* for elder females and *oppa* for elder males. Among males, they say either *noona* or *hyung* for the elder people. They call *noona* for the elder females and *hyung* for the elder males. For instance, Haneal calls Dongkyu and Sunjea *hyung* and Minjeong and Youri *noona*. Hana and Mirea calls Dongkyu, Sunjea, and Haneal *oppa* and Minjeong, Youri, and Jinhee *unnie*. These honorific words in Korean influences not only language, but also language practices. Therefore, the students feel uncomfortable around each other if they speak English because they are not practicing their honorific prefix and are ignoring their Korean culture.

Using Korean Chatting Language. As I explained in a previous section, the students have very different cultural boundaries between school and home or school and community. Based on the boundary, they switched into different language in order to communicate within the different communities. For instance, the students speak in English mainly in schools or the places where they need to communicate with Americans. Otherwise, they basically speak Korean in the other places. The students not only spoke Korean, but also used a lot of Korean chatting languages which I could not understand. For example, they use many abbreviations or newly created Korean words they found on the internet. I often heard these Korean adolescents use Korean slang and Korean chatting languages in their conversation. I found that female students tended to use them more frequently and use these internet languages than male students. Particularly, I observed that Mirea and Hana mainly use chatting languages or slang while they talked to each other such as interjections, emoticons, etc. The students tend to use more Korean slang and chatting languages in their informal conversation than the conversation in the KCM or the interviews. Moreover, through reviewing the video tapes, I found that they speak Korean slang and chatting language more frequently compared to when I am not in the KCM room or when I am in the KCM room. I sometimes left the room on purpose to observe how they behave differently while they read the chapters.

Most of the students have lived in the U.S. less than 2 years and they have visited Korea once a year. They are able to follow Korean trends and slang when they visit Korea and they can catch up on Korean slang from the internet. Most of them chat with Korean friends regularly and they watch Korean TV from the internet, except for Jinhee. She used to watch Korean soap operas and TV shows, but she quit watching the Korean TV shows because she wanted to focus

on studying. Particularly, Minjeong chatted with her Korean friends' every day. The female students seem to chat more or communicate with their Korean friends than the male students do in this study.

As a result, all the students practice Korean culture in the U.S. no matter where they live. They speak Korean to each other in schools and the church, and when they speak Korean, they call to each other in a Korean way using Korean slang. They check Korean news every day and chat very often with Korean friends. The strong attachment to Korea and the ability to maintain their Korean cultural habits makes them feel that they are forever Koreans no matter where they live. They also prefer to practice Korean culture. In the next section, I will present findings on the Korean community- the Korean church- where they practice Korean cultures and feel Korean in the U.S. I will discuss how the Korean church and their involvement in it influences their cultural identity negotiation.

Church (Korean Community)

According to Korean American researchers (Hurh and Kim, 1990; Min, 1995), Korean churches, particularly Korean Protestant churches, are one of the most significant institutions used to maintain Korean ethnic cultures by associating with a Korean social network for Korean Americans in the U.S. More than 70% of Korean immigrants in the U.S. were affiliated with Korean churches, and Korean churches play significant roles for Korean communities in the U. S. (Hurh and Kim, 1990; Min, 1992, 2002). Researchers (Min, 1992; Orellana, et al., 2002) observed that Korean churches play a very significant social function, such as providing social networks while Koreans settle down in a new environment in order to meet their needs. In other words, Korean churches function as a religious institution and a social institution and encourage social networking. For this reason, Korean churches become a central place to practice Korean culture and maintain Korean identity in the U.S.

Moreover, the Springville Korean Church is the major and the only social place to gather for Koreans in Springville. The church is to the Korean community to the students and their families no matter they are Christian or not. For this reason, the church is one of the crucial factors that can impact these students cultural identity negotiation because the students and their

families are heavily associated with the church.

I Feel Korea at the Church

The students who live with Koreans, Haneal, Hana, Jinhee, and Minjeong, said that they feel Korean at home because they eat Korean foods and speak Korean every day. The students, who stay with American host families, Sunjea, Dongkyu, and Youri, said they feel different in the church (Korean cultural environment) from school/home (American cultural difference). Apparently, they seemed to feel more comfortable in the church.

Dongkyu: I feel like I fly from Korea to the U.S. in the jet airplane when I am in the church and in school or at home.

Sunjea: I feel that I am in the U.S. at home and school. Then, I come to the church, I feel like I am in Korea. The church is very different. I can feel Korea in the church. I do not know why and I do not know how to describe this, but, I feel very comfortable. It is very different from home and school. I need to come to the church because I can feel Korea.

Haneal: Yes. I do remember what you said after the very first time you came to church, you said that you cannot come to church because you cannot adjust here. You said, it is very different from school and your home. The church is so Korea...

-The KCM, May 2009

As a result, the students seem to enjoy attending the church and the KCM because they can practice their Korean culture. Particularly, Youri who is not a Christian likes and enjoys hanging out with other Koreans and eating Korean foods in the church.

“I feel like I am in Korea when I come to the church because I speak in Korean. I never speak to them (the youth group members in the church) in English. With the Koreans in the church, I talked about Korean entertainers and their gossips like while I was in Korea. I like eating Korean foods and being with Koreans at the church. I feel home.” -The second interview with Youri, 11th grader female *Chogi-Youhacksang*.

As a result, the Korean church is a very important place for them to practice Korean cultures through their interactions with their Korean peers, speaking in Korean, and eating

Korean foods, and interaction with Koreans. Practicing Korean culture give them a clear motive to maintain Korean cultural identity although they need to travel across different cultural boundaries in their lives in the U.S. However, these students at the Church do not really interact with other Korean Americans in the Youth group. I found that these students want to be distinguished from Korean Americans in the Church. Their thoughts on Korean Americans in the church influence their cultural identity negotiation.

I am Different from Korean Americans in the Youth Group

In much research (Yeh et al., 2007; Zhou, 2003; Zhou & Lee, 2004; Chiang-Hom, 2004; Palmer and Jang, 2005, Vyas, 2004) on Asian Americans or Korean Americans, the students are identified as Korean Americans because of the nature of *Chogi-Youhacksangs* and *Girugi* students. They moved into the U.S. and stayed for a while. However, I found that the students in my study want to be clearly distinguished from Korean Americans. Unexpectedly, these students feel somewhat distance from other members of the Youth group because they are Korean Americans who do not speak Korean and do not appreciate Korean cultures.. The students defined Korean Americans as those who do not speak Korean and do not appreciate Korean cultures. On the other hand, the students believe that they themselves speak fluent Korean and deeply comprehend Korean cultures. The students insisted that the most significant criteria to be a Korean is speaking fluent Korean.

Hana: I think that they [Korean Americans] are Americans. They [Korean Americans] speak and behave differently from us. They also seem to have different cultures. They [Korean Americans] are different from us.

Youri: Right, to be honest, I do not feel any sympathy with them. They are just Americans.

Researcher: How about Korean Americans in your youth groups?

Hana: Grace Kim, she is okay because she speaks Korean. But, others speak English although they understand Korean. They speak English, so it makes me uncomfortable to hang out with them. -the KCM, May 17th

Jinhee talked about her friend, a Chinese American, as an example of how she discerns

Korean American or Chinese American from Korean or Chinese. “Well, I have some Chinese-American friends who do not speak Chinese. So, they assume that I cannot speak Korean like them. However, I speak Korean. You know the differences.”

Speaking Korean is really important for Youri in order to differentiate Korean from Korean Americans. Youri said “I do not like Koreans who are able to speak Korean but they do not speak Korean. I don’t like them. There is one in school. He is really good at school. But, I never talk to him. Anyhow, I think that if someone does not speak Korean, he/she is not a Korean.”

As Haneal, Hana, Mirea, and Jinhee mentioned, the students classify a Korean American as a person with Korean heritage who cannot speak Korean. Moreover, the students generally identify Korean Americans as Americans. I heard the students talk about Korean Americans in the youth group.

Haneal: I think that Korean Americans are Americans. They [Korean Americans] are not different from Americans. But, I can get along with them.

Hana: Well, I feel that I cannot really get along with them. I feel uncomfortable with them because of language [English]

Haneal: Well, for the first time, I felt a little bit uncomfortable. But, now I am okay with them after I joined the Youth group band.

Hana: I am still uncomfortable with them. Grace, she is okay because she speaks Korean. Then, I talk to her. But, others, [pause]

Mirea: Yeah, me too. I talked with Grace. But, others.

Researcher: What does she call you?

Hana, Mirea: Just *Unnie* [older sister]?, I do not think that she even does know our names.

-the KCM, April 2009

The conversation among Haneal, Hana, and Mirea clearly demonstrated how they feel a sense of distance from the Korean Americans in the youth group even though they attend the same church. From my observation, I barely saw Hana, Mirea, and Youri spend time with

Korean Americans in the youth group. Sunjea, Dongkyu, and Haneal also seemed to prefer to spend time with each other.

Moreover, Dongkyu expressed that Korean Americans are not true Koreans because Korean Americans cannot appreciate Korean cultures. I observed a very interesting moment while we ate lunch at the church. It was one cold Sunday in December, 2008. Korean hot and spicy soup was served for lunch at the church. Many youth group students, who were Korean-Americans, did not eat the lunch and left the church. However, Dongkyu and Sunjea enjoyed eating the soup in the church. Looking at the youth group peers as they left, Dongkyu suddenly said, “They [Korean Americans] do not know what good Korean foods are and how to eat Korean foods. It is really nice to have that hot and spicy soup in this cold weather. They don’t know. They are not true Koreans”-from the research diary, December 2008.

Similar to Dongkyu position, the students think that they are different from Korean Americans because they speak Korean, enjoy Korean cultural practices, and appreciate the Korean culture in depth. The students distinguish themselves from Korean Americans and would prefer to identify themselves as ‘Americanized Koreans’.

In conclusion, the Korean church provides an arena to practice their Korean culture and a motivation to maintain their Korean identity because they now have a clearer criterion to measure who is Korean or not based on some Korean Americans in the church.

Peers

Since the participants in this study are teenagers, friendship is one of their major concerns in their new lives. Educational psychologists (Erikson, 1965; Marcia, 1966) explain that adolescents develop their identity through their social interactions. One of the primary interactions for adolescents is their interaction with their peers. In other words, peer relationship is also very significant in order to advance in their adolescent identity development (Meeus et, al., 2002)

Haneal, Hana, Jinhee, Mirea, and Minjeong, who live with their families or Korean host family, apparently learned and experienced American cultures from their schools. Sunjea,

Dongkyu, and Youri, who lived with American host families, indicated that they learned and adapted to the American culture mainly at school because they did not have many interactions with their host families, except for Sunjea. As a result, the students in fact have developed an understanding and familiarity with American cultural through their experiences in schools. In this section, I will present how the students comprehend the new cultures realized from their American peers and their friendship. I will also discuss how their peers influence their cultural identity negotiation.

American Peers

I mentioned that the students identified themselves as Korean in the previous section. They often experienced a sense of distance from their American peers and American culture even though they had some American friends and tried to acculturate themselves to their new environment. Earlier I presented how these students feel about Americans in the section of host families and that these students pointed out that American peers are more self-oriented than Koreans. These students often told that they had some American friends in schools but they indicated more close relationship with Korean friends than American friends because they felt Koreans are more likely group-oriented or care about others. Surely, the Korean characteristics made the students more focused on how others consider them, rather than how the students consider themselves. Based on this impression of Americans, the students felt that they are very different from their peers. Dongkyu brought up the point about how he felt his distance from his American peers.

Dongkyu: I tried to belong to them [Americans], but I know that I cannot because they [American peers] treated me differently. I am not sure whether it is because of my race or not. Anyhow, I felt that way.

Researcher: Could you give me any examples, when you felt that way?

Dongkyu: Well [pause], They [American peers] had a party before the prom. They did not invite me for that party. Even though, I had never informed about it before my partner told me about the party. Then, I made her to ask me to go the party with her.

Researcher: Did you make her to ask you to go with you?

Dongkyu: Yes, I did. I made her ask me to go that party with her. Then, I went to the

party. The next day, one of friends came to me and said what he heard from other American peers in that party. Actually, I do not remember what he said to me exactly. But, it was like that. He heard, ‘An Asian exchange student [Donkyu] who does not speak English very well come to the party’. I felt they do not dislike the fact that I attend their party, but I felt that way like the party belong to them. I trespassed their boundaries. –the second interview with Dongkyu, 11th grader male *Chogi-Youhacksang*

Hana mentioned that she always needed to be concerned how American peers consider her. For instance, she wanted to complain about her mother because her mother sometimes pushed her to study harder. In Korea, it is very natural that parents insist their children study very hard. However, she could not talk about this issue because she was afraid her American peers might consider her mother as a strange woman or insane. So, she felt that she could not make conversation from her heart. She diagnosed this partly because of her English and partly because of culture differences.

“Hana: When I talked about some my private issue, you know, because of cultural differences I am concerned on how they [American peers] think about me or my mom.

Researcher: Did you try to talk about your private issue to your friends?

Hana: Yes, I tried. I told them. But, you know. If they were Korean friends, they show very sympathy about it and tried to make me cheerful. But, they [American friends] just listen. That’s it. No comments on it. It was really, I cannot even describe how I felt that time. And, they just move on to the next topic... Well, I think that I probably cannot express enough clearly how that is really important for me. I think that because of language barrier.- The second interview with Hana, female 7th grade *Girugi* student”

The students indicated that American peers are different from themselves or Koreans in general. The students interpreted this cultural difference between Korea and America as the difference between Koreans and Americans. The differences made them feel as though there was an incommunicable distance and a desire to not be close to Americans. I will discuss how these feelings of distance the students felt from Americans influenced their relationships with their American friends in the next section. I will also present how the students’ friendships influence their cultural identity negotiation in their schools.

Making American Friends

Surprisingly, the students have somewhat different attitudes on how to make friends between male students and female students. The female students, Hana, Youri, Minjeong, Mirea, and Jinhee seemed to feel more pressure to make friends than the male students. The female students have developed more positive attitudes and thus take a longer time to make friends in schools. On the other hands, the male students, Dongkyu, Sunjea, and Haneal are more proactive in making new friends. Interestingly, the male students confessed that they had to change their personality in order to make new friends. They behave in a ‘funny’, ‘foolish’, ‘stupid’, and ‘weird’ manner to get attention from their American peers. I will discuss in detail how they made effort to make friends by behaving foolish, stupid, and weird. Unlike the male students, the female students seem to be less actively involved and have more stress in order to make friends.

Researcher: Do you have friends in school?

Hana: Well, I have some. But, it is not that close enough [pause]. It is difficult to make friends for me, here. It is difficult to make friends because of English.

Mirea: Well, I have it, some. I do not talk very much in school. But, you know if you do not have any friends in school, it is troublesome. So, I made some.

-The KCM, April 2009

The female students describe how they have had a difficult time making friends in schools, and they complain that they have much less friends in the U.S. compared to when they were living in Korea. The female students pointed out that they feel that it is difficult to make friends not only because of language barriers, but also because of the cultural differences. Hana expressed that she often felt uncomfortable with her American friends because her peers talked about men or the relationships they have had many times. Hana also explained that she felt that making friends was difficult in school because she needed to consider how her peers consider her.

The students generally have had a difficult time making friends and have fewer friends in the U.S. than in Korea, except for Haneal. Thanks to his outgoing personality, Haneal seems to be able to successfully make friends in school. However, he makes huge efforts to get attention from his American peers in school. Sunjea, Dongkyu, and Haneal himself described it

as silly and stupid. Therefore, the students have been struggling with making friends in schools and some of them need to behave differently to get attention from American peers.

Sunjea said that Dongkyu and Sunjea sang in the homecoming performance at Eden, and he performed a break dance at the event in order to get attention from his American peers. When Sunjea, Dongkyu, Youri, Minjeong, Haneal, and Hana enrolled in Eden School, they were new students at Eden because Eden School is an all leveled spectrum school that includes elementary, middle, and high school. The students might have a more difficult time settling down and forming new relationships among American peers based on their status as new and foreign students. For this reason, they felt that they needed to gain additional attention in order to make new friends. Sunjea pointed out why he believed Haneal behaved funny around his American peers because Haneal could not express himself verbally so he did it with his body. Dongkyu explained that the Korean students in his school sometimes behaved silly in order to get attention from their American peers. For this reason, Sunjea and Donkyu understood the reason why Haneal acted silly or funny in school; it was a way to get attention from their American peers.

Over all, these students had experienced a difficult time making friends because of cultural differences and language barriers. Ironically Jinhee does not seem to have any language barrier issues with other American peers. Regardless of her English proficiency, she indicated that she prefers to hang out more with Asian Americans because she is a very reserved and a very academically oriented student. This has been demonstrated by her choice in making friends in her study clubs such as the math club and such.

Korean Peers

Immigrant youth studies found that Korean American students are more likely to make friends from the same race and ethnic groups among Asian Americans (Kao & Jayer, 2006). Like previous studies, the students in this study also tend to hang out with the same or similar ethnic groups in school. In fact, Eden School, Bell Middle School, and Kings High School are some of the best schools located in very wealth neighborhoods in Springville. In other words, those schools are predominantly white middle class students. Therefore, the student did not have many chances to make friends with other groups of students. For instance, there are only 12

Korean students out of 336 students with a few Asian Americans and African Americans in Eden High School. Therefore, the students more likely associate with Koreans, Chinese Americans or other Asian Americans students in school because they feel more comfortable making friends within the same ethnic backgrounds. In fact, the participants in this study are best friends.

For instance, Sunjea and Donkyu are best friends. Minjeong and Youri are best friends. Hana and Mirea are best friends. However, Haneal indicated very interesting behavior regarding the friendship with American peers. He is the only student who associates with African American peers in this study.

“I feel sometimes comfortable with when I talked with American friends. My American friends are mostly African Americans. I mean, I can more open my mind to them [American friends]. Most of my friends [American friends] are not good at school. I like talking with them about sports, games, and girls. You know, guys talk about girls. [Haneal laughed]. But, I need to think about the friendship with them because they are not interested in studying. I will become a sophomore in this year. My mom said that I need to start preparing SAT and entering colleges. When I am with Korean friends, sometimes I feel little bit uncomfortable because they behave just like *hyung* [older brother]. Particularly, Sunjea *hyung* often said, ‘You should study hard and should not hang out with American friends who are not good at school, and so on like very Korean style’.” –The second interview with Haneal, 9th grader male *Girugi* student

He pointed out that sometimes he felt more comfortable with his African American peers based on the fact that his Korean peers mainly talked about education issues such as having good grades, going to good colleges, and preparing for the SAT. Haneal is the youngest male student among the Korean male students at Eden High School. According to Korean tradition, the relationship among Korean males is more of an age-based hierarchy than the relationship among female Koreans. I often observed that Sunjea and Dongkyu treated him as younger brother rather than as a friend. At times Sunjea and Dongkyu were very insistent in their thoughts regarding what Haneal should do or not do. They also often gave him advice on how to be a good student in school. Park (1999) found that some Korean Americans get along more with African Americans or Latino American because they are sensitive to the discrimination on racial minorities in the U.S. In addition, African Americans and Latino Americans may be a role model

for Korean Americans to fight against the racial discrimination in U.S. history. It is probably not exactly the same as why Haneal's feel more attraction with African American friends. However, Haneal certainly has different attitudes for African American peers from Sunjea and Donkyu. I infer that Haneal liked African American culture, such as hip hop music and baggy pants, etc. and he felt that other male Korean students treated him as just younger brother rather than friends.

As a result, these students tended to hang out with Koreans or Asian Americans because they feel some distance from American peers like their host families. On the other hand, these students made efforts to get along with American friends as well, in order to learn new cultures and adjust their lives in new different cultural environments, schools and the U.S. In the next section, I will discuss a school setting where these students meet and learn new cultures from their peers.

School

School is an actual arena in which to negotiate their cultural identity for all the students in this study because school is a place where they cannot practice Korean culture and they learn and need to practice American cultures. These students have traveled from Korea to the U.S. for their education. These students are new in the U.S. Therefore, they need to learn and accept new cultures to survive in their new environment. Particularly, most of them come to the U.S. voluntarily because they want to learn English and undergo various degrees of cultural experience for their future. For these reasons, they willingly accept new cultures and adapt themselves to a new environment. This is a form of consequential transition.

