The Experience of Immigration and Ethnic Identity as

Revealed through Art Making Experience:

A Phenomenological Study of 1.5-Generation Korean American Immigrants

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DEDICATION

To my mother and father for their love and support during the times of frequent transitions in my life…for whom I am ever more grateful for the experience that has shaped me into the person I am today.

And to the field of art therapy that has allowed me to seek an inner journey toward finding another aspect of my self and meaning in life.
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The purpose of this study was to explore the formation and development of ethnic identity and its psychological implications among 1.5 generation Korean American young adults through the process of creating and reflecting upon one’s artwork. The primary research questions for this phenomenological study were: How is the formation and development of ethnic identity recounted and expressed by 1.5 generation Korean American immigrants through artistic expression? What are these psychological experiences, as expressed through the art and interview process? The study utilized a phenomenological research method to collect and analyze the data obtained through the creation of three drawings and an open ended responsive interview with one young adult female participant.

There is a lack of literature and research in art therapy with immigrant individuals about the psychosocial reactions to immigration and acculturation. 1.5 generation Korean American immigrants have immigrated at a young age before they have fully integrated a more mature identity, and they are exposed to the discrete cultural values of America and Korea. Abundant psychosocial research has indicated that a reluctance to consciously identify one’s own ethnicity and cultural background or perhaps an unconscious process of adaptation can be detrimental to one’s quality of life and psychological well-being. Since many of the cultural values and concepts are unconsciously integrated to one’s identity, the symbolic communication in artistic expression can provide a new means of communication to explore immigrant individual’s identities and serve as a synthesizer in integrating multiple levels of their identities.

The essential structures that resulted from the analyses of the artistic and verbal data
collected from the participant included her experience of: self differentiation from the environment; wish for comfort and feelings of connection to other immigrants; bi-cultural identification and awareness; alienation and fear of not belonging in any one identity; ongoing transition of self ethnic identity; individual hardship and a wish for validation of one’s struggles; and artistic expression as a means to exploring ethnic identity.

The results of this study indicate that reflecting upon one’s immigration experiences and ethnic identity through the use of metaphors, such as the tree and the bridge, seems to result in new realizations and self reflections on one’s ethnic identity. The use of the three drawing procedures presented in this study can be used as an initial assessment tool in the clinical setting by providing both immigrant clients and clinicians about the degree of cross-cultural influence and pre- and post-migration experiences. It provides a framework from within which clinicians can discuss the interaction between the individual’s intrapsychic life with the external life circumstances, and how the individual has learned to adapt to those life changes. In a group or family session, this series of drawings can be used as a tool to share experiences and to facilitate understanding of each other about the process of acculturation among culturally displaced individuals. The combination of both the artwork and verbal associations to the artwork during the process of creating three metaphorical drawings can aid the individuals with secondary process symbolization, allowing them to visualize and synthesize cognitive and emotional aspects of self from past, present and future.
CHAPTER I : INTRODUCTION

The purpose of this study is to explore the experience of ethnic identity formation in 1.5-generation of immigrants as described through their participation in creating artwork and an in-depth interview. Immigrating to a new country and culture can have psychological implications generally, but also these implications can specifically relate to the development of one’s ethnic identity. In this study the challenges inherent in cultural transition are explored using the creation of images as means of expression for these individuals. The nature of images allows for not only an alternative form of communication, which can transcend the limitations of verbal language, but also, allows for a depth of expression not generally possible in verbal communication.

A phenomenological research method was used as the design for this research in order to effectively capture the essences of the lived experiences described by the participants involved in the process of creating artwork about their immigration experiences and concept of their identity. One participant who was Korean American young adult was recruited and was asked to participate in an art therapy process and in-depth interview.

The rationale for conducting this study relates to the increase in diversity in the United States with a mix of many different cultures creating a cultural-hybrid or a “new melting pot” (Jacoby, 2004; Lee, 1999). This phenomenon which is often described as “multiculturalism” is more than just an ethnic-blend. Roy (1999) stated that culture is:

a shared system of meanings, an agreement between a group of people about how to talk, behave, think, and perceive. While we all are influenced by different cultures to a certain extent … multi-culture is an acknowledgement that this shared system is becoming increasingly complex as the amount of information we are exposed to and influenced by continues to grow. (p.118)

Along with this rising issue of multiculturalism, demographic estimates suggest that the
number of foreign-born residents accounts for 12% of the total United States population (US Census Bureau, 2004). Amongst this foreign-born population, 25% reported themselves as being “Asian American” accounting for more than 10 million people (4.2%) of the total U.S. population (US Census Bureau, 2004), and Korean Americans, who have immigrated to the U.S. in three distinctive waves over the years (Kim & Ryu, 2005), seem to be one of the rapidly growing Asian immigrant group in the U.S.

In the United States, many people from diverse cultures have migrated to form the cultural hybrid that exists today. Migration is a developing process rather than a single event. For most immigrants, the social environment of the host country and the loss of cultural identity due to migration have an effect on their psychological health (Dokter, 1998; Nesdale & Mak, 2003; Phinney, Horenczyk, Liebkind, & Vedder, 2001). The stresses of migration including the dislocation from one’s culture and geographical area, and the adjustment to a new culture, can result in serious mental health problems (Dokter, 1998). Typical problems associated with this cultural transition are isolation, enmeshment, disengagement, loss, identity confusion, and a cultural split between the home country and the host country (Dockter, 1998; Rousseau & Heusch, 2000). According to Dokter (1998), “migration is an exaggerated separation and individuation process to such an extent that it is sometimes seen as adding an extra stage of the life cycle” (p.145). Akhtar (1999) also discerns how the intrapsychic conflict that immigrants experience resembles the second individuation process of adolescence.

Previous research studies have reported that the ethnic values and identities are retained for many generations after migration and they play a crucial but often unconscious role in individual’s family life and personal development (Dokter, 1998; Rousseau et al., 2005). For instance, the reluctance to identify one’s own ethnicity and cultural background can be detrimental to one’s quality of life and psychological well-being (Dokter, 1998; Lieber, Chin,
Nihira, & Mink, 2001; Nesdale & Mak, 2003; Phinney et al., 2001). Some authors have also reported higher levels of psychological distress and lower self-esteem in immigrant adolescents as compared to non-immigrant adolescents (Slonim-Nevo, Sharaga, Mirsky, Petrovsky, & Borodenco, 2006). According to Phinney and Devich-Navarro (1997), there are three types of identification patterns among African and Mexican-American adolescents who had been exposed to biculturalism: blended biculturals; alternating biculturals; separated adolescents. Rousseau et al. (2005) also indicated that identity issues arising from migration are not confined to one generation but passed on and transformed over generations. Studies have shown that intergenerational conflicts also arise from immigrant families’ struggles over values during their transition to the new culture (Chu & Mustafa, 2006; McGoldrick, Giordano, & Garcia-Preto, 2005; Zhou, 1997).

Forming an identity is a complex and dynamic process wherein many different factors contribute to the formation of individual identity. Identity development is universal across cultures and the exploration of identity issues is a crucial developmental process for every individual (Erikson, 1968; Muuss, 1982). Erikson (1968) postulates that identity formation is not something that is established at one time but continues to change and develop across a person’s life span, and failure to achieve a secure identity has negative psychological consequences. Immigrants go through various developmental states of acculturation in forming an ethnic community and ethnic identities in the U.S. (Hurh, 1980; Rumbaut, 1994). Several studies have introduced Asian American identity development models that explain the dynamic and complex nature of ethnic identity development and the multifaceted variables that influence the individual’s ethnic identity among Asian immigrants in the U.S. (Bhugra et al., 1999; Lee, 1998; Sue & Sue, 1999). Bhugra et al.’s (1999) study further discusses the need to develop a multifaceted tool to measure cultural identity among Asians since cultural and self-identities are
core factors in achieving better psychological functioning. Some findings suggest that strong ethnic identity is not necessarily associated with psychological well-being but is also inter-related with the degree of identification with the dominant culture (Eyoun, Dair, & Dixon, 2000). Being an Asian American involves a shuttling between the two cultures that leaves immigrants feeling stuck or having no sense of belonging in one community (Chu & Mustafa, 2006). Asian immigrants are exposed to conflicting cultural values and they are put into situations where they have to forge new identities that would encompass the bicultural aspect (Lee & Mock, 2005; Sue & Morishima, 1982). Similarly, Korean American identity is defined in relation to the interplay between two heterogeneous cultures-American and Korean (Hurh, 1980).