Beach (1999) identified consequential transition "as a developmental change in the relation between an individual and one or more social activities (p. 114)." He provided the example of the transition as a daily movement between home and school, participating in part time work after school, and moving the between language arts and science classes during the school work. The participants in this study have multiple participations in different cultural environments such as school, home and communities. These students have experienced a type of collateral transitional journey among different cultural places in the U.S.

I often observed that these students enthusiastically talked about educational issues in the KCM. They seemed to be very concerned about their grades although they are good at school. Particularly, high school students Sunjea, Dongkyu, Youri, and Haneal showed more concern than middle school students, Hana and Mirea. These students often mentioned Korean education. Interestingly, when they talked about Korean education, the high school students were very critical about Korean education comparing to American education. Based on the KCM discussions and the interviews, I found that these students have interesting perceptions and comparisons between Korean education and American education. Therefore, before I discuss school, I will elaborate in order to illustrate their perceptions about school and education in the U.S. because the perception is the catalyst that promotes the actions to study abroad in the U.S. This is a very crucial hint to explain how and why they negotiate their cultural identity in the U.S.

Perception of American Education

Girugi students and *Chogi-Youhacksangs* come to the U.S. with their mother or by themselves because of their education. Most students in this study seemed to agree with their parents' idea when the parents suggested studying abroad in the U.S. because the students also want to study in the U.S., except for Haneal. However, the rest of the students in this study responded positively to the idea and wanted to come to the U.S. because they thought that gaining an education in the U.S. was more beneficial and valuable than in Korea. The students looked forward to having great experiences in schools in the U.S. It turns out to be true in some senses because the students could reduce their study burden, escape from high competitiveness, and enjoy various school activities that they would normally not experience in Korea. Therefore, the students consider an American education as the educational shelter and the educational ladder.

Educational Shelter: Escape from the Examination Hell. The students missed many things in Korea. However, the only thing they do not miss is an education in Korea. The students described Korean education as 'examination hell'. Korean education is well known as being very competitive with a heavy study burden because of the university entrance examination (Chung et

al., 1993). Lee and Larson (1999) explain that Korean high school students spent more than twice their time doing school work than most American students. The research also shows that Korean high school students are more likely than American students to experience depression and high stress because of their study burden. The students in this study were highly critical about Korean education. Particularly, high school students Sunjea, Jinhee, Dongkyu, Youri, Minjeong, and Haneal criticized and analyzed every detail about Korean education.

The students remember Korean education primarily as a stressful study burden. Hana and Mirea did not have middle and high school experiences in Korea. However, they have already felt the pressure of studying since they were in elementary school and they can hear from friends, parents and relatives in Korea how many hours Korean middle and high school students generally spend in studying and how Korean students are stressed about the amount of studying required to pass the exams. So, students in this study are pleased to be free from a stressful study burden. These students added how high the competitive classroom environment can be, which also depressed them. The test-oriented and highly competitive school environments pressure students to focus on studying and teachers to judge students by grades. Particularly, these students criticize about how teachers look down on students who do not do well in school in Korea. Haneal tells us his story in the KCM.

Sunjea: When I was in Korea, I completed middle school and the first grade in high school. But, I feel that I did not learn anything from the school. Frankly, I feel that I've learned from crams schools in Korea. I studied only Math and English at cram schools and I took exams in schools.

Haneal and Hana [interrupted]: Yes, he is right. I feel the same thing with him. I felt that I have not learned anything from schools.

Mirea: My friends want to come to the U.S. to study. You know, they have to study a lot in Korea, So, they want to come here.

Youri: I understand. It is hell. You know, schools in Korea are hell.

Sunjea: Too much, too competitive!

Haneal: Well, when I was in Korea, I was hurt a lot.

Youri: I know, from teachers.

Haneal: I was interested in making movies and wanted to be a movie director in Korea.

Then, my teachers all the times told me that what I am doing is useless. They scolded me all the times that I need to study for going to college.

Youri: Right, Korean teachers ignore what we want to do or be. They just say study hard and have good grades. Then, if we are not good at school and they asked parents to come to school. That's humiliated.

Haneal: Yes, I was told that I did not concern my future at all. But, you know I was very thoughtful about my future and I had a clear plan to be a movie director. But, they did not listen to me because I was not good at school.

-From the KCM, April 26th 2009

All of the students, whatever they wished to study in the U.S. or not, agreed with the sentiment that Korean schools are so stressful and painful because of the study burden. So, it seems that they are very happy to escape from 'the examination hell' in Korea. The Korean National Statistical Office (2008) reported that 88.8% of elementary, 74.6% of middle, and 55% of high school students spent 7.8 hours per week participating in private tutoring in the year 2007 (Lee, et al., 2009). This study revealed how Korean students in primary and secondary schools focus on studying and spend most of their time after school studying. As a result, test and study-oriented school's drive the class room environment to be very competitive among students in Korea. Therefore, the students felt a sense of relief from the burden of studying and the stressful level of competitions that they did not feel in the American schools. The students were satisfied with the fact that they were escaping from the examination hell. Since all of the high school students except Jinhee had enrolled in high schools in Korea, they all had experienced the stresses of being high school students in Korea. Although Jinhee, Hana, and Mirea had not experienced the stress and competition in high school in Korea, they also felt that they escaped from a highly stressful studying burden.

"My mom asked me to become an exchange student in the U.S. two years ago. I thought that it is cool to be a student in the U.S. because I can escape from Korea. I can also experience other culture. It is so cool!... Korean students do not have their lives besides studying but, here everybody has their lives. Of course, they [American students] are very

busy for school works, but not as much as Korean students - The first interview with Dongkyu, 12th grader male *Chogi-Youhacksang*

“I like the American school system. Korean schools, especially high schools in Korea focus on studying, studying, studying. They do not offer any sports and other activities. Also, American schools are a lot easier than Korean schools.”- The first interview with Sunjea, 11th grader male *Chogi-Youhacksang*

“I feel that I came here to escape from Korean education. If I study really hard in Korea, I think that I can make it... but, you know it is really difficult to go to university in Korea. So, I think that it is easier. You know Korean education is very test-oriented curriculum... but in here, the education is not only focus on test, but also about the knowledge... so, it is good for me”, - The first interview with Hana, 7th grader female *Girugi* student.

These students feel free from a heavy study load and competitive class atmosphere in the U.S. school. The American educational environment allows them to enjoy studying in a new haven. Moreover, they also explain that there are several more benefits in American schools, such as an easier and more diverse curriculum than the Korean curriculum. All the participants agree that the American curricula are much easier and much diverse than Korean curricula. Particularly, they feel that the math and science courses are very easy to study, so all of the students are in AP or honors math or science courses. These students achieve higher grades in general because the curriculum in the U.S. is much easier than in Korea. Moreover, students cheerfully told that they like the curricula selection based on students' abilities in the U.S. schools and various curricula compared to a standardized curricula in Korea.

Researcher: What do you think about American curricula?

Sunjea: American curriculum is really easy.

Haneal: Yeah, everyone says that studying in the U.S. is very easy...I got B last time in Math, although I did not study at all. It is so easy.

Hana: I think that Math and Science are really easy in here.

Sunjea: I take two Math class this year. It is really easy. When I was in Korea, I like

Math. But, I was not good at math...Math in here is very easy. I do not understand why we study Geometry in high school.

Mirea: Yes, I think that math is really easy.

Haneal: I think that history is easy too, because American history is short.

-The KCM, April 19th 2009

Compared to the Korean curricula¹⁸ in secondary education, these students do not need to study all the subjects any more in the U.S. schools. It makes them feel less of a burden to study and much easier to study other subjects. Particularly, these Korean students feel that Math in the U.S. school is much easier to study because Korean students study in Math1, Math 2, Differential and Integral Calculus, Probability and Statistics, and Discrete Mathematics in high school Math classes (The Ministry of Education, Science and Technology, Korea). Also, the students like American education because the American education provides more diverse curricula compare to test –oriented standardized curricula in Korea.

“I like American education. I think that Korean education is so test-oriented and so standardized. I do not think that I need to study and memorize everything. I don’t like the standardized education at all. I hate it”- The first interview with Jinhee, 12th grader female *Girugi* student, March 2009

Moreover, these students think that they benefit by the various after school activities in the U.S. Particularly, male students Sunjea, Dongkyu, and Haneal enjoy playing sports and musical instruments as part of their after school activities. Surprisingly, the benefits of an American education that these students care about are different from what their parents care about. Unlike their parents who emphasize English proficiency, a better future, and cultural experiences above school lives, students emphasized school lives in the U.S. such as curriculum selection, a less stressful study burden, and various extra activities in schools. Of course, they know certainly that their English skills and cultural experiences will benefit their future.

¹⁸ Korean secondary schools are divided two sections such as middle school and high school. From 7th to 9th grade students attend middle schools and 10th to 12th grade students enroll high schools. Students study around 13 subjects in secondary schools such as Korean, Civil Ethics, Social Studies, English, Math, Science, Technology/Home Economic, Music, Arts, Physical Education, The Second Foreign Language, Chinese Letter(a traditional Written Korean), Military Exercise, and Liberal Arts (the Ministry of Education, Science and Technology, Korea).

However, these students focused on the more agreeable school environments in the U.S. compared to study-oriented Korean schools.

As a result, these students think that they have some benefits from the U.S. education because American curricula is easier and more varied than the Korean curricula. It is for these reasons that they achieve higher academic performance in the U.S. school. These students also think that academic improvement in the U.S. is a huge benefit for them. I will discuss their academic improvement in the next section.

Educational Ladder: Academic Improvement. Many empirical researchers (Ball & Ellis, 2007; Nassir, 2002; Nassir & Saxe, 2003; Sadowski, 2003) of immigrant youth highlighted that the relationship between academic performances and identity is crucial in education. All students in the study have had higher grades in U.S. schools compared to when they were in Korea. They are very satisfied with their academic improvement. They mention that with less of a burden of studying and easier curricula in American schools, they enjoy studying.

I found some interesting contrasts about the easy curriculum in the U.S. among the parents, the guardians in the U.S. and some of the students. For instance, Mrs. Park, mother of Haneal and Hana, Mrs. Ko, Jinhee's mother, and Mrs. Song, Mirea's aunt seemed to be happy about their children's academic improvement. On the other hand, they are concerned that their children are spoiled because American school curriculum is too easy compared to the Korean curriculum. However, American curriculum has been designed and developed with several aspects, one of which is the problem based curriculum that emphasizes students' motivation rather than focus on transferring knowledge. "A problem based curriculum more focused on authentic, contemporary problems, rather than abstract ideas or skills (Johnson, et al, 2011, p. 340)". In addition, the American curriculum has a more diverse extra curriculum than Korea. As a result, the American curriculum encourages students' development based on their own abilities and preferences. In other words, these students enjoy their academic success and more opportunities to develop their identity though easier and varied American curricula.

In general, the students are happy about the higher academic performance and they enjoy being good students in school. Furthermore, they explained that the academic improvements

encourage them to focus more on studying voluntarily.

“In Korea, I could not even think about to go to *Minsago* (Korean *Mijok* Leadership Academy, a very prestigious private high school in Korea) and *Yoego*(foreign language specialized high schools, one of the prestigious high school types in Korea)... They are really genius. They really are. I studied well in Korea but, I could not catch them. But here, I am good at school like them. I can go to colleges in the U.S. I’ve heard that students from those high schools have really high SAT scores. If they want to go to the same college in the U.S., I am little bit nervous about it, because they are also Korean. I need to compete with them for going to college in the U.S...” -The research diary, Sunjea 11th grader male *Chogi-Youhacksang*, April 2009

Sunjea and Jinhee were good at school in Korea and they became more motivated to study after they moved to the U.S. because they achieved academic improvement and had high expectations from teachers and peers. Haneal and Mirea began to enjoy studying after attending the U.S. school because they have achieved such a great improvement in their academic performance. The rest of the students have similar experiences and enjoy being good students as well.

Moreover, these students mentioned that American schools encourage studying rather than pushing to study. Jinhee told an interesting story of how she found her talent for math and how she becomes proficient in math. She had attended a math Olympia when she was in Korea and she didn’t do a good job. Then, she thought that she was not good at math although she liked math. It was not until after she moved into the U.S. that she had good grades at math, although she did not really make an effort. So, she attended a math Olympia again and failed again. Then, she thought that she really was not good at math. However, she was encouraged to attend other math competitions and she found that she actually did have a high capability for math. From that point, she studied really hard at math and become proficient in math. It was then that she could attend a national championship competition and attend also an international competition as a delegate of the U.S. Thanks to her math talent, she studies at the one of top colleges in the U.S.

In contrast, Minjeong and Dongkyu seemed to somewhat worry about how they will

catch up and prepare for the national examination to go to college in Korea because they plan to go back to Korea. They heard that if they maintain good grades in the U.S. school and prove a high degree of English proficiency, they do not need to worry about going to college in Korea. As a result, Minjeong and Dongkyu were happy about their higher academic performance and tried to study hard in school.

Cultural Capital and Symbolic Credits. Students in this study have a somewhat different interpretation of how an American education will provide benefits for them with their parents. However, these students agree with the fact that American education is more valuable than Korean education. Particularly, they believe that English is one of the biggest benefits they will receive from U.S. education. They are sure that their schooling and living experiences in the U.S. will be a great resource for the future. Furthermore, they are aware that studying in the U.S. is a prestigious experience and only select group of people can make it.

All students are sure that English fluency will be a great resource. Not only to return to Korea but also travel to other places in the world. They know the power of English as ‘the global language’ (Stromquist & Monkman, 2000). Therefore, these students wanted to have any opportunities for improving their English in preparation for their return to Korea.

“Right after I graduated a middle school in Korea, my dad recommended me to do study abroad in the U.S. Then, I think that it is really good idea and good chance for me to improve English skills”- The first interview with Sunjea, 11th grader male *Chogi-Youhacksang*.

Only limited and selected families in Korea can afford the cost for their children to study abroad, in particular study abroad in the U.S. because parents are supposed to be able to support their children financially and culturally. As these students’ family backgrounds demonstrated, these students are from wealthy and very well educated families. Mirea and Jinhee’s fathers obtained a doctoral degree from the U.S. institutions. Jinhee’ and Haneal’s fathers are professors, Dongkyu’s father is a medical doctor, Minjoeng’, Sunjea’ and Minjeong’s fathers are businessman, and Youri’s parents are school teachers. Therefore, these students had vast networks of those who possess somewhat similar degree of cultural capital.

“When I was in Korea, I joined the basket ball club¹⁹. My friends in the club, most of them left Korea now for study abroad. Now there are only three friends left in Korea out of twelve. I heard that they are in the U.S. or Canada.”- The first interview with Haneal, 9th grader male *Girugi* student

As a result, these students’ family background, their networks, and the students’ perception of English proficiency and cultural experiences in the U.S. document that studying abroad in the U.S. is considered a way to gain more cultural capital. The students accept the idea from their parents and their network. Also, Minjoeng told me how her experience in the U.S. will be good, although she had very bad experiences and memory from the U.S. because of English fluency and feelings of the prestige. Since Korean education is so stressful and competitive, students may only have a dream about studying abroad. However, students realize that only a few select students can study abroad. Consequently, students in Korea fantasize about the study abroad experience. Moreover, the students in this study felt how they are prestigious compared to their friends in Korea. Thus, studying in the U.S. is obviously a symbolic capital among Korean teenagers, as well.

“I think that my English will be very benefit for me because I do not need to study English for exam, and English is a global language. So, it will be good for my future. Moreover, others envy me, studying in the U.S. and my English. I can watch movies without subtitles. Well, my friends in Korea, they study in Korea. Not many of my friends go study abroad, particularly in the U.S. So, I think it is good for me.” –The first interview from Minjeong, 9th grade female *Chogi-Youhacksang*

The students shared Minjeong’s opinion that their friends in Korea really envy them. They accept the idea that studying in the U.S. is a prestigious experience. Bourdieu (1986) explained that cultural capital is generally handed down from their parents to the children. The students in this study agree with their parent’s opinions that an American education brings about many benefits. Furthermore, they explained that an American education is regarded as ‘a blessed experience’ in Korean society. They insist that their blessed experiences do not come without

¹⁹ This basketball club is one of extended types of private tutoring in Korea. To improve the grades in PE(physical education), Korean parents hire private coaches to train their children. In general, parents organized the clubs for their children with students who live in their neighbors. Mrs. Park, Haneal’s mother, explained to me this.

any efforts. They pointed out how they struggled with living in different cultures.

In sum, these students regard an American education as a selective and appreciated tool in order to achieve their academic and future success just as their parents and Koreans perceive it. These students clearly see that English fluency and cultural experiences in the U.S. schools are a great benefit for them. As an added bonus, all of the students are happy to escape from examination hell, improve their English skills and academic achievements, and have certainly gained many benefits from the U.S. school system. Contrasting these satisfactions, they still miss the Korean schools, their friends, teachers, and even tedious school works. Furthermore, most students do not recommend this long and rough educational journey because students have to face huge challenges, such as cultural differences and language barriers in the U.S., although they admit that an American education is more valuable than Korean education for their future.

Fantasies of Study Abroad in the U.S. The students agree with the opinion that an American education will be beneficial to them in many ways, such as English proficiency, academic improvements, freedom in school, and cultural experiences. The students often described the study abroad in the U.S. as ‘a blessed experience’. They seemed to enjoy schooling in the U.S. On the other hand, they pointed out that enrolling in an U.S. school is not always a pleasant experience. They also complained about how their friends, relatives, and even families in Korea fantasized about the idealized living and schooling conditions in the U.S. which have not come to fruition.

These students criticized the fantasy on study abroad in the U.S. and assert the cost they face in living in different cultures.

Hana: My grandma and relatives in Korea said that I am blessed because I can study in the U.S. They think that American education is just easy.

Haneal: I study until 3 AM here.

Dongkyu: Right, I was told that a lot. I was blessed to study in the U.S.

Youri: Yes! Yes! Yes! I was told that, too. You know, recently I got a phone call from *Youhackone* [the private placement center]. The agent said that I need to study more to have higher grade... She said that I do not know how much I am blessed of studying in

the U.S. I really do not understand how they think that way. They only think about studying. But, you know, I have to be separate from my family and friends. They do not understand how I am struggling in here.

Hana: Right! It really irritated me that people in Korea think that way. We have difficult time to catch up studying too.

Hana: Yes, they do have prejudice about life in America. They think that we just have fun at school.

Dongkyu: They [people in Korea] do not understand how we are struggling in here.

Youri: Right! We need to live a foreigner here.

Haneal: Yeah, we do have many problems here like friends' issues, cultural shock, language barriers, etc.

Sunjea: Well, I think that I thought that way when I was in Korea.

Dongkyu: Yes, I agree with you.

Haneal: Right, I think that way when I was in Korea, too.

-The KCM, MAY 10TH 2009

Dongkyu asserted that the study abroad experience in the U.S. will be the biggest challenge for those students who have only dreamt about living in the U.S. "I want to tell them [Korean students who want to study in the U.S.] do not have too big expectation about the study abroad in the U.S. They should be ready for giving up what they really enjoy in Korea. You see, Minjeong's case, she was not ready yet to give up that. That's why she complained a lot about the U.S. and she even said that all Americans are foolish. They [Koreans] should know that we [Korean students in the U.S.] discard Korean value to accept American cultures".

The students asserted that the study abroad experience is not about dreaming a fantasy, but living in real life. They criticized the misperception regarding how study abroad in the U.S. became over exaggerated and idealized in the mass media in Korea through the writings, news, and articles about the study abroad program in the U.S. The student believed that these accounts are not really true. Over all, the students highlighted that they could take advantage of the study abroad in the U.S. for their future and confront huge challenges for their lives as well.

Interestingly, the findings indicated that these students were very well aware of the cost

that they should pay for living in the U.S. to take the benefits. In other words, they clearly understood their struggles and efforts living in different cultures in order to gain the benefits of cultural capital including in English proficiency.