The related psychological issues of immigration may be more or less severe depending upon the pre-existing psychological developmental issues of the immigrant. The psychological implications involved in migration are more subtle and complex especially for those individuals who have migrated at a later stage of development (Akhtar, 1999). Specifically, identity formation may be more difficult for immigrants who have migrated during the developmental stages of defining their identity, such as 1.5 generation immigrants. 1.5 generation immigrants have been described as those individuals who are foreign-born arriving in the U.S. between their childhood and middle-adolescent ages (Hurh, 1990; Kim, 1999; Park, 1999; Zhou, 1999). However, the term 1.5 generation began to be popularized in the Korean American community after 1970’s (Hurh, 1990) and there is no consensus on the definite age range that defines this generation. The reason for the lack of consensus on the specific age ranges for 1.5 immigrants is that different studies have defined the meaning of the term according to different emphases on demographic and cultural perspectives. Recent studies have highlighted the need to investigate the 1.5 and second generation of immigrants on their adaptation after immigration (Portes, 1996; Zhou, 1997). Unlike the first generation or second generation of immigrants, 1.5-generation Korean Americans
experience intergenerational conflict and psychosocial ambivalence due to their backgrounds of being bilingual and bicultural (Hurh, 1990; Kim, 1999; Kim & Ryu, 2005). Park (1999) describes how the process of identity formation among these “1.5ers” is situational and complex yet compartmentalized. As 1.5ers are in-between two cultures, the Korean and U.S., studies have described this generation as being the “bridge generation” spanning the first and second generation Korean American immigrants (Kim, 1999). The result of being the bridge generation is that the identity of these individuals may develop a “double consciousness” (Park, 1999), and become highly insecure and fearful of losing the traditional identity as Koreans (Kim & Ryu, 2005). Past research has examined the complexity of forming Korean American ethnic identity and describes the importance of synthesizing a new identity where both Korean and American cultures are integrated (Hurh, 1980; Park, 1999).

McGoldrick, Giordano, and Garcia-Preto (2005) state that “those who try to assimilate at the price of forgetting their connections to their heritage are likely to have more problems than those who maintain their heritage” (p.13). Studies have shown that individuals with integrated cultural identity had higher self-esteem compared to those who had separated or marginalized cultural identity (Eyou, Dair, & Dixon, 2000). Additionally, pressure to assimilate in a dominant culture and renounce one’s own ethnic identity may result in anger, depression and violence (Phinney et al., 2001). Therefore, integration of one’s cultural identities is a significant factor for maintaining a healthy psychological functioning (Bhugra et al., 1999; Eyou, Dair, & Dixon, 2000; Hurh, 1990; Phinney et al., 2001; Zhou, 1999). Several studies have shown that “if people are secure in their own identity, they can act with greater freedom, flexibility and openness to other of different cultural backgrounds” (Dokter, 1998, p.149; McGoldrick, Giordano, & Garcia-Preto, 2005). Hence, redefining the immigration experience and the ethnicity of the immigrant individual as a psychological task can contribute to establishing a more culturally balanced
identity. For an immigrant individual, exploring one’s ethnic identity and its underlying psychological implications can help one to acknowledge oneself better and can have an impact on his/her general well-being. As mentioned in Akhtar’s (1999) book, “in the case of immigrant patients, the assessment of identity-related issues, while not eclipsing their other complaints, is of paramount importance” (p.73). Individuals can have opportunities to share similar experiences with other immigrants, which in turn may reduce potential dissociation from the ethnic group.

There has been an increase in research about multicultural awareness in art therapy (Acton, 2001; Calisch, 2003; Chebaro, 1998; Cherry, 2002; Gerity, 2000; Hocoy, 2002; Roy, 1999), and graphic indicators concerning issues involved in immigration (Mauro, 1998; Rousseau & Heusch, 2000; Rousseau, Lacroix, Bagilishya, & Heusch, 2003). However, there is a lack of research in art therapy with immigrant individuals about the etiology and manifestations of the psychosocial and social reactions to immigration and acculturation. The primary emphasis of research that has been conducted is on the art therapist’s exploration of their own ethnic identity, within the context of cultural awareness in the therapy process, with far less emphasis on the topic of the immigrant’s subjective experience with regard to issues of ethnic identity beyond childhood. For instance, Lumpkin (2006) explored how her own ethnic identity may influence her identity as an art therapist through the use of artistic metaphors. Other methods of raising cultural awareness in art therapists have occurred through multicultural self-reflection courses which seem to aid art therapists to become more aware of both the client’s and the therapist’s cultural background both of which would play an important role in any therapeutic intervention (Cherry, 2002). A few studies have examined some indicators of loss, confusion, and culture-split in the creative expressions of refugee and immigrant children, and ways to facilitate a useful tool for expressing their experiences (Rousseau & Heusch, 2000; Rousseau, Lacroix, Bagilishya, & Heusch, 2003). However, the focus of these studies is limited to younger children who had been
dislocated from their homelands and lacks the focus on the individual’s experience of the migration during the transition from childhood to adulthood.

Since many cultural values and concepts are unconsciously integrated to one’s identity, and since participants in this study have immigrated at a younger age before they have fully integrated a more mature identity or developed adequate descriptive language, art therapy would provide a new means of communication to explore their identities through a symbolic language. The nonverbal communication in the creative arts therapies provides immigrants a useful medium to express the hidden parts of cultural awareness and this process becomes a healing aspect for them (Dokter, 1998; Lewis, 1997). The artistic expression is a form of symbolic speech that gives individuals a tool to integrate and understand their interpersonal and intrapsychic conflicts, and furthermore it can serve as a synthesizer in integrating multiple levels of identity of the individual (Hammer, 1958; Robbins, 2001). The art making process could be taken as a metaphor for reflecting upon the experiences of this particular immigrant population and allow them to express their thoughts and feelings using an alternative form of communication.

The use of metaphors and projective techniques in art therapy, such as a tree metaphor and a bridge metaphor, can reflect the person’s self-concept and his perception of the environment surpassing conscious censorship (Hammer, 1958; Hays & Lyons, 1981). The tree metaphor is used universally to depict a person’s unconscious feelings about self and his perception of self in relation to others (Burns, 1987; Hammer, 1958). The bridge metaphor is another universal symbol that represents both a connection between humans and the environment, and a transition in overcoming an obstacle in one’s life (Hays & Lyons, 1981). Both of these metaphors may provide a significant vehicle for immigrants which may give them an expressive tool to communicate their thoughts and feelings about their self-concept and transitional struggles to strive in the adopted country. The art making process may also allow immigrants to talk about their
experiences and issues through visual representations among family members which may minimize inter-generational conflict in immigrant families.

This study is delimited to a specific sample of healthy 1.5-generation of Korean immigrants who have immigrated to the United States when they were between the ages of five and sixteen. This study is also delimited by the small number of participants. Hence the findings obtained from this study may not be generalized to a larger population of immigrants but would reflect the individual subjective experiences of being immigrants. Although this study was designed for five participants, only one healthy Korean American female young adult between the ages of 18 and 34 qualified and was enrolled to participate in art making processes. Therefore, the results cannot be generalized to other 1.5 Korean American individuals who are under 18 or over 34 years of age. As the stages of one’s ethnic identity is not fixed but depends on the individual’s life circumstances and personal esteem (Dokter, 1998; Nesdale & Mak, 2003), the limitations of this study include the lack of control for all the life events of the participants involved in this study that may have some temporary or permanent impact on one’s identity during the recruitment period.

The research objective of this study was to explore the lived experience of ethnic identity formation in 1.5-generation of Korean American immigrants to the United States through as recounted and described in artwork and in-depth open-ended interviews about their immigration experiences. The research questions for this study were stated as the following: How is the formation and development of ethnic identity recounted and expressed by 1.5-generation Korean American immigrants through the artistic expression? What are these psychological experiences, as expressed through the art and interview process?
CHAPTER II : LITERATURE REVIEW

Overview

The purpose of this literature review chapter is to provide a comprehensive overview of the existing literature on the topic of ethnic identity development in relation to the immigration phenomena among 1.5 generation Korean American young adults. This chapter will first introduce the topic of multiculturalism and immigration in the United States. Then the general definition of identity and ethnic identity, and a conceptual framework of ethnic identity will be discussed. The mid section of this chapter will review the relationship between ethnic identity development and immigration among Korean Americans, and will further discuss its psychological implications for 1.5 generation Korean immigrants in particular. Lastly, the use of metaphors and symbolic communication in art therapy will be introduced, and its clinical application for immigrants will be discussed.

Multiculturalism and Immigration in the U.S.

At present, the United States is becoming more and more diverse with a mix of many different national origins creating a cultural-hybrid or a “new melting pot” (Jacoby, 2004; Lee, 1999). Due to this mixture of diverse cultures, there has been a continued demand for multicultural consciousness in the U.S. (McGoldrick, Giordano, & Garcia-Preto, 2005). This phenomenon that is often recalled as “multiculturalism”, however, is more than just an ethnic-blend. Roy (1999) stated that culture is:

a shared system of meanings, an agreement between a group of people about how to talk, behave, and perceive. While we all are influenced by different cultures to a certain extent … multi-culture is an acknowledgement that this shared system is becoming increasingly complex as the amount of information we are exposed to and influenced by continues to
In the United States, many people from diverse cultures have migrated to form the cultural hybrid that exists today, and various cultural traditions and migration patterns exist within the U.S. “The U.S. Bureau of the Census (2000) projects that by the year 2040, Caucasians will constitute 56.2%; Hispanics, 21.7%; African Americans, 14.5%; Asian/Pacific Islanders, 8.8%; and American Indians/Eskimos/Aleuts, 1% of the U.S. population” (Calisch, 2003, p.11). The Asian immigration to the U.S. has taken various historical and cultural patterns, and since the Immigration Act of 1965, it has opened new waves of immigration from many different Asian countries (Lee, 1998). The elimination of the national origins quota system and less restrictions to immigration based on particular nationalities allowed immigration from countries that had previously been denied entry in the U.S. If Chinese and Japanese immigrants were the dominant Asian immigrants in the earlier days in Asian immigration history, there are other Asian immigrants from Taiwan, Hong Kong, Korea, India, Vietnam, Cambodia, and Laos who make up a bigger immigrant population over the last decade (Lee, 1998).

McGoldrick, Giordano, and Garcia-Preto (2005) state the following which raises an important question about multiculturalism in the U.S. signifying that it is not just a simple blend of various cultures that are living together complementarily:

citizens of the United States increasingly reflect multiple cultural backgrounds. Nevertheless, because of our society’s political, economic, and racial dynamics, our country is still highly segregated; we tend to live in communities segregated communities by race, culture, and class, which also have a profound influence on our sense of ethnic identity. (p.1)

It is crucial to note that “thinking about multicultural issues means understanding the experience of any group within its context rather than as part of a stereotypic norm” (Calisch, 2003, p.11).
Hence, the inherent nature of the U.S. being a country where people of different ethnicities live together and form group memberships to different communities, the sense of ethnic identity plays an important role in how individuals construct their worlds within this realm of multiculturalism.

Ethnic Identity

Definition of Ethnic Identity and its Components

Forming an identity is a complex and dynamic process wherein many different factors contribute to the individual’s identity formation. Identity development is universal across cultures and the exploration of identity issues is a crucial developmental process for every individual (Erikson, 1968; Muuss, 1982). Muuss (1982) highlights that “although the specific quality of a person’s identity differs from culture to culture, the accomplishment of this development task has a common element in all cultures” (p.61).

Erikson (1968) postulates that identity formation is not something that is established at one time but continues to change and develop across a person’s life span, and failure to achieve a secure identity has negative psychological consequences. Identity development is always changing and developing throughout one’s life and is a “forever to-be-revised sense of the reality of the Self within social reality” (Erikson, 1968, p.211). Erikson (1968) describes:

identity, then, also contains a complementarity of past and future both in the individual and in society: it links the actuality of a living past with that of a promising future. (p.310)

There are various definitions given to ethnic identity due the complex and ever-evolving concept of ethnicity. According to McGoldrick, Giordano, and Garcia-Preto (2005):

Ethnicity, the concept of a group’s ‘peoplehood’, refers to a group’s commonality of ancestry and history, through which people have evolved shared values and customs.
Ethnicity refers to discrete qualities that reflect a particular ethnic group. Hence, members of an ethnic group share the same historical experiences, physical and cultural characteristics and build up emotional ties. The definition of ethnicity is different from race, which refers to specific physical traits of a person (Lee, 1998), and the concept of ethnicity pertains to cultural group membership in one’s ethnic group. Ethnicity is characterized by cultural distinctions such as language, dress, food, holidays, customs, values, and beliefs (Min, 1999). “Ethnic identity” which is defined as the self identification of one’s ethnicity or one’s chosen ethnic label is inherently different from “ethnicity” which is determined by parents’ ethnic heritage (Phinney, 1992). Ethnic identity carries a meaning of “belonging” and it “has a profound impact on our sense of well-being within our society and on our mental and physical health” (McGoldrick, Giordano, & Garcia-Preto, 2005, p.1). It is also a social construction where “an individual’s ethnic identity may vary according to the influence of other individuals and the social context” (Lee, 1998, p.75). Hence, ethnic identity is both individually defined and collectively constructed. Phinney (1992) gives the following definition of ethnic identity:

ethnic identity is an aspect of a person’s social identity that has been defined by Tajfel (1981) as that part of an individual’s self-concept that derives from his or her knowledge of membership in a social group or groups together with the value and emotional significance attached to that membership. (p.156)

The most important question that is raised surrounding the topic of ethnic identity is how individuals in an ethnic group develop an integrated sense of self that incorporates the dynamic and multiple dimensions – past, present, private, public, and collective selves (Lee, 1998). Every individual is born into an ethnic group or sometimes more than two ethnic groups but there are individual differences as to how they attribute meanings to their ethnic identity, how they feel over the centuries. (p.2)
about it and how much of their behavior is influenced by it (Lee, 1998; Phinney, 1992). Since ethnic identity development is a complex and dynamic process, individuals conceptualize their ethnic identities throughout their lifetime and the state of their ethnic identities may vary according to the social context and the time frame that they are in (McGoldrick, Giordano, & Garcia-Preto, 2005; Lee, 1998).

The topic of ethnic identity has been salient in literature as the numbers of ethnic minorities continue to increase in the U.S. (Phinney, 1992). Many studies that explored the topic of ethnic identity have focused on non-dominant or minority groups in comparison with the majority culture (Sue & Sue, 1999). McGoldrick, Giordano, and Garcia-Preto (2005) state that “when there has been discussion of ethnicity, it has tended to focus on non-dominant groups’, ‘otherness’, emphasizing their deficits, rather than their adaptive strengths or their place in the larger society” (p.2). The authors further argue that “ethnicity pertains to everyone, and influences everyone’s values, not only those who are at the margins of this society” (p.2). In summary, the general concept of ethnic identity has been shared by scholars in the field but due to the nature of the dynamic and complex concept of ethnic identity, there have been different emphasis in their investigation of the topic.

Given the complex nature of ethnic identity, there are various components that constitute its meaning. Due to the different aspects of ethnic identity, previous literature seems to use the terms “ethnic identity”, “cultural identity” and “racial identity” interchangeably depending on how one defines these concepts. The various components of ethnic identity include (Phinney, 1990, 1992): ethnicity and ethnic self-identification; sense of belonging to one’s ethnic group; positive and negative attitudes toward one’s ethnic group; and ethnic involvement such as social participation and cultural practices. Subcomponents such as language, friendship, religious affiliation and practice, political activity, and other cultural activities involving media, literature,
arts, and sports are all part of the ethnic practices (Phinney, 1990).

The multifaceted constructs of ethnic identity determines one’s ethnic identity and various factors in the ethnic communities may influence one’s development of ethnic identity. Although an individual’s cultural background refers to one’s ethnicity, “it is also profoundly influenced by social class, religion, migration, geography, gender oppression, racism, and sexual orientation, as well as by family dynamics” (McGoldrick, Giordano, & Garcia-Preto, 2005, p.1). Ethnic identity is strongly influenced by the individual’s social context (Yeh & Huang, 1996). Hence, “when we ask people to identify themselves ethnically, we are really asking them to oversimplify, to highlight a part of their identity in order to make certain themes of cultural continuity more apparent” (McGoldrick, Giordano, & Garcia-Preto, 2005, p.7). Looking into one’s ethnic identity would entail integrating one’s internal representation of cultural identities (McGoldrick, Giordano, & Garcia-Preto, 2005). Since every individual has a multifaceted cultural identity that is composed of various historical roots, individuals face the need to choose one or another aspect of their cultural identity according to different contexts and social feedback from their surroundings and make it meaningful for them (Lee, 1998; McGoldrick, Giordano, & Garcia-Preto, 2005).

*Theoretical Models of Ethnic Identity Development*

Researchers have indicated that ethnic identity is closely tied to both ethnic attachment and ethnic solidarity. Ethnic attachment is defined as “the degree to which members are culturally, socially, and psychologically attached to the ethnic group” (Min, 1999, p.16). Ethnic solidarity refers to “the degree to which members use ethnic collective actions to protect their common interests” (Min, 1999, p.16). Therefore, the degree to which an immigrant individual maintains one’s ethnic identity is dependent upon the individual’s pre-migrant primordial ties in the country of origin and post-migration adaptation patterns in the host country (Min, 1999). The trend of
ethnic identity development theories for immigrants has transformed over the years from assimilation models in the 1960’s to cultural pluralism or ethnicization models since the 1970’s (Lee, 1998; Min, 1999). Due to various components that make up the concept, ethnic identity has been studied using a variety of theoretical frameworks from different disciplines (Phinney, 1992). Phinney (1990) states that there are three major perspectives that explains the different theoretical approaches to ethnic identity development which would be discussed in further detail in the sections that follow: (1) social identity theory – social psychology discipline; (2) acculturation theory – social sciences discipline; (3) identity formation theory – developmental/counseling psychology discipline.