In sum, the students indicated that they are satisfied with their school experiences in the U.S. academically because they have experienced much more freedom in the American school than in the Korean schools. The students also are happy about reducing their study burden in the U.S. They seemed to enjoy being high achieving students in schools and being envied by their friends in Korea. On the other hand, they pointed out that studying and living in the U.S. is not the same as what they expected and fantasized about while in Korea. They confronted huge cultural differences and the differences brought about enormous hardships in order to adapt and survive in their new environments.

Model Minority Stereotype

Ball (2002) highlighted that many minority students have to negotiate their cultural identities between the salient inherited cultures and the mainstream cultures in their everyday lives. They often straddle their identity between the cultural identities and academic identities which are constructed in school settings (Lee & Anderson, 2009; Nasir & Saxe, 2003). As much of the Asian American youth research shows, the students are considered as math geniuses or computer geeks in schools. Being a good Korean brings about a big motivation for the students. On the other hand, some students in this study feel a great deal of pressure about being a good Korean and math genius. While I had a conversation with Enyoung Kim, mother of Haneal and Hana, she proudly said how Hana did a good job at the math competition. Then, Hana interrupted our conversation,

“Mom! Stop it. I don’t like that you praise me as a math genius like others. Please do not push me! I don’t like it. It bothers me others think that I am good at Math. Teachers and friends! But I am not good at Math like Sunjea *oppa*(older brother) and Dongkyu *oppa*(older brother)!!! I am not good at it like other Koreans. So, I dislike it. Don’t say that. It really pressures me”. – Research diary, May 2009

Hana almost cried when discussing how she felt immense pressure when her American friends considered her to be good at math. Youri and Minjeong agreed with her. They told how they were very embarrassed or nervous in a math class if the teachers and friends asked them to solve some difficult questions. Therefore, the stereotype of math geniuses pressures these Korean adolescents.

The model minority stereotype not only pressures the students to be good at math or a good Korean, but also labels the students as shy or inactive. Therefore, the students have to transition between math genius and their language/cultural deficient like a pendulum in schools.

Academic Genius vs. Social Nerd. Asian immigrant youths often seem to achieve success academically, but also to possess ‘nerd’ quality because they have limited social skills (Godina & Choi, 2009). The participants in this study are regarded as good models for academic success. On the other hand, they are also considered ‘social nerds’ among Americans peers. In other words, these students have academic success, but they may not achieve any other success such as making friends, being popular, actively involving in sports club, etc. The students brought up interesting points during some conversation regarding how they are considered in school in the KCM.

Researcher: Do your American peers consider you Asian math geniuses? Then, how do you feel about it?

Sunjea: Yes, all think that way.

Haneal: Yes, That is true. They think so. But Sunjea *hyung* [older brother] is really good at math.

Sunjea: Well, I feel good when they look at me as a genius.

Haneal: For me, one of my class mates asked me to do math tutoring. I cannot imagine if I was in Korea. No one asked me to help with their math. I am not that good at math in here but she keeps asking me to do that. That’s weird. I feel weird.

Hana: Right, others ask some math questions to me, too. It is weird. It is weird.

Youri: Well, I said that I was not good at math when I was in Korea. Then, no one believes that. It is really weird.

Hana: I did a presentation in a science class. I did not really do good job at that time, but

my teacher praised me a lot. Later, I had a bad grade in that presentation. Then, my classmates asked me why I did not get a good grade. They were very curious why I did not make good grades. I think that my classmates think that I am really good at school. It is weird. I do not know why they think that way.

Haneal: But, American peers identify Asians as nerds. I don't like it. So, when I went to a party last time, I made the party really fun. I danced really crazily. I think that I did really weird stuff there. Then, one American guy came to me and said that he thought all Asians are nerds. But I was outgoing and the only Asian who had fun in the party. Then, I told him that we [Asians] enjoy having fun. We really do. Then, he looked like very surprised.
-The KCM, April 2009

As Haneal mentioned, the students know that they are often seen as social nerds in schools. The students told several reasons why they are looked upon as social nerds. First, their English fluency is not like their American peers. Second, they do not know how they are supposed to behave in school because of cultural differences. Third, and possibly most importantly, the stereotypes represent Asians as just social nerds. The students complained about the stereotype in that how they are classified as social nerds or shy and obedient strangers.

Youri told an embarrassing moment in school because of the stereotype about Asians. She added how she was looked at as an exotic or innocent Asian girl by American peers.

“Well, they consider me a genius because I am Korean. They asked me a lot of Math questions. Then, I told them that all Koreans in our school are geniuses except me. I think that they overestimate me. I think that I am creative but not smart. Dongkyu told me that I was very popular among guys because I was pretty, but I didn't know it. I don't think so. Several times, American guys asked me to go out, but I reject that. I do not like it. I know what they want from me. Once, a black guy came to me and asked whether I slept with guys or not. It made me really upset. I just yelled to him to go away! I think that it is so rude and humiliating! I don't like that people think about me that way because I am an Asian girl.” –The second interview with Youri, 11th grader female *Chogi-Youhacksang*.

The KCM conversation and Youri's story reflect how the students alternate their

identities between who they are and who they are seen as by others. Ironically, they are praised for their successful academic achievement but they are also looked down on as misfits in American culture. As the students pointed out, they believe that their English fluency is one of the major reasons why they are labeled as social nerds in school.

Youri continued her story about the stereotype; “One of my friends asked me to play piano when she found a piano. However, I do not know how to play piano. Also, one day, an Asian girl came to me ask me to the same thing. I mean play a piano. Then, I said to her I cannot play piano. She looked at me very curiously and said to me why I cannot play piano. It was really odd why people think that I can play piano. I have never learned how to play piano. I think that they think that I can play piano because I am Korean. They think that every Korean knows how to play piano.”

When the other students listened to her story, they talked about their stories about their experiences with stereotypes and they laughed about it. Youri and other students’ stories imply exactly what Lee (2005) states about the model minority stereotype in her article; “stereotypical image of Asian Americans include those who valedictorian, the violin prodigy, the computer science whiz, etc.... (p.75).”

In sum, the students enjoy having a good image in school to some degree stereotype. On the other hand, they have been met with the strong pressure to meet their American peer’s high expectation. Moreover, the model minority stereotype situates the students as social nerds or perpetual foreigners.

English

English is one of the major purposes to come to the U.S., and one of the most valuable products from studying abroad in the U. S. However, at the same time, English is a major challenge to face in living in the U.S. for these students. Lee & Anderson (2009) pointed out that the label English Language Learners often overshadows the complex and rich sociocultural histories of students’ identities. This label instead only makes it more significant in their learning practices and abilities in relation to speaking or not speaking English. The students agreed that one of the primary reasons to coming to the U.S. is because of their desire to learn the English

language. They also added that English is one of the major benefits gained from studying in the U.S. However, they have been struggling with living in the U.S. because of their lack of their English skills and abilities. For instance, the students have experienced humiliation or degradation from their American peers in schools because of their lack of English, although most of them do not have any problems in communicating in English.

English is the biggest benefit and ironically the biggest headache for the students. All of the students certainly had experienced language barriers when they came to the U.S. for the first time. While they have stayed in the U.S. for several years, they have made huge efforts to improve their English. From their efforts, all the students do not seem to have any problem communicating with their American peers and studying in the U.S. now. However, the students, except Jinhee²⁰, feel that they have experienced an extended sense of language barriers in the U.S. because of their accents and lack of fluency.

After the students watched a video clip of the movie, *Harold & Kumar*, in the KCM, they had a very interesting conversation about learning English. In the movie, Harold Lee, a Korean American, and Kumar Patel, an Asian Indian American, are friends. They are born and grow up in the U.S. On a trip, they are arrested because they are seen as terrorists based on racial profiling. Kumar was regarded as a member of Al-Qaeda because of his physical traits and Harold was regarded as a North Korean because of his Korean heritage. In the video clip, Harold and Kumar's parent are called to an interrogation room in the CIA. The parents, Korean Americans and Asian Indian Americans, talk to each other in English concerning their sons. The CIA agent brings in a translator for the parents. The translator begins asking questions of the Korean parents in Korean. However, the translator cannot speak Korean and he just imitated what he thought was Korean. The Korean parents talk to the CIA agent in English, but the agent does not listen to them and kept asking the translator for his interpretation.

Researcher: What do you think about this video clip and the scene in the movie?

Haneal: I think that the CIA agents did not listen to the Korean parents purposefully because they will make them [Harold & Kumar] as criminals.

²⁰ Jinhee has been in the U.S. since 2003, Mirea came to the U.S. in 2006, Sunjea, Dongkyu, Minjeong and Youri came to the U.S. in 2007, and Haneal and Hana came to the U.S. in 2007 December.)

Youri: Well, I think that the agent does not listen what the Korean parents said because the agent thinks that they [the Korean parents] cannot speak English because they are Koreans. Well, I have similar experience about it. I think that I speak English very well and I do not have any problem communicating with any other Americans. When I talk with American friends in English, if someone suddenly joins our conversation, then that person does not listen to me. I mean, even the person does not try to listen to me and keeps saying to me ‘What? What? What did you say?’. The person thinks that I cannot speak English because I am an Asian. So, I think that the agent does the same thing to the parents in the movie. I think because of the stereotype about Asian.

Sunjea: Yes, I had that experience, too. When I was talking with my American friends in school, a guy came to me and said to me ‘*speak in English*’. I felt really bad. I was speaking in English.

Researcher: Have you experienced the stereotype?

Haneal: When I went to LEE middle school, a Hispanic guy threw me something. I do not remember what it was. I asked him what he threw me. Then, he said to me ‘What? What? I do not understand’. I asked him to stop it but he kept doing it. It made me really angry. So, I yelled and swore him in Korean...

Sunjea: You did a really good job! [applause]

Researcher: Then, how about you all, how would you respond if it happens to you?

Hana: Well, I would say stop it and if they keep doing.

Sunjea: I have quite many experiences in the last year. For the first time, I just took it and took it. However, at some point I could not stand it anymore. So, I spoke up to them with angry, ‘Hey! You cannot speak Korean, you can only speak English. But, I can speak Korean and English. I can speak two languages. It means that you are stupid and I am much smarter than you’. I think that I said that to them. I was really angry at that time, so...

-the KCM, April 2009

The students talked about how they felt uncomfortable and humiliated because of the perception others have about their English proficiency. Moreover, the students complained how they are made fun of or are discriminated against in school because of their level of English

proficiency.

Dongkyu: Well, we became a target because we do not speak English fluently like them. For instance, Youna, one of Korean girl in school, does not speak English very well. Then, someone taught her bad words in English, but she even does not understand what that means. So, she speaks those words in front of people in classes.

Sunjea: Yes, it makes me really piss off.

Haneal: Yes, it is embarrassing. I mean, not because of her but, people who teach that.

Hana: I feel really sorry for her.

Youri: Yes, I feel really bad.

Dongkyu: I dislike it. But, I think, that is the way of American peers make fun of us because they want to be popular. You know, Americans like people who have a sense of humor. They think that it is funny.

Sunjea: Yes. I think so. That is why they [Americans] make fun of us. They want to be popular and famous in school. I do not really like that way to become popular or famous. It is very different from Korea.

-The KCM, May 2009

The students agreed that they are often teased by their American peers because of their accent and their lack of fluency. They also think that their English proficiency limits their lives in school and the U.S. All but Jinhee believe that this is true. Sunjea talks about his experience of when he felt indirectly discriminated against in school because of his English skills. He also added how his American peers make fun of his English and how he gets over their teasing.

“Last year, I really liked to play basketball, but I never played as a team. I knew how to do that, but I could not do that [join the team]. I was told because I am an Asian. I could not join them as a team. I felt that they ignored me and they ill-treated me because I do not speak in English very well...Now, I have a lesson from last year. It is about Americans. They just say what they want to say. They do not care about how others feel. I think that Americans just ignore other people in front of themselves and make fun of

them in order to be popular. That is how American guys become popular. It really bothers me. I think that the same thing happens at Eden. But I realize that I do not need to concern about it because they do not care about others. I mean, I am now aware that they do not dislike me, but they just do to become popular. Sometimes, some popular guys say to me, ‘What? What do you said? Speak in English!’. Then, others American peers laugh. The guy just makes fun of me to become popular. He does not really mean about my personal issue” –the second interview from Sunjea, 11th grader *Chogi-Youhacksang*.

As Sunjea indicates in his story, most of the students have struggled with language barriers in school. Particularly, Haneal and Hana have experienced more difficulties among the other students because they are comparatively new comers and they do not have any previous experience as exchange students like Sunjea, Dongkyu, Youri, and Minjeong. Hana said that she felt a degree of difficulty in adjusting to school.

“It was really difficult for me. I am originally very talkative in Korea. You see how I am talkative. I really like talking with friends. In school, I do not talk very much, but I talk a lot at home. So, on Sunday night, I cried a lot because I did not want to go to school. Now it is getting better, but I am still struggling.” -The first interview with Hana, 7th grader female *Girugi* student

The students not only struggle with adjusting their lives to a new environment, but also changing their personality because of their English proficiency. Like Hana, most of the students agreed that they have become shy in school because of their lack of English proficiency. Mirea said that she tried not to talk in school because of her accent. Dongkyu explains how his life in school has been changing compared to when he was in Korea because of his English.

“You know, I used to be a very popular leader at school in Korea. I was a vice president in my school and I was very good speaker, but here I cannot be a leader because I cannot make jokes like Americans and I cannot persuade others in English. So, I am not famous as much as I used to be, but I do not care. I have some friends and I do not feel lonely. So, it is okay.”-The second interview with Dongkyu, 11th grader male *Chogi-Youhacksang*.

In sum, these students agree with the idea that English is one of major benefits from studying abroad in the U.S. and one of major obstacles to face in living in the U.S. as well. Furthermore, they might continue communicating in English in order to gain higher academic performance in school although they may reject the Korean language in order to acculturate themselves into the U.S. I also found a very interesting point about their English proficiency. Their parents and guardians certainly believe that their children have English fluency so much that they do not have any problem living in the U.S. However, students' perspectives are different from their parents. They are still struggling with their English, except for Jinhee. In other words, these students may obtain the Korean perspectives of cultural capital and English proficiency. However, they may not obtain in American perspective of cultural capital. Due to their English, these students indicated that they had a difficult time making friends, felt that they needed to change their personality, and experienced a sense of demotivation in their confidence while living in the U.S.

Adjustment Efforts

Researchers (Solis, 1980; Darder, 1991) who focus on bicultural identities pointed out that when an immigrant youth moves to another country they are often forced to adapt to the dominant mainstream cultures of the new society. The process of being bicultural as a form of identity is one way a person may respond to cultural conflicts that they face in their everyday lives. Unlike permanent immigrants, the *Chogi-Youhacksangs* and *Girugi* students did have somewhat different degrees of pressures to acculturate themselves to the dominant society. They, however, certainly need to learn how to adapt to new cultures in order to live in their new environments due to the fact that they intentionally came to study abroad in the U.S. based on their desire to learn and experiencing American culture. For this reason, these students made great efforts to adapt and adjust their lives while living in the U.S.

While they tried to adjust their lives into their new cultures, they made two different degrees of adaptation, what it calls a camouflage stage and transformation stage. I found that these students showed certain behavior patterns of different stage in American cultural boundaries. I also observed that these students showed more long term adjustments in new cultures during what could be deemed the transformation stage.

In this section, I will present how these students make considerable efforts to adjust their lives with different degrees of adjustment in new cultures.

Camouflage Stage

In adolescence, individuals start sensing the sameness and the differences with others (Erikson, 1965; Marica, 1966). Moreover, the participants in this study are from Korea, an ethnically and culturally homogenous country. They do not have many opportunities to experience multicultural environments. Therefore, these students are unfamiliar with being different from others. Due to their age and cultural backgrounds, they are very sensitive to 'being different' and they want to blend into their peer groups. Moreover, their Asian physical traits are already very different and conspicuous among peers. For these reasons, they sometimes want to disguise themselves and blend in with their American peers by looking like or behaving like Americans- a form of camouflage. One of the ways they do that is using an English name in school.

English Name. Names are one of the best ways to identify individuals. In other words, the way individuals are called by others describes or determines who they are (Alttuersser, 1970). The students identify themselves as Korean and they have a strong sense of belonging to Korea. They prefer to speak Korean and practice their Korean culture in the U.S. However, all the students have adopted an English name and they go with their English name in school. They do not want to be treated as 'different' in school because if they are called by their Korean names, they feel very different from their American peers. In addition, they do not want to hear their American peers mispronounce their Korean name. They said that they often feel embarrassed when their American peers cannot pronounce their name correctly. For these reasons, they use their English names in school. Research has shown that immigrant youth claim that the concept of sameness and difference, normal and other, are important in youth understanding of their culture (Pollard 1985; Davies 1991; Corsaro, 2005). Belonging and togetherness profoundly influence children's identity shaping (Davies and Harre 1990; Rizvi 1993; Goodwin 2003; Bash and Zezlina-Phillips 2006). Children often feel very negative when they are labeled as 'different' (Troyana and Hatcher 1992; Connolly 1998; Vicars 2006).

“It really bothers me when they [American peers] mispronounce my [Korean] name. I dislike when they have trouble calling my name. So I chose an English name for myself. But I don’t like my English name, because it seems too ‘old style’ –the first interview with Hana, 7th grader female Girugi student.

“I have my English name because Americans cannot pronounce my name [Korean name]. So, I choose it. But I only use that name in school. Other Korean friends in school, they call me either my Korean name or they just call me *Unnie* or *Noona*.–The first interview with Minjeong, 9th grader *Chogi-Youhacksang*

The students chose their English names by themselves, except for Mirea and Jinhee who were born in the U.S. However, Jinhee and Mirea do not use their English name at home or with Koreans. As I already explained above, the students do not want to be too different from their American peers. Their Asian physical characteristics are already very distinct from their American peers. Therefore, the students do not want to be any more conspicuous by using their Korean names in school or around Americans. For these reasons, the students chose English names and use their English name in schools.

Blending into American Peers Group. In order to blend into peers groups, these students make various efforts to imitate their peer groups. While all of these students used English names in schools, there are different patterns to blend into their peer groups between female students and male students. Interestingly, female students indicated a different tendency of imitation of American peers from male students. While female students focus on trying to imitate the stylistic look similar to their American peers, male students are more interested in behaving like American peers. In other word, female students try to follow their peers’ outfits and male students try to follow their peers’ behaviors.

Looking like Americans: Female students. Apparently, teenage girls are concerned with how they look because they are in puberty. During puberty girls start considering their physical appearance and how they look to others. It is natural that these Korean adolescent girls are also concerned with how they look. However, their Asian physical traits are so conspicuous among other peers in school. Their Asian physical traits made them so different from their peer groups.

As I already mentioned, being different is a very crucial issue during the development of these students' cultural identity. For this reason, they try to look like their peers as much as they can by wearing make-up, wearing stylish clothes, trendy hair styles, etc.

While Youri explained how she felt Korean, she talked about American style and Korean style.

“I am Korean. I think that I am different from Korean Americans. They [Korean Americans] are different from me. Firstly, my outfits are different from them [Korean Americans]. But sometimes, I heard that I look like a Korean American. Then, I feel really weird. I mean that I do not dislike hearing that. But, I said no. I am a Korean. Last year, I used to imitate them [Americans] because I wanted to look like American peers. So, I imitated what Americans peers did with make ups. They [Americans] taught me how to make up, wear the clothes, and do hair styles like Americans. You know, for the first time everything is new to me but, three and four month later, I started following what they wear and how they did make-up because I was with them [Americans]. I wanted to look like the same with them. But, when I visited Korea last year, I realized I looked different from my friends in Korea. My parents told me that I am changed. But, at that time, I did not care about it. But, as times goes by, I realized although my outfit changed, I cannot be an American because I am Korean. Then, I felt how I was stupid. So, I do not care of how Americans consider me in this year because anyhow I am Korean”- The second interview with Youri, 11th grader female *Chogi-Youhacksang*.