Social identity theory was developed by Tajfel and Turner in 1979, and according to this theory, a person has many “personal selves” in the context of being a member of a group (Phinney, 1990). Therefore, depending on different social contexts, an individual may exert different levels of self. This theory asserts that once a person establishes his position as a member of a group, he seeks to achieve positive self-esteem by positively comparing his in-group from the out-group (Phinney, 1990). If a group is considered in low-regard by a dominant group, the members in that group will also have a low self-regard. In sum, individual’s sense of who they are comes from the collective group identity “we” rather than the individual identity “I”.

According to acculturation theory, ethnic identity is significant when there is a relationship between two groups in one society over time (Phinney, 1990). There is a distinction to be made between the term acculturation and ethnic identity. Ethnic identity is an aspect of acculturation and its focus is on the individual’s process of relating one’s ethnic group to dominant group, whereas acculturation focuses on the group phenomenon especially how minority groups relate themselves to dominant groups (Phinney, 1990). This theory suggests four degree of identification involved in a group membership (Eyou, Dair, & Dixon, 2000; Hocoy,
2002; Kim, 1999; Phinney, 1990). These four degrees are defined and described as follows: 1) integration/bicultural identity; 2) marginal identity; 3) separated identity; 4) assimilated identity. Integration/ bicultural identity means a high identity with both one’s ethnic group and the majority culture. Marginal identity means a low identification with both one’s ethnic group and the majority culture, where individuals feel that they do not belong in any group. Separated identity means a high identity with one’s ethnic group but a low identity with the majority culture. Assimilated identity means a high identity with the majority culture but a low identity with one’s ethnic group, where the individual is likely to suffer from a cultural conflict. This theory also discusses the psychological implications involved in having a dual group membership (Eyoud, Dair, & Dixon, 2000; Hocoy, 2002; Kim, 1999; Phinney, 1990).

Lastly, identity formation theory or stage theory focuses on the developmental aspects of ethnic identity development. It is based on the assumption that ethnic identity is a dynamic and evolutionary process and therefore individuals progress along different stages of their identity development (Phinney, 1990). Many scholars have suggested various stage models to explain culture-specific groups on ethnic identity development (Atkinson, Morten, & Sue, 1989; Christensen, 1989; Lee, 1999; Lewis, 1997; Poston, 1990; Sue & Sue, 1990). Table 1 depicts a summary of these different theoretical models of ethnic identity development.

Asian American Identity Development Model

One of the early type models of Asian American identity development looked at different types of identity formation among Chinese American students which were distinguished as traditionalist, marginal person, and bicultural identity as Asian American (Sue & Sue, 1971). Kitano (1982) also proposed a similar type model that reflected ethnic identity development among Japanese Americans. However, these early type models lacked the following principles (Lee, 1991): First, these type models fail to represent the dynamic process and complexity of
ethnic identity development. Second, these models only reflected one ethnic group in their studies (ie. Asian American ethnic group) hence they were too population-specific. Following these criticisms, theorists began to develop stage or process models of Asian American identity development which viewed ethnic identity formation as a continuous process occurring in stages from less healthy to more healthy ethnic identity (Kim, 1981; Lee, 1991). Through these stage models, theorists were able to explain what factors influenced individual’s ethnic identity advancement.

Kim (1981) proposed a five-stage model of Asian American identity development and it incorporates “the influence of acculturation, exposure to cultural differences, environmental negativism to racial differences, personal methods of handling race-related conflicts, and the effects of group or social movements on the Asian American individual” (Sue & Sue, 1999, p.126).

Limitation of Theoretical Models of Ethnic Identity Development

The above mentioned stages of ethnic identity development models provide a useful framework for greater understanding of the different cultural attitudes of diverse individuals. However, they are not perfect but rather have several shortcomings. First, the identified stages are not fixed since ethnic identity development is a dynamic process (Sue & Sue, 1999) and these models do not give explanations of contributing factors that lead to progression of stages (Yeh & Huang, 1996). The stages proposed in these different theoretical models fluctuate depending upon the individual and the individual’s context (Lewis, 1997). Hence, an individual may be experiencing elements of various stages simultaneously, fixated at one particular stage, advancing through stages faster or regression depending on the situation and presenting context that the individual is in (Sue & Sue, 1999; Yeh & Huang, 1996). The cultural identity development models could be viewed as a linear process as individuals progress through each of the stages identified by these models. Yet, this
Table 1. Ethnic Identity Development Models (stage models)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Models</th>
<th>Stages of Identity Development</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Racial/Cultural Identity (Sue &amp; Sue, 1990)</td>
<td>Conformity, Dissonance, Resistance &amp; Immersion, Introspection, Integrative Awareness</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cross-cultural Awareness (Christensen, 1989)</td>
<td>Unawareness, Transition, Conscious Awareness, Consolidated Awareness, Transcendent Awareness</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Biracial Identity (Poston, 1990)</td>
<td>Personal Identity, Choice of Group Categorization, Enmeshment/Denial, Appreciation, Integration</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dominant Racial Identity (Lewis, 1997)</td>
<td>Pre-encounter/pre-exposure, Encounter/Exposure, Return or Pseudo independence, Immersion/Emersion, Autonomy &amp; Integration</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Black Identity (Cross, 1995)</td>
<td>Pre-encounter, Encounter, Immersion-Emersion, Internalization, Internalization-Commitment</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Asian American Identity (Kim, 1981)</td>
<td>Ethnic Awareness, White Identification, Awakening to social political consciousness, Redirection to Asian American consciousness, Incorporation</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

linear process will have some variability due to individual difference in his/her identity development at a particular life cycle stage (Sue & Sue, 1999). Second, many of these ethnic/cultural identity development models are based on the perception that individual’s identity develops from their experience with an oppressive society (Sue & Sue, 1999). For instance, the ‘Black identity model’ has basis on the reaction of ‘Black individuals’ to oppression and focuses on how they construct their ethnic identity in relation to the dominant white group (Kim 1999). It is important to note that not all individuals from a particular minority group share same identity development or beliefs, and individual difference exists in identity development within the same
Ethnic group (Poston, 1990). Third, most of these models have implied value judgment and assume that the final stage of the ethnic/cultural identity model represents much healthier form of ethnic identity (Sue & Sue, 1999). For example, in Racial Cultural Identity model (R/CID), an individual who is in the integrative awareness stage is seen as having a more healthy form of ethnic/cultural identity. Fourth, the impact of sociocultural factors in identity development should be considered in future ethnic/cultural identity models. “There is a need for exploration and investigation of how interpersonal, institutional, societal, and cultural factors may either facilitate or impede cultural identity development” (Sue & Sue, 1999). Fifth, although an individual’s identity may take a uniform progression in these stage models, affective, attitudinal, cognitive, and behavioral aspects of identity may not take a one-to-one stage-like format (Sue & Sue, 1999). Lastly, many researchers have tended to focus on specific ethnic groups to explore the identity development within those ethnic groups, and lack the focus on ethnic identity as a general phenomenon relevant to cross-cultural groups from all backgrounds (Phinney, 1992). Therefore, other components of identity should be explored in depth in terms of how they play a role in the individual’s ethnic/cultural identity development along with other factors such as class, age, and gender.