As Youri explains, the female participants often point out how Korean-Americans have dark eye makeup on their eye lids because they want to look their eyes bigger like Americans. Hana also explained how she tried to follow American peers' style.

“I want to do make up like them [American peers], but you know my mom²¹ But, my mom said okay when I go to the party. You know, I do not go to party very often and I do not like to do that. I do not know why, maybe I feel uncomfortable if I put some make up on my face. But, I want to do some eye make-up. I want to do mascara like them [American peers]. It looks

²¹ In Korea, make up is not allowed in schools. That means, Korean parents do not consider as good if their teen ager daughters have make up.

beautiful to me. My eyes look bigger like them... I tried to wear what they [American peers] wear and purchased cloths from the same brand while I am in the U.S. You know, I already look too different from them. I do not want to more look different from them. Well... I mean, I am worry about whether I look weird or not.” –the second interview with Hana, 7th grade female Girugi student

Comparing Youri and Hana, Jinhee and Mirea seemed to pay less attention to their outfits. They, however, said that they wear blue jeans and T-shirts because they like it and many American peers wear them as well. By contrast, Minjoeng did not want to follow the American style because she thought that Korean style is more beautiful. Minjeong also articulated how her outfits made her feel Korean.

“Me? I am very Korean. I do not fit in America. I check Korean news everyday through the internet and chat with my friends in Korea...Plus, I do not like American style [cloths/fashion/hair/cosmetics]. Well, American style is not that weird, but I never want to follow American trends. I like Korean style. Others said that my style is pretty. I like everything in Korea. I do not think that American clothes or accessories are pretty. I do not do make up. In school, I don’t think that any Koreans [Korean girls] do make up. I mean, I am talking about that big eye make-up. And, I do not have any motivation to do make up or look pretty because there is no guy for me in here. You know, there are only few Koreans in my school and they are not my type, and American? No! I do not like them. Anyhow, I am a definite Korean. I feel more comfortable in Korea and I like Korea besides studying in Korea. -The second interview with Minjeong, 9th grader female
Chogi-Youhacksang

Physical appearance is important to teenagers, particularly female students. Like Youri and Hana mentioned, they wanted to look like an American (White) girl and they often copy the American peers’ style. However, as Youri pointed out, these students realized that their Asian physical traits cannot be changed through make ups or the latest trend setting styles. That is just temporary camouflage to blend into their peer groups as Youri demonstrated when she suddenly stopped copying her peers after a few months. Therefore, these students understood that changing their physical traits does not mean changing who they really are after they made some

efforts to adjust their lives in new cultures.

Behave like Americans: Male Students. While female students focus on their outfits, male students focus more on their behaviors, copying their American peers. Interestingly, these students said that their American peers' behavior was funny, crazy, stupid, or weird. They, however, copied that behavior because they wanted to make friends.

Sunjea told his story how he did make considerable efforts to blend in with his peers last year and why he stopped doing that this year.

Sunjea: I really do not understand American peers. Last year, I did really weird stuffs to adjust my life and make friends. I said hi to everybody and I did really funny things in front of peers. But, at the very first time, I was very embarrassing, but I decided to do that. Then, I have a lot of friends in that school. But, this year I need to focus on studying, so I did not do that stupid stuff. I think that now Haneal do that stuffs because he cannot amuse others verbally. So, we can do that by our body.

Researcher: So, do you think that's why Haneal does that?

Sunjea: Well, I do not know. But I tried to do that last year, although my personality was not like outgoing..." - The second interview with Sunjea, 11th grader male *Chogi-Youhacksang*.

Haneal also told his story how he copied with his peers to get attention from American peers in a party.

"I am very good at adopting a new situation. It takes only 10 minutes to adopt to a new situation for me. So, when I was invited to a birthday party, I danced very crazily and silly like them. You know, it was crazy. But I did it.

Researcher: What if you were in Korea, do you dance like that way in the party?

No, I did not. But here, everyone did so. Well, for the very first time, it was little bit weird for me but, I thought that I needed to do. Then, I did it and felt okay later. But, I think that I was crazy at that time" -The first interview from Haneal, 9th grader *Girugi*

male student

Dongkyu and Sunjea told that Haneal often did weird stuff and just copied what American peers did in Eden. They also understood the reason for Haneal's weird behavior in the school was to get attention in order to make friends during last year. Sunjea and Dongkyu have experienced being an exchange student for one year before they came to Springville. That means, Sunjea and Dongkyu have more experiences with American peers than Haneal. Therefore, Sunjea and Dongkyu foresee that Haneal may stop doing his weird behaviors at certain points in the near future what they did. Dongkyu also pointed out if Haneal kept doing this, it would not be good for Haneal's reputation anymore.

“I think that Haneal needs to behave appropriately to Americans. In my opinion, if he acts funny or foolish, Koreans would consider him just acting like that. However, Americans would consider him as just a fool if he acts like a fool. I think that Haneal behaves like little bit foolish to get attention and to make friends. I guess, that's a part of his personality. But, if he keeps behaving foolish like that, Americans certainly consider him as being stupid or insane.” -The second interview with Dongkyu, 11th grader male
Chogi-Youhacksang

Interestingly, when I met Haneal one year later, he said that he stopped doing the crazy behaviors because he did not need to do it anymore. He wanted focus more on studying rather than making friends just as Sunjea had predicted previously to me.

Male students, Sunjea, Dongkyu, and Haneal admitted that they behaved oddly by copying their peers or behaved exaggeratedly to get attention in order to make friends. This indicated how these students tried to blend in with their peer groups. However, like female students, Sunjea and Dongkyu knew that their efforts were a transitional phase in order to adjust their lives into their new environments.

In sum, these students use English names in schools to blend into American cultural boundaries. Some female students follow their peers' make up styles, hair styles, and fashion styles. They even tried to put some big and thick eye make-up to look their eyes bigger like American peers. Male students behaved in a manner that was copying their American peers in

order to make friends. However, all of these students stopped copying their peers at a certain point and they realized this was transitional phase, as animals do camouflage in a new environment to protect themselves and their conspicuous features from others.

Transformation Stage

Researchers on immigrant youths explain that individuals have often maintained their own culture or adapted to the dominant culture in the society. This process can be identified as acculturation (Phinney, 1996). Berry (1997) claims that acculturation is a multi-dimensional process composed of integration, assimilation, separation, and marginalization. Integration is a period when someone becomes bicultural through the process of maintaining some characteristics of their ethnic group while selectively adopting those of the host culture. The assimilation stage is when a person solely identifies with the dominant culture and severs their identification with their own culture. The separation stage is when someone identifies solely with their cultural group and rejects the host culture. Finally, marginalization is when someone rejects both their own culture and the host culture (Benet-Martinez et al, 2002; Farver & Lee-Shin, 2000).

As the participants in this study juggle within the two different cultural settings in their everyday lives, the two different cultures clearly influence the students' cultural identity negotiation. Interestingly, the students seem to maintain different acculturation stages. Most of the students seem to try to accept new cultures and integrate themselves into a new cultural environment expect Minjeong. The students make an effort to mingle with Americans in schools even though they have clearly different cultural boundaries among home/church or school/home in their everyday lives. This means that they try to behave appropriately in terms of where they are and who they are surrounded by. They vacillate between their Korean cultural mode and American cultural mode based on the different cultural boundaries. In other words, they need to negotiate their cultural identity all the time when they are faced with different cultural settings. For instance, they explain that they only speak in English in school or when they need to around other English speakers. Dongkyu, Sunjea, and Youri speak in English at home as well, because they live with an American host family. However, these students speak in Korean among Korean peers in school unless they are surrounded by American peers. Interestingly even though I speak

Korean I have never heard them speak in English while we met in the club meetings and I seldom witnessed them speaking in English in the church. In this section, I will present how they feel and negotiate their identity at the convergence between Korea and America.

Bicultural Identity. Educational psychologists (Martinez et al, 2002) point out that people in contemporary societies tend to adopt multiple cultural meaning systems and they behave differently in order to adjust to different cultural meaning systems. In other words, people with multicultural backgrounds conduct themselves in different manners based on different cultural settings. Bicultural is the term used to identify individuals who are able to know and understand two different cultures although the individuals basically know and understand different degrees of the cultures (LaFrambois et al., 1993; Lee, 2002).

Most students try to adapt to a new culture because they came to the U.S. in order to learn the American culture including, English. Certainly, they struggled with adapting to the new cultures and confronted many obstacles because of the huge differences in the two cultures. Minjeong and Dongkyu had developed a clear plan to return to Korea. Unlike Minjoeng, Dongkyu seemed to try to adapt and acculturate to the American culture while he stayed in the U.S. Dongkyu thought that he needed to learn and adjust to the American culture because he wants to graduate from high school in the U.S. Dongkyu said, “It is different from the last year [when he was an exchange student]. At that time, I did not care about making friends, and so on. But, now I need to graduate high school here. So, I tried to make an effort to learn their cultures and make friends, etc. I think also having American cultural experience is so cool.” Compared with Minjoeng, Dongkyu seemed to enjoy his life in the U.S. because he could play guitar in the youth group band and do many sports related activities, which he cannot do in high school in Korea.

Sunjea and Youri seem to make a genuine effort to adjust to their life in the American culture even though they have struggled with homesickness, friendship issue, and cultural differences. Both of them want to go to college in the U.S. Compared to Sunjea, Youri has somewhat positively adjusted to her new American culture. She mainly spent time with Minjeong or other Korean students while in Eden. She did not really seem to want to join clubs in Eden. In contrast, Sunjea joined sports clubs, the youth group band with Donkyu and Haneal,

and tried to spend a certain amount of time with his American peers.

Haneal and Hana live with their mother. Mrs. Park, their mother, teaches and disciplines Haneal and Hana based on Korean traditions, such as respecting elders, being obedient to parents and teachers, studying hard, etc. Therefore, they are often confronted by the two conflicting values of their mother's teaching vs. their American peers' values. Interestingly, Mrs. Park seemed to discipline Haneal more than Hana because Haneal is the elder son. Regardless of the conflict and confusion between the cultural differences between home and school, Haneal seems to be willing to adjust himself to the major culture. From my observation, his affirmative attitude about American cultures is attributed partly to his outgoing personality and upward academic identity.

As I explained in the previous section, Haneal was a very low achieving student in Korea. Since students in Korea are generally judged by their academic performance, Haneal must have experienced very low expectations from his teachers and consequently had experienced low self-confidence. However, he experienced huge changes in his school life after he moved to the U.S. Haneal became a high achieving student and had high expectations from his teachers and peers based on the expectations many Asian students experience formulated based on racial stereotyping. He seemed to enjoy the academic benefit in the U.S., and the benefits encouraged him to develop a very positive attitude in order to adjust himself to new cultures regardless of the many difficulties and obstacles. As a result, Haneal was the only student who has an American best friend in this study, and he was the only student not to be stressed out over the process of making friends in the U.S. Comparing with Haneal, Hana seemed to have a somewhat negative perspective about the American culture because she felt that there were huge cultural differences between the Korean and American cultures and friendships. Despite her perspectives, she did not limit herself solely to a Korean cultural boundary like Minjeong.

Mirea seemed to make an effort to adjust to a new culture. However, I found that she tried to create and maintain her own boundary. I observed that she spent almost all of her day in front of the computer. She chatted, down loaded some music, watched animations, internet surf, and so on with her computer. Conversely, Jinhee exhibited a smooth acculturation process into the new cultures although she lives with her mother. However, according to Mrs. Ko, Jinhee's

mother, Jinhee spent most of time by herself at home because Mrs. Ko works as a pharmacist. For this reason, Jinhee stayed at home and studied by herself. Jinhee explained, “You know, I do not have a car here and my mom works. So, I cannot really hang out with friends like when I was in Korea. So, I stayed at home and study by myself. I am also very busy to prepare to go to college.” Therefore, Jinhee had fewer chances to confront the challenges between Korean and American values compared to Haneal and Hana. Female students, Minjeong, Youri, Hana, and Mirea, generally seem to either positively adapt to their new cultures or reduce their opportunities to be exposed to the American cultures expect for Jinhee.

In sum, the students indicated that they negotiate their cultural identities while they travel across multiple cultural boundaries. They sometimes have smooth transitions between the two different cultural boundaries. They also have experienced confusion and challenges based on the fact that Korean and American values often contradict against each other. Living within two different cultures, the students are changed and influenced by different cultural practices.

Americanized Koreans. The students often described themselves as ‘being Americanized’ or ‘being changed’ compared to when they were in Korea. Also, they explained that they often heard from their families or friends in Korea when they visited Korea that it seemed as though they had become Americanized or changed. Interestingly, they would prefer to identify themselves as ‘Americanized Korean’ instead of ‘Korean American’. Certainly, the students’ identities are deeply influenced by their environments since they are adolescents. The cultural identities are constructed by how they are considered by others as well.

Many of the students pointed out that they are seen as ‘being Americanized’ based on their outfits. Compared to other Korean high school students, the students wear more casual clothing and have much more freedom to choose their clothes and their outfit. There are many restriction and school policies for school students in Korea. For instance, students are not allowed to have piercings in Korea. School students are not allowed to perm or dye their hair, and male students may not grow their hair long. Students are not supposed to have make-up in school. Students need to wear uniforms. Compared to Korean students, Minjeong can have pierced ears, Dongkyu can grow and perm his hair, and Youri can have some make-up on her face. Therefore, they looked different from their friends or families in Korea. Minjeong said that

her friends in Korea told her that she looks like a ‘Yankee’ when they saw her. Also, the students purchased their clothes in the U.S. Their clothes from the U.S. make these Koreans look like an American in front of their friends in Korea. Hana explained about her outfit and her clothes. “I am in the U.S. I am trying to wear what American peers wear as much as I can because I do not want to look so different from American peers. Anyhow, I look already very different from them [American peers].” Therefore, the students try to follow their American peers’ trend in order to reduce their physical differences.

All the students agree that they feel Americanized when they speak Korean. The students talked about how at times they cannot remember some Korean words to describe something in Korean. I often observed that Sunjea, Dongkyu, Youri, Haneal, Hana, and Mirea made fun of each other and laughed at mistakes that they made when they mispronounced Korean words in the KCM. They explained too that their friends noticed when they speak Korean like the Korean Americans because it sounds different because of the students’ distinct English accent.

Youri told of her experience when she visited Korea last summer after she spent a year as an exchange student and how she felt to be changed.

“I really missed Korea and looked forward to seeing my families and friends in Korea. However, I felt little bit disappointed because my parents and friends said that I was changed a lot. They looked at me like an American. I realized that my friends are changed. I could not really enjoy the conversation with my friends like I used to. I could not catch up what they talked about, etc. the theme, etc. Then, I am aware of being different from them [Korean]. Plus, my house was changed too at the moment. So I was so sad. I was so confused who I am and where I am supposed to be. While I visited Korea last year, I was struggled with adjusting me back to Korea. I felt sometimes that my friends are so young when I listen to their conversation. I think that I become mature and independent because I lived in the U.S. by myself.”-The second interview with Youri.

Moreover, the students agree with the fact that they have become more outgoing and independent. They consider their personality change as a part of being Americanized. Particularly, Sunjea, Dongkyu, Minjeong, and Youri, *Chogi-Youhacksangs* who do not live with

their family, described that they must be independent and outgoing in order to survive in the U.S. by themselves. They realized that this must be what it felt like to be Americanized, because they have survived.

Interestingly, Jinhee explained the moment she felt what it is like to be Americanized herself was when she did not really agree with her Korean elder's thoughts. She told me that

“Sometimes the church members [Korean church] visited my house. You know, that's church stuffs [Korean church members' gathering]. I heard some conversations among the church members [Koreans]. I sometimes do not agree with their opinions at all. Then, I feel that I am Americanized. Of course, I do not say anything against them at that moment.” –the second interview with Jinhee

As a result, the students assume that ‘being Americanized’ mean ‘denying Korean tradition’ or ‘against Korean value’. They also considered ‘being Americanized’ as interrupting practicing their Korean cultural habits.

Parentified Children. Parentification is defined as “the familial interactional pattern in which children and adolescents are assigned or assume roles and responsibilities normally the province of adults in a given culture, but which parents in a particular family have abdicated ” (Walsh et al., 2006, p. 321). In other words, children may take charge of household chores such as cooking, cleaning, and laundry, or take a more authoritative role as consoler, confidante, or advisor toward parents. They may also take care of their siblings (Sroufe & Ward, 1980).

Many researchers claim that immigrant families have often experienced different family relationships or roles between parents and children because they have had to cope with huge sociocultural and economic challenges in a new society. Research (Chilman, 1993; Kwak, 2003; Suarez-Orozco & Suarez-Orozco, 1995; Fuligni et al., 2002) shows that among Asian and Latin American families in the U.S., children's help for the family is considered a part of the traditional culture and a necessity for family solidarity. It has also been found in my pilot study (Park, 2007) that Korean immigrant adolescents perform household chores and work in their parents' businesses. They also help their parents adapt to the new culture and they often translate official documents for their parents' businesses. They also take care of their siblings or help with

their siblings' homework. Researchers have found that this particular situation for immigrant youths definitely influences their identity formation (Berry, 2001; Kim, 1996; Kwak, 2003).

The participants in the study also experienced taking on the parent role, no matter who they live within the U.S. *Chogi-Youhacksangs* live under the care of a host family, but these students always determine on their own how to manage their finances and organize their academic and living schedule. They also decide where they will go to college.

Sunjea: I live by myself in here. When I was in Korea, my parents took care of everything for me. They gave me allowance or if I need money, I can ask to parents. But here, I have to manage all money what I need to spend. It is difficult.

Dongkyu: Yeah, I do have that problem, too. For the first time, I did know how to use personal check. Then, I used personal checks, but I did not know my bank account was out of balances. I got several letters from the bank but, I did not know what it is. Then, later I have to pay \$800.00 for over draft charges. After that, I really pay attention to spend money. Then, I need to think about the value of money.

Sunjea: Yes. I never thought about medical fees, tuition, living costs, etc. in Korea, but I have to spend money very accordingly in here. Otherwise, I spend too much money.

Youri: I need to manage that money. I need to pay attention to spend money. I did not used to do that. But, no one can help me. So, I have to do everything by myself.

-The KCM, May 17th 2009

Regardless of the fact that these *Girugi* students stay with their mothers, these students cannot expect as much parental support and involvement as they used to have in Korea. Mothers face huge challenges adjusting to life in the U. S. due to cultural differences and language barriers. Mothers have more difficulty than their children because they spent most of their lives in Korea. The mothers lack cultural capital in the U.S.; therefore, they may not be able to fully support their children's lives, academically and culturally.

“When my son's friends visit our home, I just give some foods for them, then I was stuck in my room because of English, and so on... but, if my son visited their friends' house, I

was told that their parents talk about any issues with my son and his friends. But, we cannot do that... So, one day, my husband and I make fun of ourselves as 'disabled' in here (U.S.) and laugh. .."-The interview with Mrs. Ko, Jinhee's mother

As a result, *Girugi* students face more responsibility with their mothers or their siblings than *Chogi-Youhacksangs*. Particularly, *Girugi* male students feel more responsibility than female students because of the Korean tradition of male-oriented Confucian family structures. Also, *Girugi* mothers expect this type of role from their sons. Before I performed the second interview with Haneal, I went to a restaurant to pick him up. Haneal, Hana, Mirea and Mrs. Park, Haneal and Hana's mother were there. Mrs. Park was calling a waitress to ask for chopsticks for Hana. She said, "Hello, chopsticks." Haneal looked around and said to his mother, "Mom! You may ask when the waitress comes to our table." Mrs. Park looked at me and said, "Did you see? My son stops me when I try to do something in public and my son tries to teach me." She was smiling a little bit. Haneal told her again that she did not need to yell at the waitress. Then, Mrs. Park responded, "No, I did not yell to her, I just call her." -From the research dairy, June 12 2009

I found that Haneal, *Girugi* male student and an elder child in his family, felt more responsibility than his younger sister, Hana.

"I often feel that I am looked down because I am Asian. But, hopefully my mom and sister do not feel that way. I really hope not happen to them. I think that family tie become stronger than when we were in Korea. I think that we become closer each other. But, I feel really sorry to my mom. She goes to school because of us. You know, my mom does not need to go to school and she is too old to go to school. Now, I feel that I grow up very much after I came to the U.S. I feel also more responsibilities for my family. I know that my mom unconsciously depend on me. Now, I also concern on my sister. When I was in Korea, I never did it. But, now I really concern her like as making friends, her school life, etc. I do vacuum in the house because my dad used to do vacuum. It is heavy. I do household chores for man because I am the only man in my house now." – The second interview with Haneal, 9th grader *Girugi* male student

As a result, *Chogi-Youhacksangs* and *Girugi* students feel that they become more mature because they have the opportunity to experience some of their parents' roles in the U.S. Since *Chogi-Youhacksangs* live in the U.S. without their parents, they have to make every decision in their living conditions as well as manage their lives. Or, they sometimes need to introduce the American cultures to their parents in Korea because parents in Korea do not understand these students' lives in the U.S. These special experiences make them grow up. Sometimes they need to play the role of mediator between their host family and their parents. Moreover, *Girugi* students, particularly Haneal, feel a great deal of responsibility to take care of their mothers and siblings because they need to act as the role a father would play in his family. I found that he feels a great deal of responsibility for his family in the U.S. He also felt that he needs to be a bridge to connect between his Korean mother and the American society. I discovered also that Hana and Jinhee were not as anxious about this issue compared to their elder brothers.

Summary

The students and their parents agree with the idea that an American education brings more benefits than a Korean education. There were, however, somewhat different perspectives of the benefits of the education in the U.S. among the parents and the students in this study. Their parents asserted that American education would be an advantageous tool to gain cultural capital. The students also admitted that their educational experiences in the U.S. will provide a better position for them compared to their friends in Korea, whether they go back to Korea or not.

I found that the students lived within very different cultural boundaries among home, school, and community. Their cultural boundaries are not only constructed by physical locations but also by relationships. While the students live within two different cultural boundaries, they try to manage their life accordingly to integrate the different cultural boundaries. Interestingly, the students seemed to keep practicing Korean cultural habits in the U.S., and the Korean cultural habits strongly influence their cultural identity negotiation. Moreover, huge cultural differences between their home/school and school/community sometimes hindered the students' smooth transition between two different cultures.

I also found that these students have a somewhat limited participation by their choice or by necessity in new environments. According to Wenger(1998), it is a peripheral trajectory which has limited participation, but can influence their identity. This limited participation in new a cultural environment influences their cultural identity negotiation. On the other hand, these students seemed to have a more likely high degree of practice in Korean cultural communities. This different trajectory for practice of participation in the communities between Koreans and Americans strongly influences their cultural identity negotiation. Moreover, although these students did not fully indicate the four linear stages of culture shock—the honeymoon stage, crisis, recovery, and adjustment—as described by Oberg (1960), they have experienced many struggles with cultural shock within their new cultures. Their culture shock certainly influenced their practices within the new cultures and their cultural identity negotiation.

To conclude, while the students traveled across different cultural boundaries, they were continuously concerned about who they are, how they behave, and how they are considered by others.

CHAPTER FIVE

SUMMARY OF FINDINGS, POLICY IMPLICATIONS, AND RECOMMENDATIONS FOR FUTURE RESEARCH

Introduction

In this final chapter I will present a summary of major findings, present policy implications, and suggest some recommendations for future research.

Purpose of Study

This study explores Korean secondary school students' and their parents' perception of American education as an advantageous tool in order to gain cultural capital. Specifically, this study investigates how these students negotiate their cultural identity among their different living environments in the U.S.

Bourdieu (1977) argues that parental involvement and home environment is critical in the formation of children's cultural capital. The parents and students in this study agree with the idea that American education experiences are a beneficial tool used in order to gain cultural and symbolic capital. The students travel a long distance from Korea to the U.S. for their education. Once they are in the U.S., the students need to make a cultural journey from their Korean way of life and adjust to the American cultures in a manner that will ultimately impact their everyday life. Their journey across different cultural boundaries influences the way they negotiate their cultural identity. Therefore, the students' cultural identities are formed and transformed as they transition between social contexts (Beach, 1999; 2003; Wenger, 1998). Eight students, their mothers, guardian, and parents who live in Korea participated in this study. The students also attended the Korean Club Meeting (KCM). Data was gathered from semi-structured interviews, from discussions and observations in the KCM, and research diaries.

Summary of Findings

In this study, I posed two major research questions and three sub research questions.

1. What are Korean parents, *Girugi* students and *Chogi-Youhacksangs*' perception of the relationship between the study abroad experience and their cultural capital? To what extent do parents and children share common or different understandings of the cultural capital acquired in studying in the U.S.?

As most Koreans perceive an American education as more valuable than a Korean education (Ly & Woodward, 2005), the participants agree with the idea that an American education brings more benefits than a Korean education although there were somewhat different understandings of the benefits regarding education in the U.S. among the parents and the students in this study. The parents asserted that an American education would be an advantageous tool used to gain cultural capital. The students also admitted that their educational experiences in the U.S. provided a better position for them compared to their friends in Korea. This was agreed upon whether they went back to Korea or not.

However, there are somewhat different degrees of how the American educational experiences could be perceived as benefits between the parents and students. The parents' perception regarding an American education is more focused on how it could be a critical tool to gain cultural capital and symbolic power for their children. The parents additionally wanted to provide an academic ladder for their children through the American education. They expected that their children might be higher achieving students in the U.S. than in Korea. Lastly, the parents want to reduce their children's heavy study burden in Korea by utilizing the U.S. education.

On the other hand, the students expressed that an American education was their educational shelter from the examination hell in Korea. I found that the students enjoyed their improved academic identity as high achieving students in the U.S. compared to Korea. They also admitted that their educational and cultural experiences will be a great asset for cultural and symbolic power. As a result, the students agreed with their parents in that an American education provides a better position to gain cultural capital.

- a. What was their perception about the U.S. education before they move into the U.S.?

The participants had clear expectations of an American education, but in fact they actually had a limited working knowledge about the American K-12 education during the time they performed their research in Korea. They were informed about the American education system in the advertisements from private placement centers and internet sites. Moreover, they had heard many successful stories of living and studying in the U.S. from the mass media, Korean private placement centers, and internet blogs rather than hearing from what other *Chogi-Youhacksangs* and *Girugi* students really experience in the U.S. For this reason, the parents and the students had somewhat romanticized and fantasized of the benefits of an American education and studying abroad in the U.S. Most of these families fell victim to the ‘marketing’ of an American education for Korean students and their families rather than the factual and real-world experiences of *Chogi-Youhacksangs* and *Girugi* students who have already made the journey and have factual based stories to share. Thankfully, these families are in an economic position so that the adverse effects of traveling to the US to study abroad is not felt as much as if they were non-affluent immigrants.

In other words, they dreamed about the beneficial aspects of studying abroad in the U.S. without considering the cultural and psychological cost for studying abroad in different cultures.

- b. Are there any changes in the perception of U.S. education after they experience the new environments? If the perception has changed, how it has been changed?

The participant’s principle perception about American education has not been changed after they had experienced an education in U.S. schooling. The participants are sure that they have gained benefits from their American education because of the increased English proficiency and educational experiences. The students also think that they are blessed that they were able to study in the U.S. because they have experienced less stress and more various curricula in schools compared to the Korean curricula. In general, the participants are very satisfied with their academic performance in U.S. schools as well. However, the *Girugi* mothers and guardians in the U.S. often mentioned that they were concerned that American curriculum was so easy

compared to the Korean curriculum. Interestingly, they continually hired private tutors in Math, and English, even though they pointed out that American curricula are much easier than Korean curricula. They stated that they had a considerable concern regarding the quality of education in the U.S. compared to the type of education their children would receive in Korea. They hired tutors understandably for English because their children are not good at English comparing with American peers. They hired tutors for Math for their children as well. It means that these mothers have higher expectation for their children's academic performance because in general Korean students' have reputation for good performance, particularly in Math.

The students also pointed out one of the reasons that they were able to achieve higher academic performances was because American curriculums were easier than the Korean curriculum. Therefore, Minjoeng and Dongkyu, who had a plan to go back to Korea, were worried about not being able to catch up to other peers in Korea for the national entrance exam for the university. However, I heard that thanks to their English proficiency, they have gained a benefit for the national entrance exam for university. These students liked student oriented classroom environments and various extra curriculum, as well. While *Girugi* students enjoyed easier and various curriculum in U.S. schools, they did not seem to be free from the study burden based on the high expectation placed on them. The high expectation for these students was attributed to the reputation, known as the model minority stereotype, and the pressure from their parent.

As a result, their principle perception of gaining cultural capital from studying abroad in the U.S. has not been changed. However, they have faced the reality of studying in American schools rather than dreaming about it. Based on that experience, the students indicated very ambivalent attitudes regarding an American education and Korean education. They recalled Korean education as literally 'examination hell', and they enjoyed studying in U.S. schools. However, they also highlighted their efforts to study abroad in the U.S. although they knew their benefits from American schools was less studying burden, more free time to enjoying their extra activities, etc.

2. How do these *Girugi* and *Chogi-Youhacksangs* deal with identity crafting between their family, American schools, and peers, and their potential future return to Korea?

Wenger (1998) says that identity is evolving out of a process of negotiated experiences that involve participation and reification. The students seemed to keep practicing Korean cultural habits in the U.S. and the Korean cultural habits strongly influence their cultural identity negotiation. The students indicated that they negotiate their cultural identities while they travel across the different cultural boundaries. Sometimes, they experience smooth transitions between the two different cultural boundaries. They also have experienced confusion and challenges based on the fact that Korean and American values often contradict each other. Living within two different cultures, the students are changed and influenced by different cultural practices. The students think that they are different from Korean-Americans because they speak Korean, enjoy Korean cultural practices, and appreciate the Korean culture to a greater degree. The students distinguish themselves from Korean Americans and would prefer to identify themselves as 'Americanized Koreans'. The students assume that 'being Americanized' means 'denying Korean tradition' or 'against Korean value'. They also considered 'being Americanized' as interrupting practicing their Korean cultural habits.

The students continuously negotiate their cultural identity based on the different cultural boundaries in their everyday lives. While they are at school, the students tried to merge with the dominant cultures in school. However, the Korean students often experienced confusion or distance from the dominant cultures because the Korean students in the study embodied their Korean cultures and values. Interestingly, the students who live with their mothers, Haneal, Hana and Jinhee, often indicated that their mother's disciplined the students based on Korean values. The Korean disciplinary system often made the students confused about who they are and how they are to behave in the different cultural boundaries the U.S. The students indicated that they are changed and feel that they have become more Americanized since they have lived in the U.S. This was supported by their accounts of hearing that they are 'different' from their friends in Korea. Certainly, these teenagers are influenced by their new cultural environments. They felt that in order to survive, they had to be 'changed' and accordingly adjusted themselves to a new social structure even though they lived temporarily in a new environment. Minjeong and Dongkyu have returned to Korea. The rest of the students are currently enrolled in colleges or high schools in the U.S. However, most of them want to go back to Korea ultimately after they graduate from college because they think that Korea is their home. Interestingly, some students

are afraid of going back to Korea because they feel that they are too ‘changed’ and ‘Americanized’ to fit back in the Korean society.

The students experienced not only cultural transition, but also identity transition because of racial stereotypes. The model minority stereotype not only pressures the students to be a math geek or good Korean, but also classifies the students as shy or inactive. Therefore, the students have to transition between math genius and their language/cultural deficient like a pendulum in schools. The students enjoy having a good image in school at some point with this racial stereotype. On the other hand, they have been met with the strong pressure to meet their American peer’s high expectation. Moreover, the model minority stereotype put the students as social nerds or perpetual foreigners

The *Chogi-Youhacksangs* and *Girugi* students feel that they have become very mature because they have had the opportunity to experience some of their parents’ roles in the U.S. Since *Chogi-Youhacksangs* live in the U.S. without their parents, they have to make every decision regarding their living conditions as well as manage their personal lives. Sometimes they need to introduce American culture to their parents in Korea because parents in Korea do not understand the way their children live in the U.S. These special experiences often make them grow up quickly. They also need to play the role of mediator between their host family and their parents who stayed in Korea. Moreover, *Girugi* students, like Haneal feel a great deal of responsibility to take care of his mother and younger sister because he needs to act as his father in his family. I found that he feels a great deal of responsibility for his family in the U.S. He also felt that he needs to be a bridge to connect from his Korean mother to the American society. Interestingly, they have a very strong attachment to Korean culture and Korean identity whether they have a plan to go back or not. Most participants have planned to go back to Korea eventually. However, no matter if they go back to Korea or not, they are strongly attached to the Korean cultures because they identified as Korean wherever they live.

These students also indicated low cultural awareness about themselves. However, as I mentioned in the previous chapter, this can be due to the lack of multicultural experiences they had there. As a result, these students have more difficult time to acculturate into the U.S.

compared to the other students. Jinhee who spent more time than any of the other students demonstrated a different degree of acculturating herself in the U.S.

- a. How does the difference in family structures of *Girugi* and *Chogi-Youhacksangs* influence their children's identity crafting?

Compared to the students who live with their American host family- Sunjea, Dongkyu, and Youri who live with their families or Korean host family- Haneal, Hana, Jinhee, Mirea, and Minjeong- are more influenced by their Korean culture. However, the findings indicated that these students have a strong emotional attachment with their families although they are separated across the Pacific Ocean. Particularly, they demonstrated a very strong emotional attachment with their parents because these students deeply appreciate their parents' support. For this reason, these students try to behave very well by being a good student, obedient children, etc. in the U.S. Ironically; these students' idea of good behavior is very much like Korean traditional values originated from Confucianism. In other words, these students live in the U.S. with very traditional Korean values because of strong attachment with their parents. Moreover, *Girugi* students often indicated that they had to be a bridge in order to introduce American cultures to their mothers. Particularly, the male *Girugi* student, Haneal, indicated more strong responsibilities for his family compared to other female *Girugi* students or *Chogi-Youhacksangs*. As a result, these students are strongly influenced by their family while they negotiate their cultural identity. Haneal, a *Girugi* male student, assumes more responsibility in order to take care of his mother and his sister as a son and older brother.

- b. How do their Korean memberships and practices in the community influence negotiating their cultural identity?

Since the students identified themselves as Koreans and they differentiated themselves from Korean-Americans, they indicated a strong membership of being Korean even though some of the students are not involved with the Korean community in Springville. The Korean church in Springville provides a place for them to practice Korean culture and to maintain their Korean identity. The Korean church also provides a clear criteria for them to measure who is Korean or not, based on some Korean Americans in the church. The students distinguished themselves from

Korean Americans who do not speak Korean fluently and do not appreciate Korean cultures in the Church.

The eight students in this study identify themselves as Koreans because they practice the Korean culture such as speaking Korean, eating Korean foods, and following the Korean traditional values. The students speak Korean to each other at school and the church, and when they speak Korean, they refer to each other in a Korean way and using Korean slang. Moreover, they indicated a strong attachment with Korea because they were able to speak with their friends or parents, and they followed the Korean news from the internet. The internet usages connected the students closely to Korea even though they are in the U.S. Interestingly, Minjeong does not belong to the Korean community in Springville because she does not attend the church. Instead of participating in a physical Korean community in the U.S., she participated in a Korean community from the internet. She chatted with her friends in Korea and read the Korean news every day. Also, she watched Korean TV programs from the internet regularly. In other words, Minjeong lives in mostly Korean cultural boundaries including physical and cyber space, although she is in the U.S. Not only did Minjoeng participate in Korean cultural boundaries on the internet space, but also other students joined the internet space. All of the participants read Korean news and watched Korean TV programs although each student demonstrated different frequency of watching them. Moreover, I often observed that these students enjoyed having conversation about Korean entertainers and TV programs.

As a result, all of the participants in this study enjoyed participating in the Korean community and they willingly hold Korean membership in the U.S. Their strong Korean membership leads them to be more attached Korean cultures and maintain Korean identity.

- c. How does their participation in American schools and cultural practices affect their identity crafting?

These students were in consensus that they have gained benefits from U.S. education because the American curriculum is easier and more varied than the Korean curricula. They believed that they were able to achieve their higher academic performance in the U.S. schools because of an easier curriculum in the U.S. They also were sure that their academic improvement

in the U.S. is a huge benefit for them in the U.S. and in Korea, as well. They were satisfied with their school experiences in the U.S. academically because they have experienced much more freedom in the American schools than in the Korean schools. The students also were happy about reducing their study burden in the U.S. They enjoyed being high achieving students in school and having earned a certain degree of envy from their friends in Korea. At the same time, they have experienced that an American education is not the same as what they expected and fantasized about in Korea. In reality, they confronted huge cultural differences and the differences brought about enormous hardships they had to endure in order to adapt and survive in their new environments.

Sunjea, Dongkyu, and Youri live with their American host families. Minjeong used to live with an American host family. However, these students often changed their host families and did not have close relationship with their host families. Therefore, host families were not able to provide enough opportunities to participate in American cultures for these students. Schools were the actual place to learn and practice new cultures in the U.S. for all of the participants in this study. All the participants enrolled in prestigious schools in Springville. Six of the participants, Sunjea, Dongkyu, Minjeong, Youri, Haneal, and Hana, attended Eden School, a prestigious private school in Springville and Jinhee and Mirea attend one of top public junior high schools, Spring Bell Junior High School and a public high school, Kings High School in Springville.

The students indicated that their American peers are different from themselves or Koreans in general. The students interpreted this cultural difference between Korea and America as the difference between Koreans and Americans. The differences made them feel as though there was an uncommunicable distance which led to a desire to not be close to Americans. Due to their distance from their American peers, the students had experienced a difficult time making friends. The students had a difficult time making friends because of the cultural differences and the language barriers. The students do not want to be too different from their American peers. Their Asian physical characteristics are already very distinct from their American peers. Therefore, the students do not want to be any more conspicuous by using their Korean names in school or around Americans. For these reasons, the students chose English names and use their English name in schools.

Also, the students experienced not only cultural transition, but also identity transition because of racial stereotypes in their schools. The model minority stereotype not only pressures the students to be a math geek or good Korean, but also classifies the students as shy or inactive. Therefore, the students have to transition between math genius and their language/cultural deficient like a pendulum in schools. The students enjoy having a good image in school at some point with this racial stereotype. On the other hand, they have been met with the strong pressure to meet their American peer's high expectation academically and they have struggled with dishonorable nick names, such as social nerds or shy Asians because of the model minority stereotype. As a result, their schools were the most difficult site for these students to negotiate their cultural identity.

In sum, the students and parents in this study agreed with the idea that gaining an American education places them in a better position within various aspects for their futures. The students made extreme efforts to learn as much as possible and integrate into the new environment culture because they came to the U.S. for the educational purpose. However, as they have negotiated the unfamiliar terrain, they had to confront huge cultural challenges in their new cultural environments. They have often experienced conflicting cultural values between the new cultures and inherited Korean tradition. Between two very different cultural boundaries, the students were often confused as to how to switch their cultural codes. Consequently, they felt as though they swing like a pendulum in their everyday lives while negotiating their cultural identity.

The Pattern of Cultural Identity Negotiation

From this study, I found that the participants showed somewhat different patterns of their cultural identity negotiation while they make their cultural journey in their everyday lives; Reassertion of Korean identity, experimentation, and accommodation.