**Ethnic Identity and its Psychological Implications**

In order to examine the psychological implications that are involved in ethnic identity formation and development, it is essential to look at the wider psychological implications involved in ego identity development in general. According to Erikson’s theory of human development, there are eight human life stages with different developmental tasks to be resolved at each stage. The first stage begins at infancy where the developmental task surrounds the topic of becoming a trusting versus mistrusting person. A successful resolution of the developmental crisis at this stage will lead to a healthy individual who has the ability to trust others and to trust
oneself. A failure to resolve this developmental task will lead to mistrust of others and oneself and the “lack of trust in infancy may contribute to the identity confusion in adolescence” leading to “identity diffusion in adolescence” (Muuss, 1982, p.65). The second stage of human development takes place during 18 months – 3.5 years of age. At this stage, the individual needs to deal with the issue of autonomy versus shame and doubt. A positive outcome upon resolving this developmental task will lead the child to have a sense of autonomy and self-assurance. Gaining a sense of autonomy is “an essential prerequisite for the development of a mature ego-identity” and “contribute to the formation of an identity in adolescence” (Muuss, 1982, p.66). However, “the identity crisis of adolescence revives and grows out of an unresolved autonomy crisis”, if not resolved successfully at this stage (Muuss, 1982, p.66). When the child is between 3.5 – 6 years of age, he is faced with the third stage of developmental task that involves a sense of initiative versus a sense of guilt. This stage is involved with the child’s ability to engage in intellectual initiative to acquire new learning from his environment through his play activities. Muuss (1982) stated that a sense of initiative emerges when this developmental crisis is resolved successfully and this “will later in adolescence become the basis for curiosity, ambition, and experimentation with different roles just as the child’s play activities often reflect an anticipation of different roles” (p.67). A failure to successfully resolve the crisis at this stage will result in “guilt, inhibition by fear, role inhibition, role fixation, and too much dependence on adults” (Muuss, 1982, p.67). The fourth stage is associated with the development of a sense of industry versus the emergence of feelings of inferiority. At this stage children learn to positively identify the task and are willing to learn and master that task, acquiring a feeling of success. However, the negative outcome of this stage will leave the child feeling useless and inadequate. The fifth stage is characterized by the developmental task of identity versus identity confusion and this is where Erikson (1968) explored the importance of ego-identity development and resolution of identity
issues during adolescence. He postulates that adolescents need to acquire an ego-identity and resolve issues around identity crisis to avoid the dangers of role confusion and identity confusion that may affect further ego development. “Identity must be acquired through sustained individual effort” (Muuss, 1982, p.69) and “the adolescent who fails the search for an identity will experience self-doubt, role diffusion, and role confusion” (Muuss, 1982, p.72).

The exploration of identity issues is a crucial developmental process for every individual (Erikson, 1968; Phinney, 1992). Identity development is known to have its “normative crisis in adolescence” and one cannot “separate the identity crisis in individual life and contemporary crises in historical development because the two help to define each other and are truly relative to each other” (Erikson, 1968, p.23). Erikson states that:

Youth is not only confronted with an internal ‘physiological revolution’ that interferes with the establishment of a reliable body image but also with “psychological crisis” that revolves around the issue of identity formation. (Muuss, 1968, p.70)

Although identity crisis is most pronounced during adolescence, ego-identity is not something that is established at one time but continues to change in one’s life (Erikson, 1968; Muuss, 1982). In addition, identity is not something that is pre-established for the individual by society nor is it something that is automatically established through maturation. Rather, it is acquired through individual’s effort to find a meaningful self-concept bringing together one’s past, present and future (Muuss, 1982).

“In psychological terms, identity formation employs a process of simultaneous reflection and observation, a process taking place on all levels of mental functioning” (Erikson, 1968, p.22). Any life events that require the individual to change one’s role in life, “such as one’s first job, marriage, parenthood, divorce, unemployment, serious illness, widowhood, or retirement” (Muuss, 1982, p.63), identity issues may surface. If the individual is unable to resolve one’s
identity formation and its crisis due to failures in previous developmental stage resolutions, there is a danger of self-doubt, role diffusion, alienation, isolation and confusion, which in turn will endanger further healthy ego development (Muuss, 1982). It may also lead to “self-destructive one-sided preoccupation or activity” (Muuss, 1982, p.72). The exploration and resolution of identity issues is another important dimension of identity (Erikson, 1968). According to Erikson’s theory of ego identity development, the central developmental task during adolescence is the achievement of a secure identity through a process of search and commitment. The failure to achieve a secure identity has been found to have negative psychological implications for adolescents, including poor self-concept, and low self-esteem. Erikson (1968) describes how “identity crisis” has become a familiar connotation and no longer entails “impending catastrophe” (p.16) but seen as a part of developmental phase that might be necessary to move along the developmental tasks, and further growth and differentiation of self.

In a study that investigated cultural identity and its measurement for Asians, Bhugra, Bhui, Mallet, Desai, Singh, and Leff (1999) concluded that self-concept is important in individual’s psychological well-being. The study discusses various factors that compose one’s cultural identity and how different ‘selves’ at different levels – individual self, familial self, social self – must be integrated to achieve healthy psychological functioning. Nesdale and Mak (2003) have also examined the psychological consequences of immigration of 510 adult immigrants in Australia from Hong Kong, Vietnam, Bosnia, Sri Lanka, and New Zealand. In this study the investigators examined the extent to which an immigrant’s ethnic identification has had an impact on their self-esteem and psychological health. The findings indicated that the immigrant’s level of ethnic identification was a primary determinant of ethnic self-esteem. However, personal self-esteem was determined by individual’s achievements and seemed to be the main predictor of immigrant psychological health (Nesdale & Mak, 2003). This indicates the importance of both
ethnic and personal self-esteem in immigrant’s psychological health but serve different functions. Sam (2000) explains that immigrant adolescents who adopt marginalization as their acculturation strategies lack significant reinforcers in their lives to develop a positive self-esteem. Hence, when investigating ethnic/cultural identity of individuals, it is important to connect the dominant/host society’s representation of “self” with the “other” to understand their relational context (Bhugra et al., 1999).

Several studies have highlighted the importance of ethnic identity and self-concept among minority young adults and ethnic identity seemed to be positively correlated with self-esteem for them (Phinney, 1992). However, this does not mean that white adolescents do not experience what minority adolescents go through in terms of ethnic identity – self esteem significance, because white adolescents also showed traits like ethnic minorities when they were in the position of a minority culture (Phinney, 1992). Thus, “ethnic identity appears to have a relationship to self-esteem more like that for minority youths in the culture as a whole” (Pinney, 1992, p.170). In addition, there are psychological implications involved in individuals who have different degrees of ethnic identification. Some findings suggest that strong ethnic identity is not necessarily associated with psychological well-being but it is also inter-related with the degree of identification with the dominant culture (Eyou, Dair, & Dixon, 2000; Phinney, 1992). Phinney (1992) noted the following:

although ethnic identity, in the sense of identification with one’s ethnic group, can range from strong to weak, an understanding of how ethnic identity is related to self-concept may require also determining an individual’s relationship to the majority group. (p.509)

Eyou, Dair and Dixon (2000) investigated the relationship between psychological adjustment and cultural identity determined by the degree of identification with own ethnic group and mainstream culture. The study involved 427 first generation Chinese immigrants and utilized
questionnaires and interviews. The results demonstrated that individuals with integrated cultural identity had higher self-esteem compared to those who had separated or marginalized cultural identity. Authors concluded that cultural integration of both one’s own ethnic group and the mainstream society is important for maintaining psychological well-being in these adolescent immigrants. It also questioned the possibility of bi-directional influences between cultural identity and psychological adjustment (Eyoo, Dair, & Dixon, 2000).

According to Gerity (2000), an unhealthy cultural assimilation where the individual denies one’s sense of self and inner life rather than multiculturalism can be detrimental to anyone’s mental health in general. McGoldrick, Giordano, and Garcia-Preto (2005)’s study proposed that those who try to assimilate to the dominant culture cutting off their connections to their heritage culture have more problems than those who maintain their heritage. Additionally, pressure to assimilate in a dominant culture and renouncing one’s own ethnic identity may result in anger, depression and violence (Phinney et al., 2001): “Hostility and denial of his minority culture may cause him to turn his hostility inward and to develop a form of ‘racial self-hatred’ … self-hatred can result in violence as well as in derogatory attitudes towards one’s own group” (Sue & Sue, 1971, p.40). Few studies have shown that “if people are secure in their own identity, they can act with greater freedom, flexibility and openness to other of different cultural backgrounds” (Dokter, 1998, p.149; McGoldrick, Giordano, & Garcia-Preto, 2005). Hence redefining the immigration experience and the ethnicity of the immigrant individual as a psychological task can contribute to establishing a more culturally balanced identity. However, some studies have shown that having a secure ethnic identity does not necessarily entail openness to members of different ethnic groups (Phinney, 1992).

There is some evidence that ethnic identity also varies according to the context of the individual and individual’s familial values. Rumbaut (1994) suggested that a child’s cultural
assimilation and adaptation of a particular ethnic identity was shaped by his family context. Rumbaut (1994) discussed how the children’s ethnic self identities are influenced by “parental ethnic socialization, social status, and parent-child relationships” (p.790). In Wadeson’s (2000) book, Sue Lee illustrated an example of a Korean American immigrant adolescent on the psychological implications of parental or familial values affecting the formation of ethnic identity.

Kyung, an 18 year old who had come to the United States at age 10, was discouraged from making Korean friends by her parents because they wanted her to adapt to American culture quickly…she had tried to transform herself according to her parents’ wishes for her by coloring and perming her hair and wearing lots of makeup. (p.261)

Sue Lee described how the group of immigrant adolescents in her study “all felt torn by their parents’ expectations” (Wadeson, 2000, p.262).

In essence, integration of one’s cultural identities is a significant factor for maintaining a healthy psychological functioning (Bhugra et al., 1999; Eyou, Dair, & Dixon, 2000; Hurh, 1990; Phinney et al., 2001; Zhou, 1999).

Immigration and Ethnic Identity

Effect of Migration on Ethnic Identity Development

Migration is a developing process rather than a single event and the stress of adjusting to a new host society can be detrimental to one’s mental health (Dokter, 1998). Similarly, identity development is always a changing and developing process and not something that is “established” as an “achievement” (Erikson, 1968). Migration impacts individuals at different phases of the life cycle, and there are different consequences of acculturation to a new culture depending on when they go through this process (Lee & Mock, 2005; McGoldrick, Giordano, & Garcia-Preto, 2005). Kaplan (2003) explains that “cultures cannot successfully travel intact from one nation to
another” (p.2) and therefore cultural changes due to migration are inevitable phenomena. Moreover, adjusting to a new culture after immigration takes time, often over many generations (Inclan, 2003). Muuss (1982) states that “the search for an identity involves the establishment of a meaningful self-concept in which past, present, and future are brought together to form a unified whole. Consequently, the task is more difficult in a historical period in which the anchorage of family and community tradition has been lost” (p.69). In her study with culturally displaced Indian youth, Burt (1993) also suggests that individuals who had lost contact with one’s own culture and failed to assimilate into the host culture often resorted to substance abuse, suicidal and antisocial behaviors to replace the void feelings. The dissociation with one’s own culture may also lead to a slow self-destruction through substance abuse in an attempt to restore a meaning of life and a sense of self (Gerity, 2000). Kolm (1967) suggested the following to represent the dilemmas of immigrants:

> to the immigrants and their descendants it means a continuous struggle not only for rebuilding the physical foundations for existence, but also for some form of cultural identity, and for social status … Most, if not all the dilemmas of the immigrant, his potentialities for new advantageous developments, as well as the possibilities for his failures and defeats can be related to his personality as formed and developed in his culture. (p.24, 27)

Thus, transnational connections between the host and the home countries play an important role in immigrants and it enables them to maintain higher levels of ethnicity (Kolm, 1967; Min, 1999).

Various factors are involved in the immigration process and immigrants go through various developmental states of acculturation in forming an ethnic community and ethnic identities in the U.S. (Hurh, 1980; Rumbaut, 1994). Hence, there are complex psychosocial reactions involved in immigration and acculturation (Akhtar, 1999; Baker, 1999). The psychological implications involved in migration are more subtle and complex especially for those individuals who have migrated at a later stage of development (Akhtar, 1999). Baker (1999)
also demonstrates in his study with Arab individuals that acculturation serves as a coping mechanism within the host culture, and re-accluration – going back to one’s home culture with acculturated value system – equally causes conflicts and psychosocial stress. Akhtar (1999) addresses that the immigration process could leave long lasting effects on an individual’s identity which impacts both inter- and intra-psychic aspects of one’s self identity, but also provides the individual with an opportunity for psychic growth. The author parallels immigrant’s experience in the adopted country with Mahler’s process of individuation where the concept of individuation is viewed from both interpersonal and intra-psychic perspectives. Immigration poses a greater threat to an individual’s identity that may lead to problematic identity formation if the individual fails to synthesize two self representations (Akhtar, 1999).

The effects of migration might be specific to particular ethnic groups. Ho (1987) delineates impacts of immigration and cultural adjustments specific to Asian/Pacific American family. Ho outlined the two interrelated levels of adaptive cultural transition that are involved in the process of immigration: “(1) the physical or material, economic, educational, and language transitions; and (2) the cognitive, affective, and psychological (individual members and family as a unit) transitions” (p.31). There are also inherent cognitive responses of each individual who are going through immigration process albeit of individual differences on the schema and the order of these reactions:

(1) cultural shock and disbelief at the disparity between what was expected and what actually exists, (2) disappointment at what exists, (3) grief at the separation from and loss of what was left behind, (4) anger and resentment, (5) depression because of the current family situation, (6) some form of acceptance of their situation, and (7) mobilization of family resources and energy. (Shon and Ja, 1982 as cited in Ho, 1982, p.32)
In one study, the formation of ethnic self-identities during adolescence and the psychosocial adaptation of second generation immigrants from Asia, Latin America and the Caribbean were addressed (Rumbaut, 1994). The findings showed that there were differences in the patterns of ethnic self-identification both between and within different heritage groups. The study highlights gender differences, acculturation process, perception of discrimination, and family context in ethnic self-identification, and suggests that the process of ethnic identity formation is complex, conflictual, and stressful phenomenon that impacts immigrant parents and children alike. This study also noted that the parental nationality had strong effects on the hyphenated identity, as in Asian-American, for Asian-origin children in particular (Rumbaut, 1994).

Generation and Gender Differences in Ethnic Identity Development among Immigrants

The process of ethnic identity development might be different for different generations of immigrants. For the children of immigrants, the process of ethnic identity development is complicated by intense acculturation and intergenerational conflict, especially during adolescence when the new generation is “likely to reject their parents’ ethnic values and strive to become Americanized” (McGoldrick, Giordano, & Garcia-Preto, 2005, p.26). Studies have shown that intergenerational conflicts also arise from immigrant families’ struggles over values during their transition to the new culture (Chu & Mustafa, 2006; McGoldrick, Giordano, & Garcia-Preto, 2005; Zhou, 1997). Previous research has revealed that acculturation alone can bring out an imbalance in the family structure and that individuals who are younger in age acculturate more rapidly than those who are older (Moreno & Wadeson, 1986).

Ho (1987) explains that intergenerational conflict between immigrant parents and children might be much more heightened especially during the cultural transition, and the child is faced with many unexpected challenges and feels overwhelmed by the situation in which he/she had no choice. As the child becomes proficient in the English language and learns to assimilate
the Western culture and values to which he/she is exposed to outside home, more intergenerational conflicts are created in the development of a wider physical/emotional gap between the parents and the child. Rousseau et al. (2005) also indicated that identity issues arising from migration are not confined to one generation but passed on and transformed over generations. The first generation immigrants feel threatened when they are challenged by their American-born or American-raised children about their cultural practices that they have maintained and tried to transmit to their children. They are worried that their children may lose a sense of their traditional ethnic values (Lee, 1998). While the older first generations search for meanings and values in immigrant life, their children or younger generations seek identity in the dominant culture (Lee, 1998). For the new second generation immigrants, identity building is based upon shared experience rather than the common ethnicity, faith or language (Chu & Mustafa, 2006), and many of them discover their ethnic identity after adolescence (Lee, 1998).

According to a survey that involved over 5,200 teenage students, representing 77 nationalities in South California and South Florida in 1992, the foreign-born immigrant adolescents identified with their national origin (43%) four times more than those who were U.S.-born (11%) (Rumbaut, 1998). Respectively, U.S.-born adolescents were more likely to identify themselves as Americans or hyphenated-American than those who were foreign-born (Rumbaut, 1998).

Interestingly, gender may also play a significant role in the choice of ethnic self identification for immigrants (Rumbaut, 1994). In Rumbaut (1994)’s study that investigated the psychosocial adaptation in relation to identity formation of over 5,000 adolescent immigrants from Asia, Latin America, and Caribbean, has revealed that males were more likely to choose the unhyphenated identity – American or national origin identity – than females. The current literature suggested that the experience of acculturation process was qualitatively different between young immigrant males and females as well (Bhatia & Ram, 2001; Gibson, 2001). The
relationship between gender and ethnic identity was found to be more pronounced in Asian American women in particular who were coming from patriarchal customs (Min & Kim, 1999).

**Psychological Implications Involved in Ethnic Identity Formation in Immigrants**

For most immigrants, the social environment of the host country and the loss of cultural identity due to migration have an effect on their psychological health (Dokter, 1998; Nesdale & Mak, 2003; Phinney, Horenczyk, Lebkind, & Vedder, 2001). The stress of migration including the dislocation from one’s culture and geographical area, and the adjustment to a new culture, can add up to serious mental health problems (Dokter, 1998). In addition, the vast number of life changes over a short period of time intensifies psychological stress for immigrants (Holmes & Masuda, 1974). According to Dokter (1998), “migration is an exaggerated separation and individuation process to such an extent that it is sometimes seen as adding an extra stage of the life cycle” (p.145). Akhtar (1999) also discerns how the intrapsychic conflict that immigrants experience resembles the second individuation process of adolescence. In relation to how adolescents go through the normal developmental phase of individuation process where they transition between childhood and adulthood, immigrant adolescents go through an additional struggle for self-identification and social integration in the new country. Ter Maat (1997) states that “as part of the acculturation and assimilation processes, immigrant adolescents are expected to leave behind their home country and embrace a new culture, even though many are experiencing feelings of loss, isolation, or betrayal” (p.19). As a result of this acculturation and assimilation process, immigrant individuals are torn between two conflicting cultural and social values leading to possible psychological ambivalence (Portes & Zhou, 1993).