Reassertion of Korean Identity

Unlike permanent immigrant youths, the students in my study do not need to consider their inherited Korean cultures as subordinated cultures to the dominant American cultures. Strikingly, most participants in this study tend to cling to the Korean culture and identity

although they have been in the U.S. for a while and they come to the U.S. with the particular purpose of learning English and gaining cultural experiences. They still practice Korean culture, such as speaking Korean, eating Korean foods, etc. in several places in the U.S. They also indicated that they tried to set aside some places where they practice Korean cultures in the U.S. For instance, Jinhee, Haneal, Hana, Mirea, and Minjeong practice Korean cultures at their home with their families or host families. Youri, Sunjea, and Dongkyu enjoyed attending the church to interact with Korean friends and eat Korean foods in the church. Certainly, Haneal, Hana, and Mirea liked to attend the church because they can get along with their Korean friends. Minjeong did not attend the church; however, she talked with her mother every day and chatted with her Korean friends from the internet every day. As a result, these students saved at least one place to practice Korean cultures in the U.S. Moreover, these students want to go back to Korea ultimately because they feel Korea is their home, their only home. Minjeong has returned to Korea before she graduated Eden High School. Dongkyu also went back to Korea after graduating Eden High School. Sunjea, Youri, Hana, and Haneal think that they will go back to Korea sometimes in future

Among these participants, Minjeong demonstrated the highest degree of reassertion of Korean cultural identity. This can be explained by two facts. One is that she had very bad experiences with Americans host families. The other is that she had a clear plan to go back to Korea. In other words, the bad impression about Americans and American cultures made her stick to the Korean cultural boundaries and limited her opportunities for practicing American cultures in the U.S. In addition, she did not feel that she needed to acculturate herself in the U.S. because she went back to Korea after she spent two years in the U.S. As a result, these students demonstrated strong attachment with Korean cultural identity and Korean cultures. Among participants, Minjeong indicated the highest degree and Jinhee indicated the lowest degree of Korean cultural identity attachment.

Perhaps one reason for this strong cultural identity attachment could be built on an intrinsic feeling toward the Korean culture based more on the fact that they had not developed a strong attachment to the U.S. These students are strangers in the U.S. They may feel that they do not belong to the U.S. culturally and socially, except for Jinhee and Mirea who have gained citizenship. As adolescents, they could possibly be feeling more vulnerable while living in a

different culture than the culture they are more familiar with in Korea. All these circumstances make them feel insecure in new environments. Therefore, they want to practice Korean cultures in order to defend themselves, they have chosen to maintain their Korean culture in their new environment based on the fact that they have had such a difficult time integrating in to the U.S. culture. Their reassertion of Korean identity may be the way of self-defense for these students in new environments.

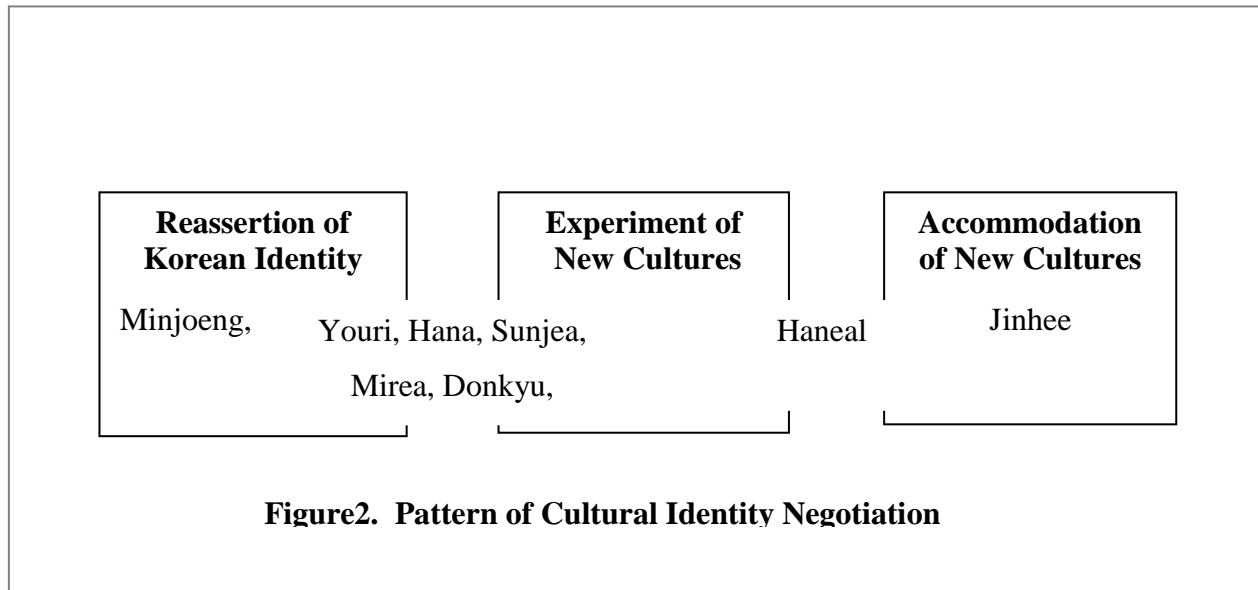
Experimentation

After the students settled down in the U.S., they realized that they are different from their peers in school. The students tried to adjust themselves to a new environment because ‘being different’ is very critical during the identity development stage for adolescents (Pollard 1985; Davies 1991; Corsaro, 2005). Therefore, these students made efforts to blend in with their peers in schools such as using an English name in school, copying their peers’ outfits, and imitating their friends’ behaviors. Interestingly, I found there is gender difference regarding how they focus on copying their peers. Certainly, female students are more interested in their outfits. Male students followed their peers’ behaviors. Youri and Hana mentioned that they tried to wear make-up and wear what their American peers wore. Sunjea, Dongkyu, and Haneal pointed out that they often copied their peers’ behavior in order to make friends in schools. However, interestingly their efforts did not last long because they realized they cannot be the same as their peers. In other words, these students attempted a form of transitional experimentation in order to blend into a new environment.

Accommodation

These students came to the U.S. for the educational purpose but wound up paying huge financial, emotional, and cultural costs as well. These students were very well aware of the costs that they paid culturally and psychologically and their parents paid financially and psychologically for their study abroad in the U.S. as well. Therefore, they tried to gain as many benefits from this experience in the U.S. For this reason, these students strongly focused on their academic performances. On the other hand, in general these students barely demonstrated active or positive attitudes in order to accommodate to the American cultures during their sojourn in the U.S.

Jinhee has displayed the most positive attempt to accommodate to the American cultures among the participants. Since she was born and spent a half of her life in the U.S., she was able to more easily accommodate to the American cultures and she was more influenced by American culture than other students in this study. In addition, Haneal interestingly indicated that he made strong efforts to comprehend and accept American cultures although he still felt some distance from his American peers and their cultures. See figure 2.



As a result, Minjeong demonstrated the strongest desire to reassert her Korean identity among other participants. However, all the participants identified themselves as Koreans and they wanted to be distinguished from Korean Americans. Therefore, these students indicated a strong desire of reassertion with their Korean cultural identity. Moreover, Youri, Hana, Sunjea, Dongkyu, and Haneal demonstrated that they made efforts to blend in with their peer groups although their efforts were often a transitional experiment. Jinhee is the most accommodated participant among these students. However, Haneal also indicated the willingness to accept and blend into the U.S.

Influential Aspects to Cultural Identity Negotiation

Facilitating Aspects

From the research findings, I found several aspects facilitated the students' attempts at cultural identity negotiation in different cultural boundaries: the diverse curriculum in the U.S., more freedom, the intrinsic motivation, and host families.

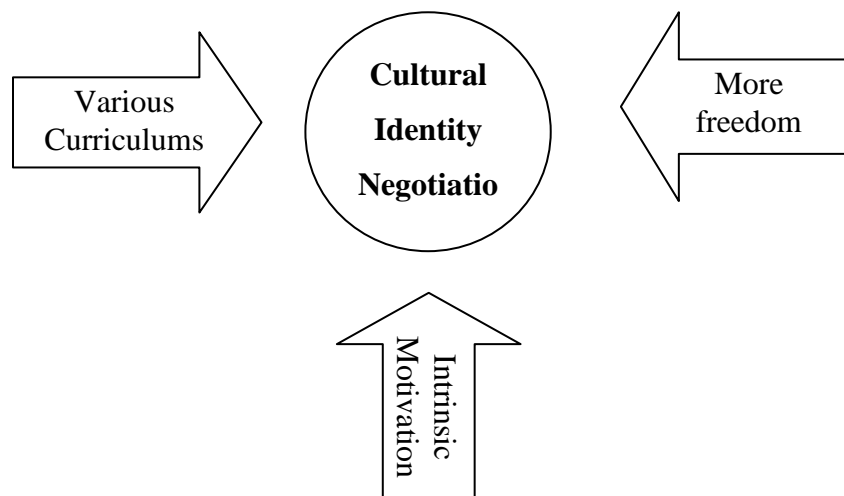


Figure3. Facilitating Factors for Cultural Identity Negotiation

Various curricula in American schools. Thanks to having more diverse curricula opportunities in American schools, these students have more time to be exposed to new cultural environments and experiment in any manner they so wish. Various curricula in American schools were very positive aspects that facilitated accepting new environment culture for these students. For instance, all the students enjoyed much more diverse curriculum in American schools compared to the standardized curriculum in Korea. In addition, Sunjea, Donkyu, and Haneal joined sports clubs. Mirea joined the school radio broad casting club and she informed school news in everyday morning on school radio broad station. She seemed to enjoy it very much and was very proud of herself. Jinhee liked the math competition club activities. Minjeong, Youri, and Hana also liked sports clubs. Therefore, various curriculums in American schools help smooth the negotiation process of their cultural identity in new environments.

More Freedom. Thanks to the less stressful study burden in U.S. schools, these students have more free time to do what they want to do. This facilitated the students' cultural identity negotiations. All the participants were happy to escape from the competitiveness of examination hell in Korea. They very much enjoyed the less stressful study burden school atmosphere in their new environment. They were very content with their free time to do their hobbies. Although these students still focus on studying in the U.S., these students participated in various club activities or enjoy playing some sports. Sunjea and Haneal joined a soccer team. Dongkyu joined a club for canoeing. Sunjea, Dongkyu, and Haneal were the members of the youth group band in the church. I also often heard that Sunjea and Dongkyu played guitar and sang a song in some school events. Haneal and Hana were involved with a swimming team. Mirea was a reporter for her school and she informed school news in everyday morning. She said she felt stressed out doing this activity because of her English. However, she seemed to enjoy working as a reporter. Jinhee is a member of math club in her school. Minjeong and Youri sometimes play tennis with their school peers. More freedom gave them opportunities to be exposed with their peers and facilitated their cultural identity in the U.S.

Intrinsic Motivation. The *Girugi* student and *Chogi-Youhacksangs* are adolescents. They are curious of new environments. For instance, Youri told that she watched many Hollywood movies in Korea and she dreamed about lives in the U.S. Dongkyu and Sunjea also told that they were excited to live in the U.S. for the first time because they had a dream about American life and new environment. Their curiosity and fantasy about new cultures encourage them to adapt to their new environment. According to Oberg's (1960) culture shock theory, there are four stages individuals go through when they face unfamiliar or new environments. The first stage is the honeymoon stage in which individuals enjoy new cultures for the first time. As the honeymoon stage implies, these students are attracted by new cultures intrinsically. Moreover, as times goes by, they felt intrinsically that they need to adjust to the new cultures to survive in new environments. Therefore, their survival instinct and excitement in new environments motivate themselves to adjust into new cultures.

Impeding Aspects

While various curriculums offer more freedom, and their intrinsic motivations encourage the students in my study to accept American cultures and have smooth in transitions from different cultural boundaries, there are some aspects that hinder these students' adaptation of American cultures. The findings revealed that English proficiency, a lack of cultural awareness, and family attachment are factors that impede their cultural identity negotiation among different cultural boundaries. See figure 4.

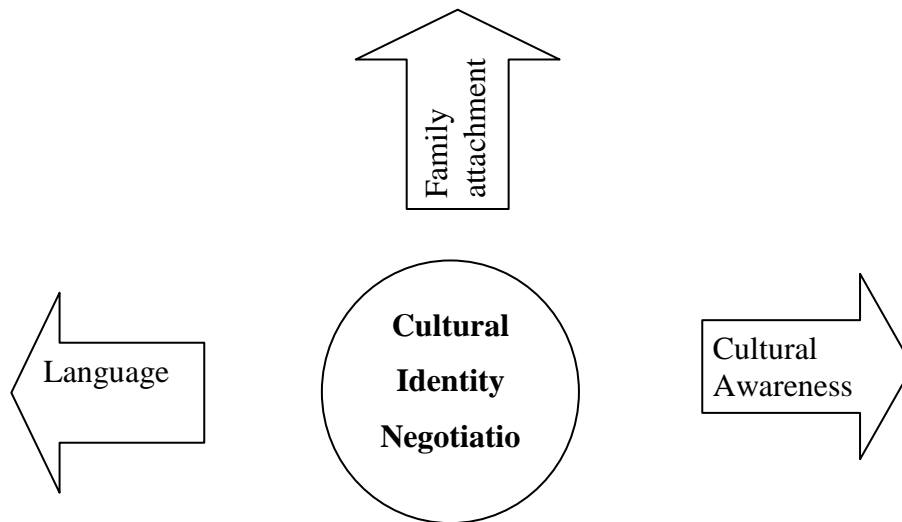


Figure4. Impeding Factors for Cultural Identity Negotiation

Language. The English language was the most difficult barrier to overcome for these students during their time studying and living in the U.S. Studying English is a primary reason that most students have come to study abroad in the U.S. This is based on the fact that most international students knew the benefits that English may provide for their future. Ironically, learning English is a major concern when it comes to making friends while blending into new environments. Their English proficiency was good enough to be good students, but not enough to be popular students in school, except for Jinhee. Moreover, these students enjoy speaking Korean and they are proud of speaking Korean. Speaking Korean is one clear criteria they have used in order to distinguish themselves from Korean Americans. As a result, their limited English proficiency and speaking Korean habits made them stay within certain Korean cultural boundaries in the U.S.

Lack of Cultural Awareness. These students often feel the cultural differences between Americans and the Korean culture and view it as a huge obstacle to face while often feeling that it is insurmountable. The cultural difference is not an easy position to overcome to new comers in the U.S. However, there is a particular reason that these students feel that it is more difficult to get over the cultural differences due to the fact that these students indicated relatively very low cultural awareness. Since these students are from a socioeconomic and culturally middle class in Korea, they have not experienced any cross-cultural or multicultural environments. Korea is a relatively ethnically and culturally homogenous country²². For this reason, these students did not have any chances to experience what cultural differences are and think about how their own cultures are different from other cultures. Moreover, since they are adolescent, they are not ready to appreciate different cultures. In Korea, the adolescents are supposed to focus on studying while their parents try to provide huge supports in whatever manner it is helpful for their children's studying. This atmosphere of study orientation leads the adolescents to be self-oriented and give lack of cultural awareness. As a result, their lack of cultural awareness impedes of their smooth cultural negotiation among different cultural boundaries.

Family Attachment. These students family attachment is one of most interesting aspects for these students' cultural identity crafting in the U.S. The findings indicated the *Chogi-Youhacksangs* and *Girugi* students had very strong ties to their parents. Interestingly, their family attachment solidified their Korean cultural identity and even highlighted very Korean traditional values for these students. These students do not want to disappoint their parents and they want to be good children for their parents. These students consider that being a good Korean is the way that they can pay back their parents support. Consequently, their strong family ties left them in Korean cultural boundaries while living in the U.S.

Other Aspects

I found other facilitating and impeding aspects for the cultural identity negotiation such as their age, their length of times in the U.S. and gender while I conducted this study. Jinhee,

²²*Jongang Daily News Paper* (2011) reported that there are currently 130 thousands foreign residents in Korea. This number reaches out 2.7% of total Korean population. It is foreseen that the number of foreign population in Korea will be increased. However, most of them are foreign labors or wives of interracial marriage in rural area. Therefore, these students were not able to have chances to be exposed to multicultural groups of people although there are some significant numbers of foreign people in Korea.

Sunjea, and Minjeong are the oldest students in this study. They are eighteen year old. Donkyu and Youri are seventeen years old. Haneal is sixteen year old. Hana and Mirea are the youngest participants fourteen years old. Interestingly, Jinhee, Minjeong, and Sunjea demonstrated very different attitudes for accommodating to new cultures in the U.S. although they are the same age. Jinhee has the most advanced degree of accommodating to American cultures; Sunjea is in somewhere between reassertion of Korean cultural identity and experimentation of new cultures; and Minjeong has the highest degree of reassertion of Korean cultural identity (please see figure 3).

Jinhee is the oldest student and has spent the longest time in the U.S. among the other students. She spent nine years in the U.S., including her infancy, one year of visiting, and five years in Springville. Therefore, she had more time to accommodate to the new cultures compared to the other students. Mirea spent three years in Springville. That means that she spent more time than the other students except Jinhee. However, she did not indicate any positive attitudes or strong efforts to accommodate to new cultures compared to the other students. Rather it was Mirea, Youri and Hana who demonstrated their efforts to accommodate to their new cultures. Minjoeng, Sunjea, Dongkyu, and Youri spent two years in the U.S. including one year of exchange students' experience. Haneal and Hana spent one and half years in the U.S. Comparing Sunjea, Dongkyu and Haneal, Haneal indicated somewhat of a more positive attitude for accommodating to the new cultures, although three of them made more of an effort to blend into their new cultures. Moreover, female and male students demonstrated mostly the same patterns of cultural identity negotiation and similar degrees of accommodating to new cultures. Therefore, gender does not seem to be a consideration for what influenced their cultural identity negotiation in this study. To conclude, their age and gender do not significantly influence the cultural identities negotiation in this study. The length of time indicates a certain influence based on their experience of the identity negotiation of Jinhee who spent the longest time in the U.S. among participants in this study. However, the length of time does not strongly impact other students' cultural identity negotiation. Therefore, this topic is ripe for future research.

Limitations of Study

This ethnographic study was conducted through interacting with a certain cultural group of people within their boundaries. Due to the limitation of the participants' boundaries such as their school, this study is a limited in scope. All of the students were enrolled in prestigious schools in Springville because they are from wealthy families. Their schools, Eden, Kings High School, and Bell Spring Middle School, are predominantly white schools in Springville. Therefore, in these schools the students could barely experience other cultural groups and make friends who are culturally diverse. Due to the limited access to other cultural groups, the students' experiences with their white middle class peers are reflected in the participants' perspective of the entire American cultures. Therefore, their experiences and perceptions about various American cultures may be different from the students who attend predominantly African American schools or other ethnic minority schools in the U.S.

In addition, this study was based on the data from the interviews with students and their parents. This study did not include any perspectives from their American host families, their school teachers, or their American friends. Therefore, who their American host families, their school teachers, and their American friends really are and how they think about these students remains something of a black box. I primarily depended on these students' accounts of these aspects of their experience. For this reason, I believe in a future study it would be useful to include American host families, teachers, and friends in order to understand through multiple lenses how these students participate and practice in American cultural communities and how they make cultural transitions between Korean and American cultural boundaries.

Policy Implications

In 2005, the Ministry of Education held a symposium to figure out the current phenomenon of *Chogi-Youhacksang* in Korea. KEDI (Korean Education Development Institute, 2005) reported how teachers, parents, and the Korean public consider this phenomenon and what are their concerns about this phenomenon. The report also introduced several cases of the *Chogi-Youhacksangs* in the U.S. However, the report focused on the students' academic success or failures instead of how they live in new cultures. Therefore, the Korean public does not pay

attention to how the individual *Chogi-Youhacksangs* and *Girugi* students live in their new environments, what challenges the students may face in a different environment, and how they are influenced by their new environment. Korean public and policy makers still argue about whether the study abroad program is good or bad. No matter if the study abroad is good or bad, the number of *Chogi-Youhacksangs*, including *Girugi* students, has reached at one hundred fifty thousand from 2000-2008 (the *Yonhap* News, 2010).