Previous research reported that the ethnic values and identities are retained for many generations after migration and that they play a crucial but often unconscious role in individual’s family life and personal development (Dokter, 1998; Rousseau et al., 2005). For instance, the
reluctance to identify one’s own ethnicity and cultural background can be detrimental to one’s quality of life and psychological well-being (Dokter, 1998; Lieber, Chin, Nihira, & Mink, 2001; Nesdale & Mak, 2003; Phinney et al., 2001). Since the “cultural meaning may persist many generations after migration and after people have ceased to be aware of their heritage, when family members move from an ethnic enclave, even several generations after immigration, the stresses of adaptation are likely to be severe” (McGoldrick, Giordano, & Garcia-Preto, 2005, p.11, p.18). This stress of adaptation will also be different depending on whether the individual has migrated alone, with his family/community, or with the whole nation. McGoldrick, Giordano, and Garcia-Preto (2005) state that “those who try to assimilate at the price of forgetting their connections to their heritage are likely to have more problems than those who maintain their heritage” (p.13). Typical problems associated with this cultural transition are isolation, enmeshment, disengagement, loss, identity confusion, and a cultural split between the home country and the host country (Dokter, 1998; Rousseau & Heusch, 2000).

A study examined the complexity of the issues surrounding ethnic identity, immigration, and adaptation to a new host society and how these factors play a role in the psychological well-being of immigrants (Phinney, Horenczyk, Lebkind, & Vedder, 2001). It suggests an interactional model that accounts for various determinants for understanding this complex process. This study supports that an integrated identity, combination of strong ethnic and national identities, in immigrants promotes healthy psychological adaptation, and that pressures to assimilate to dominant culture giving up one’s ethnic identity from heritage culture may result in anger, depression, and violence. Some authors have also reported higher levels of psychological distress and lower self-esteem in immigrant adolescents than non-immigrant adolescents (Slonim-Nevo, Sharaga, Mirsky, Petrovsky, & Borodenko, 2006).

The related psychological issues of immigration may be more or less severe depending
upon the pre-existing psychological developmental issues of the immigrant. Identity formation may be more difficult for immigrants who have migrated in their childhood when they were in the process of defining their identity such as 1.5 generation immigrants. As mentioned in Akhtar’s (1999) book, “in the case of immigrant patients, the assessment of identity-related issues, while not eclipsing their other complaints, is of paramount importance” (p.73).

*Asian American Ethnic Identity*

Since the 1970s, there has been an increasing emphasis on multicultural education and interest in Asian cultures (Min & Kim, 1999). Along with the rising issue of multiculturalism, demographic estimates suggest that the number of foreign-born residents accounts for 34.2 million taking up 12% of the total United States population (US Census Bureau, 2004). Amongst this foreign-born population, 25% reported themselves as being “Asian American” accounting for more than 10 million people (4.2%) of the total U.S. population (US Census Bureau, 2004). There has been a substantial increase in the number of Asians in the U.S. and it has been projected to reach 33.4 million, or 8% of the total U.S. population by the year 2050 (US Census Bureau, 2005). Kibria (1999) defines the term “Asian American” as the following:

> a signifier of a strategic political community, one that is driven by the shared racial interests of persons of Asian origin in the U.S. as well as a larger struggle against racism.

(p.33)

The Asian/Pacific American designation was created for various reasons such as similarities in general appearance and cultural values, common bicultural experience in the U.S., similar ethnic origins, and for political reasons. However, the term is an artificial concept since it is not accepted by all Asian/Pacific communities and between- and within-group differences exist (Sue & Morishima, 1982).

Many theoretical models for identity development have been accommodated to
encompass the dynamics and complexity of ethnic identity development beyond the population-specific models (Sue & Sue, 1999). The modern Asian American identity development models view identity formation as occurring in stages rather than in categories, and it is seen as progressive and sequential advancing from less healthy to healthier (Sue & Sue, 1999). Several studies have introduced Asian American identity development models that explain the dynamic and complex nature of ethnic identity development and the multifaceted variables that influence the individual’s ethnic identity among Asian immigrants in the U.S. (Bhugra et al., 1999; Lee, 1998; Sue & Sue, 1999). Being an Asian American involves a shuttling between the two cultures that leaves immigrants feeling stuck or having no sense of belonging in one community (Chu & Mustafa, 2006). The immigration process itself also involves highly diverse circumstances for each Asian immigrant population (Zhou, 1999). Although Asian Americans’ ethnic identities will depend on their experiences in the U.S. along with various social class factors, the native ethnic culture brought from their homelands still has considerable amount of effects on their identity formation (Lee, 1998; Min, 1999). “The struggle for an ethnic identity is a unique struggle faced by Asian Americans who are raised according to the culture of their parents, yet exposed to an entirely different culture outside the home” (Min & Kim, 1999, p.218). Min and Park (1999) also points out that many second generation Asian American college students have been reported to have inner conflicts over their ethnic identity. Thus, Asian immigrants are exposed to two distinct and seemingly opposite cultural values and they encounter situations where they have to forge new identities that would encompass the bicultural aspect of their situation (Lee & Mock, 2005; Sue & Morishima, 1982). Furthermore, these individuals’ awareness of their ethnic identity, whether it is their American, Asian, or bicultural identity, tended to emerge when they were visiting their homelands or when they became aware of their non-white status in the dominant culture (Min & Kim, 1999). Hence, “many younger-generation Asian Americans experience
strong psychological conflicts during the process of forming their ethnic and racial identities” (Min & Kim, 1999, p.223).

Ho (1987) discussed five major factors that impact cultural transitional difficulties due to immigration in Asian/Pacific American families. These five factors include: (1) economic survival, (2) American racism, (3) loss of extended family and support system, (4) vast cultural conflicts, and (5) cognitive reactive pattern to a new environment (p.31). The process of immigration inevitably changes the environmental structure of mutual support and interdependence to which Asian/Pacific families are accustomed. Lee (1998) focused on the three major Asian American immigrant populations – Korean, Chinese, Vietnamese – in Philadelphia area, and explored the immigration history, demographic and socioeconomic characteristics, myths, pan-Asian ethnic identity and the complexity of the Asian American communities. Lee compared each of the aforementioned Asian countries to demonstrate inter- and intra-group variations. His research raises a discussion that ethnic identity is meaningful depending on the relations and contexts, and should not be viewed as an individual phenomenon but rather a collective one (Lee, 1998). It is important to note that contemporary Asian immigrant groups have distinctive cultural and religious traditions that they have carried with them when they came to the U.S. (Lee, 1998; Min, 1999). For instance, Chinese, Korean, Japanese, and Vietnamese immigrants follow a distinct cultural principle called Confucianism and Buddhism. Moreover, because the term Asian immigrants lumps many different Asian countries together, it does not mean that all Asian immigrant groups have the same levels of cultural homogeneity (Min, 1999). In essence, the term “Asian American” can symbolize a sense of empowerment against racial hostility as a group but it also imposes an external category to a group of Asian immigrants who are all different (Kibria, 1999).

According to Min and Kim (1999), Asian immigrants’ ethnic identities had a significant
impact on their academic interests and career choices, and also having no Asian role models in their surroundings as immigrants have fostered them to identify with other minority individuals. In addition, many of the new second generation Asian immigrants have stated that their resistance to accept their own cultural values at home during adolescence got resolved once they entered college, where they first developed a sense of ethnic identity and learned to embrace their bicultural backgrounds (Kibria, 1999; Lee, 1998; Min & Kim, 1999). These children of first generation immigrants have attributed the reasons for this shift to the cultural diversity and large Asian population in college, a greater acceptance of different ethnic cultures in college environment, and their psychological maturation over resolving their own ethnic identity conflicts (Min & Kim, 1999). Ironically, Yeh and Huang (1996) have also found that avoiding shame was a strong factor that influenced the process of ethnic identification for Asian American college students.

Bhugra et al. (1999)’s study further discusses the need to develop a multifaceted tool to measure cultural identity among Asians since cultural and self-identities are core factors in achieving better psychological functioning. Studies have also found that the new second-generation Asian Americans have multiple ethnic identities rather than just one (Min & Kim, 1999). The development of measuring instrument for acculturation and cultural identity is difficult but there is a need to develop a multifaceted tool to measure cultural identity among Asians (Bhugra, Bhui, Mallet, Desai, Singh, & Leff, 1999). In Time magazine, Chu and Mustafa (2006) featured the concept of identity from the perspectives of second generation of Asian immigrants in the U.S. These respondents were interviewed and inquired about their experiences growing up in the U.S. and their development of self identity between two cultures – Asian and American. Interviewees shared different assimilation and acculturation stages that they have gone through in search for their identities, and how shuttling between the two cultures left them in a
state of loss and confusion. The article also described how these individuals’ desire to fit in with
the American culture created conflicts beyond the usual generational gap with their Asian parents.
Some interviewees stated that by reflecting upon their own experiences during this interview has
led them to have some insight into their parents’ experience raising them.