I believe that the Korean public and policy makers should stop arguing. Instead of arguing, they need to provide relevant cultural trainings for the students who want to study abroad, and they need to prepare to readmit the returning students. Thus, I suggest that the potential *Chogi-Youhacksangs* and the returning *Chogi-Youhacksangs* be correctly educated about their new environments. As the findings have indicated, most of the participants in this study had very low cultural awareness due to lack of cross cultural experiences. Cultural self-awareness is one of the most essential virtues to live in multicultural societies in the global age (Monkman, 2001). As Korean daily newspapers have reported and foreseen, Korea will be culturally and ethnically diverse in the near future. Therefore, the students in Korea are required to be educated about multicultural societies. Additionally, the potential *Chogi-Youhacksangs* and *Girugi* students should become better educated about new cultural environments instead of fantasizing about studying abroad based on the advertisements from *Youhackone*, the private placement centers. According to the findings, these students do not seemed to be ready to appreciate new cultures. It would be in their best interest prior to coming to a new country to prepare to understand different cultures and life in different cultural environments. I also suggest that they need to have some cultural and psychological counseling while they are living in the U.S. Since they are adolescents, they need to have some psychological supports from adults. Particularly, these students have experienced difficulties living in new environments based on their cultural differences and language barriers. This difficult situation certainly impacts their psychological development. However, the findings revealed that these students, particularly Sunjea, Dongkyu, Youri, and Minjeong, *Chogi-Youhacksangs*, who live with American host families, did not have any supports for their psychological development. As a result, struggling with psychological development and cultural burden led them to somewhat misunderstand new cultures and hinder them to blend into new cultural environment. I also suggest that host

families in the U.S. should be ready to accept these Korean students and should have some education about Korean cultures. These students seemed to have more difficult time to blend into new environments because their host families did not understand Korean cultures. These reciprocal misunderstandings kept these Korean students from having close relationships with American host families.

Moreover, the returning students should get more support in order to readjust their lives back to their new Korean environments. As the participants in this study mentioned, while they are influenced by new cultures in the U.S., their peers in Korea have also changed. Furthermore, their peers in Korea may not consider the returning students Koreans as the students in this study clearly differentiate themselves from Korean-Americans. The returning students may confront another challenge as they readjust themselves back into Korean culture.

According to the Student and Exchange Visitor Information System (SEVIS), the number of Korean students in U.S. schools including in higher institutions has hit over ten thousand in 2008. The population of Korean students in the U.S. is approximately 14% of the entire population of international students in the U.S. Korean students have become the most populous group of students among other students from different countries since 2007 (*Kukmin Ilbo*, 2008). Koreans are one of the fastest growing populations among Asians in the U.S. Despite this statistic, as the participants in this study pointed out, there are misunderstandings or misperceptions about Koreans or Koreans-Americans. The misunderstanding about Koreans in the U.S. was a tragic trigger that was the reason for the break out racial riots between Korean-Americans and African-Americans in Los Angeles at 1992 (Yu, 1994). Unlike a monolithic image of Koreans or Korean-Americans in the past, Koreans come from very diverse socioeconomic backgrounds and had very different purposes for coming in the U.S. since 1980 (Min, 1998). Therefore, I urge that Korean Americans or Korean immigrants need to be understood more particularly in schools that are preparing for the new multicultural classroom environments in the U.S.

Area for Future Study

The major challenges of studying these groups of students' cultural identity negotiation are the limited time scope. Since these students are teenagers, their perceptions are easily

influenced by their everyday lives' and routines such as friendships, relationship with host families, academic achievements, etc. They might have experienced dramatic changes in their personality or self-esteem. I heard after the KCM had been completed, Hana started getting along with American peers and Youri suddenly disappeared from the Korean community. Therefore, I suggest a longitudinal study for the *Chogi-Youhacksangs* and *Girugi* students' cultural identity negotiation.

In addition, I recommend future studies regarding the returning students' cultural identity re-negotiation in Korea. Wenger (1998) defines identity building as practicing and negotiating the meanings of experiences of membership in a social community. Jinhee is afraid of returning to Korea because she cannot seem to fit into the Korean society anymore. Before Dongkyu and Minjeong returned to Korea, they were worried about how they would adjust themselves in to the Korean schools and environments. As these students' are concerned about the readjustment process in Korea, the returning students may confront huge challenges about Korean tradition. As a result, the returning students may travel again across different cultural boundaries in Korea, and have to negotiate their cultural identity based on different cultural boundaries even though they went back to their home country. Therefore, I believe that the future research about the returning students' cultural identity negotiation would provide more in depth comprehension about how sociocultural structures influence individual identity crafting.

While I conducted this study, a question, such as when is the best time for the Korean students study abroad in the U.S. amazed me. The participants in this study were adolescents and they seemed to have difficult time adjusting to new cultural environments because they are already accustomed to Korean cultures. I am wondering if they came earlier than their age or later than their age, it would be easier to adjust them to new cultural environments and have a smoother transition between Korean cultures and American cultures or not. Therefore, this question is ripe for future research.

Finally, I suggest conducting more research about this particular group of Korean students. Only a few studies have been conducted about this population and researchers need to include the *Chogi-Youhacksangs* and *Girugi* students in Korean-Americans or Korean immigrants. However, as the participants in this study clearly differentiate themselves from

Korean Americans, researchers exclude the *Chogi-Youhacksangs* and *Girugi* students from studies of Korean-Americans or Asian –Americans.

APPENDIX A

EPILOGUE: ONE YEAR AFTER

After the KCM had been completed, I would see Sunjea, Dongkyu, Haneal, Hana, and Mirea in the church. However, I have not seen Youri. Youri stopped coming to the church after the KCM was finished. I still could hear about her from the other students. I had a chance to meet Jinhee while she was home during a vacation. Also, I had a chance to spend time with the other students before they visited Korea during the summer vacation. In this section, I introduce their story one year after the KCM.

One afternoon at the end of June, 2010, I met Dongkyu, Sunjea, and Haneal for a farewell party because Dongkyu was leaving for Korea. A couple of days later, Dongkyu, Sunjea, and Youri graduated from the Eden school. Mirea and Hana graduated from their middle schools. Sunjea will attend one of the prestigious universities in the U.S., and Youri will attend a community college in a metropolitan city in the northern U.S. Hana will attend the Eden high school, and Mirea will enroll in one of the best high schools located in a very wealthy neighborhood in Springville.

Dongkyu returns to Korea in the summer and Sunjea, Haneal, Hana, and Mirea will visit Korea during the summer vacation. Dongkyu, Sunjea, and Haneal seem very happy to finish the semester and excited to visit Korea. Dongkyu brought one of his friends, Minkyu, an 11th grade male *Chogi-Youhacksang* at his school to the farewell party. I was told that 12 students came from Korea and enrolled at the Eden school in the 2009 academic year because Dongkyu, Sunjea, and Youri became good examples of *Chogi-Youhacksangs* and their successful stories were good advertisements for Eden through the private placement center in Korea.

I asked Dongkyu how he felt about returning to Korea. He told me with a little bit of hesitation and a smile.

“Well, I feel good and sad for leaving Springville. I am also a little bit worried about the national entrance exam in Korea and catching up on /with studying back in Korea. My mom told me that I might not need to take the exam and I need to be only concerned with

English, but I do not know. I am happy to be going home, but I am a little bit sad to leave here (Springville) because I have new friends now. I think that I will miss Eden and here (Springville).”

As he said this, Dongkyu seemed to be happy and somewhat sad. However, he seemed to be generally content with the decision to study in the U.S. and his up-coming return to Korea. As he mentioned, he was worried about going to a university in Korea and taking the entrance examination. However, he was sure that he could get some benefits from the American education experiences and his English skills.

Also, Sunjea seemed very happy to visit Korea and to be proud of gaining admission to a prestigious university.

“I am very happy to visit Korea this summer and my parents are looking forward to seeing me in Korea. I cannot wait for that, either. They are also happy to hear that I was admitted to the university in the U.S. I think that I am lucky to have good teachers, friends, the Korean church, church members, etc. I think that I have many people who support me like my host family, friends, youth group teachers, and you, teacher (researcher), too. I appreciate them all.”

I could see how he was happy about the result from the efforts that he made and the support that his family gave for his life in the U.S. He was regarded as one of the successful students among *Chogi-Youhacksangs* not only from the private placement center in Korea, but also from Eden. During the graduation ceremony, Sunjea’s name was called many times for having special honors and awards. As Lee (2005) described about Asian students’ racial stereotypes in her article, Sunjea was the valedictorian for 2010 at Eden high school.

Unlike Sunjea and Dongkyu, Haneal did not look entirely happy about finishing the semester and visiting Korea during the summer vacation. I saw that he looked at Sunjea and

Dongkyu, both of whom graduated high school, enviably. I was told that Haneal would go to some cram schools to prepare for the SAT test and to study math in Korea²³.

Researcher: You are happy about visiting Korea during the summer vacation, aren't you?

Haneal: Yes, somewhat and no, somewhat.

Researcher: Why? I know that you really wanted to visit Korea.

Haneal: Yes. I do. I am really excited to meet my friends and family, enjoy Korean foods, and hang out with my friends in Korea. But, I am not sure whether I do have time to hang out with my friends in Korea or not. Because my mom said that I needed to go to cram schools for the SAT in Korea. I really envy my sister, Hana, because she does not need to go there to prepare for the SAT. She will just enjoy being in Korea. I hope that I do have time to do that...

Researcher: Do you still do that weird stuff in front of people? Are you still very popular in school?

Haneal: No, not anymore.

Researcher: Why?

Haneal: Well, I do not need to do it anymore. I do not have time to. I want to focus more on studying. Now, instead of me, my sister, Hana, became very popular. I do not know why and how. But, suddenly she became popular. In my opinion, Americans began thinking that Hana is beautiful. You know, she is an Asian girl. I mean...[Dongkyu and Sunjea called us and the conversation was interrupted].

While I was talking to him, I felt that he had intense personal pressure to study because he will become an 11th grader and take the SAT. Haneal seemed very concerned with his grades and going to college. While I talked to him, he asked me many questions about going to college and how to study and he said that he did not want to disappoint his mother. Additionally, he mentioned his sister, Hana. According to Haneal, Hana is getting used to school. She has begun getting along with her friends at Eden. Then, Haneal seemed to feel happy about Hana's current

²³ There are many cram schools for SAT preparation in Korea. These cram schools are particularly very crowded during summer vacation because many students who live in the U.S. come to Korea to study for the SAT test. There are also many cram schools for the SAT test in big cities like New York, Los Angeles, Atlanta, etc where there are huge Korean communities. The cram schools in the U.S. are generally run by Koreans. I was often told that many Korean high school students in Springville had studied in the cram schools in New York or Atlanta during summer vacation or winter break.

school life at Eden. I also found that Haneal was still concerned about his family members in the U.S., namely his mother and his sister.

Compared to Haneal, Hana did not seem to worry about her brother and her mother. Of course, she sometimes mentioned her family members. However, her major concerns are friendship and grades. She was supposed to attend the farewell party, but she could not make it because she was invited to her friend's party. As Haneal said, she seemed to have a better social relationship this year. This is good news due to the fact that in the interviews of the past year, she used to complain about not being invited anywhere.

I had a chance to meet Jinhee in January 2010 while she visited her home for her winter break. She looked more comfortable and confident than when I had met her for the interviews. I asked her about her college life. She told me that she really enjoyed her life in college and she really liked to study mathematics and philosophy. While we chatted, I heard about how she chose her college and how she felt how she might have changed in the college. She said that the college she was attending was not her first choice because she was admitted to many good colleges, including a small liberal arts school. According to her, the liberal arts school is a great school and famous with Americans, but not to Koreans. Therefore, her parents did not want her to choose the liberal arts school at all. She laughed and said to me. "I think that school is good. I don't care about going to the liberal arts school or any other schools. But, my mom said 'Hey, Jinhee. No! Absolutely not the liberal arts school! You know the reason'. Then, my mom chose the school that I now attend. She wanted me to go the college. That's why I chose it". She finally enrolled at the college which is the most famous and popular for Koreans. When she came to the U. S., she thought that the most important things were studying, good grades, and going to a good school. However, her opinion has been changed since she started attending the college. She envied her friends who enrolled in colleges that were more aligned with their future career such as a music teacher or an animator. She said that she was thinking about her future in the college because she always thought about going to a good college in high school.

I had chance to talk with Mirea in the summer of 2010 just after she came back from Korea. She seemed very happy to visit Korea. She was very talkative as she described how her summer vacation in Korea was and she proudly said where she had visited in Korea with her

family and what she had ate. She smiled and said to me that she had been told often that she was very pretty from her family members. She said that she would visit Korea again in the next year and looked forward to visiting Korea.

Hana and Mirea will go to high school. Hana will enroll in Eden High school and Mirea will attend Kings High school where Jinhee graduated from. Both schools are very well known for predominantly white middle class neighbors in Springville. Mirea and Hana will continue to be exposed to the white dominant cultures in their school. They attend the Korean church on Sunday. As a result, Hana and Mirea will continue the cultural journey between home/community and school.

Dongkyu and Minjeong went back to Korea. They will try to readjust back in to their life into Korea. It may be difficult based on what Youri said from her experience of what their families and friends in Korea might consider Dongkyu and Minjeong as being different or changed. They may feel Korean cultures as a new cultures and be confronted by challenges in order to readjust themselves back into the Korean lifestyle. Sunjea, Youri, and Jinhee live in big metropolitan cities in the U.S. They may have more chances to be exposed to the Korean culture because many of the larger metropolitan cities in the U.S. generally have huge a Korean population and communities. Or, they may now face new and different culturally based encounters which they have not experienced from Springville. Despite the geographical differences they will still have to travel across multiples cultural boundaries in their new cities. Haneal, Hana, and Mirea are in Springville. I still meet them in church and observe that Hana and Mirea hang out with each other rather than with other youth group members.

As a result, the students still travel across different cultural boundaries no matter where they are. They still negotiate their cultural identity while they make cultural journeys in their everyday lives. I hope that they have smooth transition among huge different cultural boundaries.

APPENDIX B

HUMAN SUBJECT APPROVAL



Office of the Vice President For Research
Human Subjects Committee
Tallahassee, Florida 32306-2742
(850) 644-8633 · FAX (850) 644-4392

APPROVAL MEMORANDUM

Date: 4/23/2008

To:
Youngwoo Park
MC 4452

Dept.: EDUCATIONAL LEADERSHIP AND POLICY STUDIES

From: Thomas L. Jacobson, Chair

Re: Use of Human Subjects in Research
The New Pattern of Migration Pattern of South Korean in the U.S.: Girugi Families and
Chogi Youhacksangs

The forms that you submitted to this office in regard to the use of human subjects in the proposal referenced above have been reviewed by the Human Subjects Committee at its meeting on 1/9/2008. Your project was approved by the Committee.

The Human Subjects Committee has not evaluated your proposal for scientific merit, except to weigh the risk to the human participants and the aspects of the proposal related to potential risk and benefit. This approval does not replace any departmental or other approvals which may be required.

If the project has not been completed by 1/8/2009 you must request renewed approval for continuation of the project.

You are advised that any change in protocol in this project must be approved by resubmission of the project to the Committee for approval. The principal investigator must promptly report, in writing, any unexpected problems causing risks to research subjects or others.

By copy of this memorandum, the chairman of your department and/or your major professor is reminded that he/she is responsible for being informed concerning research projects involving human subjects in the department, and should review protocols of such investigations as often as needed to insure that the project is being conducted in compliance with our institution and with DHHS regulations.

This institution has an Assurance on file with the Office for Human Research Protection. The Assurance Number is IRB00000446.

cc: King Beach
HSC No. 2007.1044

APPENDIX C

INFORMED CONSENT FORM (English)

Informed Consent Cover Letter: Parents/Guardians

Dear _____

I am a graduate student under the direction of Professor Jeffery Milligan in the Department of Educational Leadership and Policy Studies at Florida State University. My dissertation is about South Korean students and their families who migrated temporarily to the U.S. because of their children's education. The dissertation which is titled: *New migration patterns of South Koreans to the U.S.: Girugi families and Chogi-Youhacksangs*, will examine how their movement from South Korea to the U.S. contributes to building their cultural capital. It also explores how their multiple environments—home, community and school influence the formation of the identities of these students in the U.S.

Your participation in this study will entail one interview. The interview will take about one hour. Your participation in this study is voluntary. If you choose to withdraw from this study at any time there will be no penalty. If you agree, the interview will be tape-recorded to ensure accurate referencing. I will make transcripts of the tapes once the interviews have been done and I will remove any identifiers (names, places, etc.). I will assign a code to identify your interviews but your identity will be masked. The tapes will be kept in a locked cabinet until all interviews have been completed and transcripts have been generated. All tapes will be destroyed by December 31, 2011 and only the coded transcripts will be kept for analysis. During the process of the study, all tapes and transcripts will be kept in a locked cabinet at all times, and will be accessible only by the principal investigator.

The result of the research study may be published, but your name will not be known. There are several questions about your family issue might be somewhat sensitive. However, there are no foreseeable risks or discomforts to you if you agree to participate in this study. Information

obtained during the course of this study will remain confidential, to the extent allowed by the law. Although there may be no direct benefit to you, the possible benefits of your participation include an opportunity for you contribute to the analysis and understanding of a pervasive social phenomenon in South Korea and the understating of *Chogi-Youhacksang* and *Girugi* families in the U.S. within the educational context.

If you wish, I will share the results of our interviews and the results of the study with you and will ask for your feedback on both.

I appreciate your willingness to give your time to this project to help me learn more about *Chogi-Youhacksangs* and *Girugi* families in the U.S.

If you have any questions, please feel free to call me, or email me. You can also email my professor. I am happy to discuss the research and any concerns you might have about it at any point throughout this study. If you have any questions about your rights as a participant in this research, or if you have feel that you have been placed at risk, you can contact the Chair of Human Subjects Committee, Institutional Review Board, Florida State University at (850) 644-8673, <http://www.fsu.research.edu>.

Sincerely,

Youngwoo Park, PhD Candidate
Florida State University

Date:

I give my consent to be interviewed for the above study. I also give my consent for the interviews to be taped-recorded. I understand that the tape recordings will only be used to create identifier-free transcripts of the interviews. These transcripts ensure accuracy in data analysis and reporting. The tapes will be kept by Ms. Youngwoo Park in a locked filing cabinet. I understand that only Ms. Youngwoo Park will have access to the tapes until all identifiers have been removed; they will not be shared with anyone else. I also understand that all tapes will be

destroyed following the conversion to transcripts which will occur no later than December 31, 2011.

Participant Name: _____

Participant's Signature: _____

Date: _____

INFORMED CONSENT FORM (Korean)

보호자 동의서(Parental Permission Form)

_____ 귀하

안녕하세요? 저는 플로리다 주립대학교 교육대학 Dr. Milligan 지도하에 있는 박사과정 학생 박영우 입니다. 저는 “한국인들의 새로운 이민 형태; 기러기가족과 조기유학생을 중심으로”라는 박사 논문을 쓰고 있습니다. 이 논문을 위해 귀하의 자녀(보호 학생)의 참여를 부탁드립니다. 우선 이 동의서를 읽어 보시고, 귀하의 자녀(보호 학생)의 참여에 대해 질문 있으시면 자녀(보호 학생)의 참여를 동의하시기 전에 말씀해 주십시오. 신문이나 다른 미디어를 통해 아시겠지만 현재 한국의 많은 어린 학생들이 학업을 위해 미국이나 여러 다른나라로 떠나고 있습니다. 저는 이 논문을 통해 어떻게 조기유학생들이나 기러기 가족들이 미국생활에 적응하고 또 조기유학생들이 그들의 정체성을 어떻게 확립해나가는지 연구하고자 합니다.

귀하께서 자녀(보호 학생)의 참여를 동의하시면, 두번의 인터뷰를 가질 예정입니다. 첫번째 인터뷰는 약 30분 정도가 소요될 것이며 두번째인터뷰는 약 1시간 정도가 소요될것입니다. 한국에서의 생활과 미국에서의 생활 등을 물을것입니다. 또한, 귀하의 자녀는 “한국 문화 토론클럽”에 참여하게 될것 입니다. 한국 문화 토론 클럽은 매주 혹은 2주에 한번씩 모임을 갖습니다. 이 모임에서는 책과 영화를 보고 이를 토대로 토론할 것입니다. 이 모임은 1시간 씩 진행 될것이며, 총 6회에서 7회의 모임을 가질 예정입니다. 이 토론 클럽은 비디오로 녹화 될것입니다. 하지만, 이 녹화는 단지 박사논문을 위한데이터를 분석을 위한것이고, 본 연구자 외에는 그 누구도 볼수 없다는 것을 알려드립니다. 또한, 인터뷰는 녹음될것입니다. 인터뷰와 비디오 녹화는 녹음된 후 전사(轉寫) 될 것입니다. 전사된 내용은 익명으로 처리될것입니다. 그리고 녹음된 테잎은 본 연구자가 별도로 보관할 것이며, 익명으로 처리되기 전에는 그 누구에게도 이 녹음 테잎을 들려주지 않을 것입니다. 모든 녹음 테잎은 연구를 마친후 2011년 12월31일에 폐기될것입니다. 또한 사정이 있으시면 언제라도 연구에서 탈퇴하실수 있습니다.

가족관계나 미국 생활의 적응에 대한 몇가지 질문은 다소 민감할 수 있다는 것을 알려드립니다. 본연구는 출판될수 있습니다. 하지만 귀하의 자녀(보호 학생)의 이름은

절대로 게재 되지 않고 익명이나 다른 기호로 나타나질 것입니다. 이 연구는 참여 학생에게 어떤 해도 끼치지 않을 것입니다. 이 연구를 통해 얻어진 그 어떤 면담 내용도 본 연구자외에는 알 수 없으며 이는 미국 법으로 규정되어 있음을 알려드립니다.

본 연구의 참여는 전적으로 귀하의 자녀(보호 학생)의 자발적인 참여를 원칙으로 하고 있습니다. 따라서 귀하의 자녀(보호 학생)가 대답하고 싶지 않은 질문있다면 그에 대해서는 대답하지 않을 수 있습니다. 또한 귀하의 자녀(보호 학생)가 이 연구에 더이상 참여하고 싶지 않다면 언제든지 참여를 중단할 수 있습니다.

본연구가 현재 많은 기러기 가족들과 조기 유학생들의 미국의 삶의 모습을 이해하는데 조금이라도 도움이 되었으면 하는 마음입니다. 본 연구에 참여하시길 원하시면 아래의 동의란에 서명하신후 연구자에게 전해 주시면 감사하겠습니다. 다시 한번 연구에 공동 참여해주심을 감사드리며, 문의하실 사항이 있으면 언제라도 연락 주시기 바랍니다. 또한 필요한 사항에 관해서는 본 연구자만 아니라 연구자의 논문 지도교수이신 Dr. Milligan 교수님께 연락하실 수 있습니다. 그리고 혹시라도 이 연구의 참여중에 부당한 대우를 받으신다고 생각하신다면 플로리다 주립대학의 휴먼 서브젝트 외회에 연락하실 수 있습니다.

연락처는 다음을 참고해 주시기 바랍니다.

다시한번 여러분의 참여에 진심으로 감사드립니다.

2008년 3월 박영우 드림

지도교수 Dr. Jeffery Milligan

연구자 박영우 전화

플로리다 주립대학교 휴먼 서브젝트 의회: 850- 644-8673, <http://www.fsu.research.edu>

귀하의 자녀(보호학생)의 참여를 동의하시면 자녀(보호 학생)의 이름을 기재해주시고 서명해 주십시오.

자녀(보호 학생) 이름: _____

보호자 서명 _____ 날짜 _____

INFORMED CONSENT FORM(Students)

Dear _____

My name is Youngwoo Park. I am a graduate student from Florida State University. I am asking if you would like to take part in this study of “New migration patterns of South Koreans to the United State; *Girugi* families and *Chogi-Youhacksang*”. This study is about South Korean students’ experience studying in the U.S.

If you agree to be in this study, I will interview you twice. In the first interview, I will ask about your school experience in Korea. The interview will be about 30 minutes. In the second interview, I will ask how your experience in the U.S. is different from your experience Korea. The second interview will be about one hour.

Some interview questions about your family and your experience in the U.S. might be little bit sensitive. However your answers can provide a guideline for students in Korea who plan to study in the U.S. like you.

Please talk this over with your parents before you decide whether or not to participate. We have asked your parents to give their permission for you to take part in this study. But even if you parents said “yes” to this study, you can still decide to not take part in the study, and that will be fine.

This study is voluntary, which means that if you do not want to be in this study, then you do not have to participate. Being in this study is up to you, and no one will be upset in any way if you do not want to participate or even if you change your mind later and want to stop.

You can ask any questions that you have about this study. If you have a question later that you did not think of now, you can call me, email me, or ask me next time. You may also email to my professor Dr. Milligan. If you have feel that you have been placed at risk, you can contact the Chair of Human Subjects Committee, Institutional Review Board, Florida State University at (850) 644-8673 or you may access their website at <http://www.fsu.research.edu>.

Signing your name at the bottom means that you agree to be in this study. You and your parents will be given a copy of this form after you have signed it.

Name: _____

Signature: _____

Date: _____

APPENDIX D

INTERVIEW PROTOCOL

Parents in the U.S.

Thank you for agreeing to be a participant in this study and for agreeing to be interviewed. My name is Youngwoo Park. I am currently doing my PhD at Florida State University. Over the years I have been studying in the U.S., I have observed that there are many Korean K-12 students studying in the U.S. I am interested in why these children are studying in the U.S. and what their experiences are. Therefore, I have decided to make that the topic of my dissertation and I hope that you will help me collect data to answer some of the questions I have. The study specifically focuses on *Chogi youhacksangs* and *Girugi* families in the U.S. I would like to find out whether there are differences in experiences within these two groups.

In this interview I would like to hear your opinion about the U.S. education and your experience of living in the U.S. with your child. This interview will take about one hour.

I am recording the interview so that we have an accurate account of your responses. However, if at any time you want me to stop the tape recording please let me know and I will turn off the tape. I will make transcripts of the tapes once the interviews have been done but I will remove any identifiers (names, places, etc.) to mask your identity and ensure confidentiality of the information you have shared with me. This is explained in the consent form I would like you to sign.

How long have you been in the U.S.?

1. Why did you decide to bring your child/children to study in the U.S.?
2. How do you think studying in the U.S. will benefit your child/children?
3. How did you decide which schools you want your children to attend in the U.S.?
4. What is your view about Korean education in general?
5. How would you compare education in Korea and education in the U.S.?

Now, let's talk about your experience living in the U.S. with your child/children

6. What are some of the cultural differences you have observed that might influence your child/children's schooling?
7. From your observation, how has your child/children settled in school? (Probe for difficulties language, how school is organized, expectations, etc.)
8. From your observation, how has your child/children settled living in the U.S? (Probe for homesickness, cultural differences, etc)
9. From your observation, does your child/children have many friends in school? If yes, who are they? (Probe whether they are Korean or American friends)
10. What differences have you observed between your child's/children's life in school in Korea and their life in school in the U.S.?
11. What differences do you observe in parenting in the U.S. as compared with parenting in Korea?
12. Has living in the U.S. influenced your role as a parent? If so, how? (Probe for cultural difference in parenting)
13. What changes have you observed in your child/children's behaviors and attitudes since they have been in the U.S.?
14. In what ways do you think that being away from their father affects your child/children?
15. What is your major concern about your child/children in a U.S. school?
16. Do you plan to return to Korea with your child/children after your child/children graduate high school or do you plan to enroll your child/children in college in the U.S.? Why or why not?
17. What advice would you give parents in Korea who are considering sending their children to study in the U.S.?

18. Finally, please tell me a little bit about yourself and your spouse such as educational backgrounds and occupation.

Thank you for participating in this study. Your answers will be valuable in helping me to carry out this research.

INTERVIEW PROTOCOL

Parents in Korea

Thank you for agreeing to be a participant in this study and for agreeing to be interviewed. My name is Youngwoo Park. I am currently doing my PhD at Florida State University. Over the years I have been studying in the U.S., I have observed that there are many Korean K-12 students studying in the U.S. I am interested in why these children are studying in the U.S. and what their experiences are. Therefore, I have decided to make that the topic of my dissertation and I hope that you will help me collect data to answer some of the questions I have. The study specifically focuses on *Chogi youhacksangs* and *Girugi* families in the U.S. I would like to find out whether there are differences in experiences within these two groups.

In this interview I would like to hear your opinion about the U.S. education and your experience of living in the U.S. with your child. This interview will take about one hour.

I am recording the interview so that we have an accurate account of your responses. However, if at any time you want me to stop the tape recording please let me know and I will turn off the tape. I will make transcripts of the tapes once the interviews have been done but I will remove any identifiers (names, places, etc.) to mask your identity and ensure confidentiality of the information you have shared with me. This is explained in the consent form I would like you to sign.

1. How long has/have your child/children been in the U.S.?
2. Why did you decide to send your child/children to study in the U.S.?
3. How do you think studying in the U.S. will benefit your child/children?
4. How did you decide which schools you want your children to attend in the U.S.?
5. What is your view about Korean education in general?
6. How would you compare education in Korea and education in the U.S.?

Let's talk about your experience and feeling after you sent your child/children in the U.S.

7. How do you and often do you communicate with your child/children?
8. What is the main topic of conversation when you talk to your child/children?
9. What is a major concern of your child/children's life in the U.S.?
10. Have you heard any complaints, concerns, from your child/children?
11. How different do you feel about your child/children from when they were in Korea and now they are in the U.S.?
12. How different do you feel about your parenting of your child/children after they arrived in the U.S.?
13. From your conversation with child/children, how has your child/children settled into living in the U.S? (Probe for homesickness, cultural differences, etc)
14. When you talk to your child/children, how they talk about their friends or school life? Do they talk more about their American friends or Korean friends?
15. What differences have you heard between your child's/children's life in school in Korea and their life in school in the U.S.?
16. Do you want your child/children to return to Korea after they graduate high school or do you want to enroll your child/children in college in the U.S.? Why or why not?
17. What advice would you give parents who are considering sending their children to study in the U.S.?

Finally, please tell me a little bit about yourself and your spouse such as educational backgrounds and occupation.

Thank you for participating in this study. Your answers will be valuable in helping me to carry out this research.

INTERVIEW PROTOCOL

Guardians

Thank you for agreeing to be a participant in this study and for agreeing to be interviewed. My name is Youngwoo Park. I am currently doing my PhD at Florida State University. Over the years I have been studying in the U.S., I have observed that there are many Korean K-12 students studying in the U.S. I am interested in why these children are studying in the U.S. and what their experiences are. Therefore, I have decided to make that the topic of my dissertation and I hope that you will help me collect data to answer some of the questions I have. The study specifically focuses on *Chogi-Youhacksangs* and *Girugi* families in the U.S. I would like to find out whether there are differences in the experiences within these two groups.

In this interview I would like to hear about your views about U.S. education and your experience as a guardian of (name of child). I would also like to hear about your opinion and observation about the student's U.S. education and his/her experience living in the U.S. This interview will take about one hour.

I am recording the interview so that we have an accurate account of your responses. However, if at any time you want me to stop the tape recording please let me know and I will turn off the tape. I will make transcripts of the tapes once the interviews have been done but I will remove any identifiers (names, places, etc.) to mask your identity and ensure confidentiality of the information you have shared with me. This is explained in the consent form I would like you to sign.

1. How long has (name of child) been studying in the U.S.?
2. How long have you been taking care of (name of child)?
3. How did you come to be this child's guardian? (Probe: whether family friend, website, references from other parents, the church members, etc)
4. How do you think studying in the U.S. will benefit to this child?
5. In your opinion, why do parents send their children to study in the U.S.?

Now let's talk about this child's experience in school and living in the U.S. from your observation

6. From your observation, how has this child settled in school? (Probe for difficulties language, cultural differences, how school is organized, expectations etc)
7. From your observation, how has this child settled living in the U.S? (Probe for homesickness, cultural differences, etc)
8. From your observation, does this child have many friends in school? If yes, who are they? (Probe whether they are Korean or American friends)
9. What difference you have observed in this child's behavior and attitudes since they have been in the U.S.?
10. What differences have you observed in parenting in the US as compared with parenting in Korea?
11. In what ways do you think that being away from his/her parents affects this child?
12. What is your major concern about this child in a U.S. school?

Finally, tell me a little bit about you and your educational background and your views about education in Korea and the U.S

13. Did you go to school in Korea or in the U.S? If Yes, How would you compare the two educational systems?
14. What are your views about Korean education in general?
15. Do you think this child should to go back to Korea when he or she graduate high school or go to college in the U.S.? Why or Why not?
16. What advice would you give parents in Korea who are considering sending their children to study in the U.S.?

Thank you for participating in this study. Your answers will be very valuable in helping me to carry out this research.

INTERVIEW PROTOCOL

Chogi-Youhacksangs (The First Interview)

Thank you for agreeing to be a participant in this study and for agreeing to be interviewed. My name is Youngwoo Park. I am currently doing my PhD at Florida State University. I am studying about *Girugi* families and *Chogi-Youhacksang*, their experiences in the U.S. Therefore, I hope that you will help me collect data to answer some of the questions I have.

In this interview I would like to hear about yourself and how you came to the U.S. I would also like to hear about how your school experience in South Korea. The interview will take about 30 minutes.

I am recording the interview so that we have an accurate account of your responses. However, if at any time you want me to stop the tape recording please let me know and I will turn off the tape. I will make transcripts of the tapes once the interviews have been done but I will remove any identifiers (names, places, etc.) to mask your identity and ensure confidentiality of the information you have shared with me. This is explained in the consent form I would like you to sign.

Now, we will talk about your experience in the U.S. and how you came to the U.S.

1. Could you explain how you came to the U.S. to study? (Probe for whether parents decision or not)
2. How did your parents choose the school you are now attending?
3. How did you prepare to attend a school in the U.S. when you were in Korea?
4. Tell us about your school experience in Korea, where you went to school and some of your school experiences.(Probe for experiences in elementary school)
5. What differences have you experienced in school life between the U.S. and in Korea?
6. Can you tell us how you felt when you came to the U.S. for the very first time?
7. Have you ever experienced any difficulties living in the U.S.? If you have, what kind of difficulties did you experience? (Probe for language, cultural differences, etc)
8. Tell us about your school experience in the U.S., how your friends and your teachers call you? Do you have any English name or nick names? If you have, how it is different from Korean nick name when you were in Korea?
9. How do you think studying in the U.S. will benefit you? (Probe for students' view about education in the U.S.)

Then, let's talk about yourself who you are and your family.

10. Tell us a little bit about your parents—where they went to school and what type of work they do? How often do you contact your parents (father) and by what (i.e. email. Telephone, etc.)?
11. What are the major issues that come up when you talk with your parents?
12. Tell us about your families (i.e. parents, sisters and brothers)

INTERVIEW PROTOCOL

Chogi-Youhacksangs (The Second Interview)

Thank you for agreeing to be a participant in this study and for agreeing to be interviewed. In our first interview I asked you about your background and your past school experience in Korea. Now, I would like to ask you some questions about your life in the U.S. I am interested in finding about how you experience differently at school, home and community in the U.S.

Let's talk about your experience in the U.S., Home, school and community

1. Can you tell me how you felt when you came to the U.S. for the very first time?
2. Have you ever experienced any difficulties living in the U.S.? If you have, what kind of difficulties did you experience? (Probe for language, cultural differences, etc.)
3. Tell me about your school experiences. (Probe for experiences with teachers, friends, classmates, assignments, expectations etc.)
4. Do you have any American friends? What kind of activities do you do together with your American friends?
5. Do you have any Korean friends? What kind of activities do you do together with your Korean friends?
6. Please tell me some of the ways that your school experience in Korean is different from your school experience from in the U.S.?
7. Do you want to go back to Korea when you graduate high school? Why or why not?
8. Do you feel confident with your ability to speak English? Tell me about any difficulties you have speaking English, if any?
9. How often do you talk with your parents and your family members in Korea? Do you hold conversations in Korean or English?
10. How often do you visit your parents in Korea or your parents visit you in the U.S.?
11. What are the major issues when you talk with your parents in Korea?

12. In your opinion, what might be your parents' major concern about you in the U.S.?
(Probe for whether children have different view about their life in the U.S. with their parents or not)
13. What is your major concern for yourself? Can you explain the reason why you are concerned?
14. What have you experienced differently when you lived with your parents in Korea and now that you are in the U.S. with a guardian?
15. What differences have you felt about your relation with your parents after you came to the U.S.?
16. Where is your favorite place among home, school, and church? Could you explain why?
(Probe for their identity formation and membership)
17. What advice would you give students in Korea who are considering studying in the U.S. like you?

INTERVIEW PROTOCOL

Girugi Students (The First Interview)

Thank you for agreeing to be a participant in this study and for agreeing to be interviewed. My name is Youngwoo Park. I am currently doing my PhD at Florida State University. I am studying about *Girugi* families and *Chogi-Youhacksang*, their experiences in the U.S. Therefore, I hope that you will help me collect data to answer some of the questions I have.

In this interview I would like to hear about yourself and how you came to the U.S. I would also like to hear about how your school experience in South Korea. The interview will take about 30 minutes.

I am recording the interview so that we have an accurate account of your responses. However, if at any time you want me to stop the tape recording please let me know and I will turn off the tape. I will make transcripts of the tapes once the interviews have been done but I will remove any identifiers (names, places, etc.) to mask your identity and ensure confidentiality of the information you have shared with me. This is explained in the consent form I would like you to sign.

Now, we will talk about your experience in the U.S. and how you came to the U.S.

1. Could you explain how you came to the U.S. to study? (Probe for whether parents decision or not)
2. How did your parents choose the school you are now attending?
3. How did you prepare to attend a school in the U.S. when you were in Korea?
4. Tell us about your school experience in Korea, where you went to school and some of your school experiences.(Probe for experiences in elementary school)
5. What differences have you experienced in school life between the U.S. and in Korea?
6. Can you tell us how you felt when you came to the U.S. for the very first time?
7. Have you ever experienced any difficulties living in the U.S.? If you have, what kind of difficulties did you experience? (Probe for language, cultural differences, etc)
8. Tell us about your school experience in the U.S., how your friends and your teachers call you? Do you have any English name or nick names? If you have, how it is different from Korean nick name when you were in Korea?
9. How do you think studying in the U.S. will benefit you? (Probe for students' view about education in the U.S.)

Then, let's talk about yourself who you are and your family.

10. Tell us a little bit about your parents—where they went to school and what type of work they do? How often do you contact your parents (father) and by what (i.e. email. Telephone, etc.)?
11. What are the major issues that come up when you talk with your parents?
12. Tell us about your families (i.e. parents, sisters and brothers)

INTERVIEW PROTOCOL

Girugi Students (The Second Interview)

Thank you for agreeing to be a participant in this study and for agreeing to be interviewed. In our first interview I asked you about your background and your past school experience in Korea. Now, I would like to ask you some questions about your life in the U.S. I am interested in finding about how you experience differently at school, home and community in the U.S.

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1. Can you tell me how you felt when you came to the U.S. for the very first time?
2. Have you ever experienced any difficulties living in the U.S.? If you have, what kind of difficulties did you experience? (Probe for language, cultural differences, etc)
3. Tell me about your school experiences. (Probe for experiences with teachers, friends, classmates, assignments, expectations etc.)
4. Do you have any American friends? What kind of activities do you do together with your American friends?
5. Do you have any Korean friends? What kind of activities do you do together with your Korean friends?
6. Please tell me some of the ways that your school experience in Korean is different from your school experience from in the U.S.?
7. Do you want to go back to Korea when you graduate high school? Why or why not?
8. Do you feel confident with your ability to speak English? Tell me about any difficulties you have speaking English, if any?
9. How often do you talk with your father and your family members in Korea? Do you hold conversations in Korean or English?
10. How often do you visit to Korea or your father visit you in the U.S.?
11. When you talk with your mother, generally what kind of issue do you talk to her about?
Do you feel differently when you talk with your father in Korea?

12. In your opinion, what might be your parents' major concern about you in the U.S.?
(Probe for whether children have different view about their life in the U.S. with their parents or not)
13. What is your major concern for yourself? Can you explain the reason why you are concerned?
14. What have you experienced differently when you lived with your parents in Korea and you live with your mother in the U.S.?
15. What differences have you felt about your relation with your parents after you came to the U.S.?
16. Where is your favorite place among home, school, and church? Could you explain why?
(Probe for their identity formation and membership)
17. What advice would you give students in Korea who are considering studying in the U.S. like you?

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