Korean American

General Characteristics of Korean Americans

As discussed earlier, the number of foreign-born population in the U.S has increased
dramatically during the past few decades and the number continues to grow steadily making the
country a multicultural and ethnic mixture. The U.S. Census Bureau (2005) reported that Chinese
Americans were the largest Asian group comprising 3.3 million people, followed by Filipinos (2.8
million), Asian Indians (2.5 million), Vietnamese (1.5 million), Koreans (1.4 million), and
Japanese (1.2 million). Today, Koreans are one of the rapidly growing Asian immigrant groups in
the U.S. with a 34% increase from 1990 (Kim & Ryu, 2005), representing the seventh-largest
group of foreign-born in the U.S. (Yau, 2004). The 2000 U.S. Census Bureau indicated that
immigrants from Korea made up 0.3% of the total U.S. population (Yau, 2004) and constitute
about 11% of the 10 million Asian immigrants representing the fifth-largest group among
Asian/Pacific Islander population in the U.S. (Shin, 2004). In addition, the number of Koreans
coming to the U.S as foreign students has drastically increased in recent years. In 2003, Korean
students were ranked as the second largest group of foreign students in the U.S. with a number of
74,115 students (12% of total foreign students) (Yau, 2004).

Korean Americans have immigrated to the U.S. in three distinctive waves over the years
(Hurh, 1990; Kim & Ryu, 2005; Shin, 2004; Yu, Choe, & Han, 2002). The first wave of Korean
immigration to the U.S. began in 1902 which consisted of more than 7,000 Koreans, mostly male
farmers, who came to Hawaii as plantation workers (Hurh, 1990; Kim & Ryu, 2005; Lee, 1998; Shin, 2004; Yu, Choe, & Han, 2002). Most of these earlier immigrants were poor financially and came to the U.S. as contract laborers to escape from economic hardship in Korea (Kim & Ryu, 2005; Shin, 2004). The second wave of post-Korean War immigration occurred between 1951 and 1964 with American intervention in the Korean War (Kim & Ryu, 2005; Shin, 2004; Yu, Choe, & Han, 2002). During this period, Korean immigrants were mainly brides who were married to American soldiers (6500), adopted children (6300), and students (6000) (Yu, Choe, & Han, 2002).

The massive Korean immigration to the U.S. occurred after 1965 when the Immigration and Naturalization Act of 1965 lifted the barriers against immigration from Asian countries (Kim & Ryu, 2005; Lee, 1998; Shin, 2004; Yu, Choe, & Han, 2002). This allowed Koreans to immigrate as families to the U.S. for the first time (Yu, Choe, & Han, 2002). The new set of post-1965 Korean immigrants was different from those who immigrated earlier who were mostly illiterate and poor. The new immigrants were generally well educated and college-trained individuals from the urban middle class in Korea (Shin, 2004). Over two-thirds of Korean immigrants in the U.S. immigrated after 1970 (Hurh, 1990; Shin, 2004), and the number peaked during 1981-1990 where 78% of present Koreans represent those who immigrated in the U.S. after 1980 (Yu, Choe, & Han, 2002). “In the past two decades, more than 30,000 Koreans have immigrated annually, accounting for the tenfold increase in the Korean American population between 1970 and 1990” (Kim & Ryu, 2005).

Koreans have traditionally been residing in the Western region of the United States, mainly in Hawaii and California, but today they are widely dispersed among many regions in the U.S. (Shin, 2004; Yu, Choe, & Han, 2002). Koreans have geographically dispersed themselves to different regions of the country quicker than other Asians such as the Chinese and the Vietnamese (Lee, 1998; Shin, 2004; Yu, Choe, & Han, 2002). The U.S. Census Bureau (2000) revealed that
44% of Koreans are located in the West, 23% in the Northeast, 12% in the Midwest, and 21% in the South of the country (Yu, Choe, & Han, 2002). California continues to be the state with the largest number of Koreans (345,882) followed by New York, New Jersey, Illinois, Washington, Texas, and Virginia and so forth (Shin, 2004; Yu, Choe, & Han, 2002). Interestingly, 43% of Koreans are concentrated in California and New York (Yau, 2004; Yu, Choe, & Han, 2002), and seem to be mainly residing in large urban settings which allows for material and psychological support from the Korean American community during the initial stages of adjustment period (Shin, 2004; Yu, Choe, & Han, 2002).

There are different definitions of Korean immigrants in the United States depending on the individual’s birthplace and age at immigration; first generation (ilse), 1.5 generation (ilchomose), and second generation (ise). Zhou (1999) identifies three distinct generations as the following:

the second generation (or later generations) include those persons who were either U.S.-born or foreign-born arriving in the U.S. at pre-school age (zero to four years); the 1.5-generation includes those who were foreign-born arriving in the U.S. between ages five and twelve; and the first generation includes those who were foreign-born arriving in the U.S as adolescents aged thirteen and over. (p.7)

The “new second generation” of immigrant includes both individuals who are U.S.-born and foreign-born individuals who immigrated to the U.S. during their teenage years. However, there are differences in their “physical and psychological developmental stages, in their socialization processes in the family, the school, and the society at large, as well as in their orientation toward their homeland” (Park, 1999; Zhou, 1999, p.8). There is also a difference in linguistic facility and self-identity development between the 1.5 generation and second generation (Kim, 1999). One of the important characteristics of 1.5 generation is that they are bilingual and
bicultral and have immigrated at a young age with their first generation parents (Hurh, 1990; Kim, 1999). For the purpose of this study, 1.5 generation Korean American is defined as those individuals who are Korean-born or foreign-born and arrived in the United States between the ages of five and sixteen, encompassing all the age ranges proposed by previous literature. The definition of 1.5 generation Korean American will be discussed further in the later section of this literature review chapter.

According to Min (1999), Korean immigrants have the highest level of homogeneity within its ethnic group compared to Filipino or Indian group which has many subgroup cultural/religious differences. A High level of homogeneity among Korean immigrants also entails that they have higher chance of maintaining ethnic solidarity. One of the aspects that reflect this ethnic mobilization is the establishment of their own territorial community such as Koreatown. The Korean ethnic communities such as Koreatowns have provided new Korean immigrants with the social connection and the support they need to settle down in the U.S. (Hurh, 1990). Many Korean immigrants in the U.S. own small businesses where they play a role of “middleman minorities” selling products made by white dominant corporations to minority customers such as African American and Latino customers (Min, 1999). A majority of Korean Americans run self-owned small business which are labor intensive and family or individually operated (Lee, 1998; Shin, 2004; Yu, Choe, & Han, 2002). One of the main reasons for this phenomenon is the language and cultural challenges in getting jobs in the mainstream American society and, owning a small business does not require high levels of English proficiency (Shin, 2004; Yu, Choe, & Han, 2002). Another reason for the high concentration of entrepreneurship is related to the immigrants’ self-esteem (Yu, Choe, & Han, 2002). Self-esteem is said to be closely related to person’s occupation, and owning a business as a boss in their own stores gives psychological satisfaction for these immigrants (Yu, Choe, & Han, 2002).
One of the important characteristics of Koreans in the U.S. is that they are generally well educated. “Koreans are one of the most highly educated groups in the history of American immigration” (Hurh, 1990). Similar to other Asian groups, the 2000 Census reports indicated that Koreans continue to exhibit one of the highest levels of education attainment, 35% of the population having a bachelor’s degree or higher (Yu, Choe, & Han, 2002). The reason for this high education achievement among Korean immigrants is because they are mostly from the urban middle class in Korea who are college-educated and held white-collar jobs before immigrating to the U.S. (Hurh, 1990; Lee, 1998; Shin, 2004). Shin (2004) argues that many Koreans immigrate to the U.S. with a determination to sacrifice their lives to seek better educational opportunities for their children. Due to the Asian immigrants’ high educational achievement, professional occupations, and relatively low rates of crime in the U.S., a term “the model minority” is given to reflect success aspects of Asian Americans in the U.S. (Lee, 1998; Lee & Mock, 2005). On the contrary, the term “model minority” gives a false and often distorted perception of Asian immigrants in the U.S., and it is “a racist discourse which categorizes, evaluates, ranks, and differentiates between groups” (Lee, 1998, p.165). The “model minority” image of Asian Americans creates a stereotypical label that distances them from the dominant white group as well as other minority groups in the U.S. This reinforces a self-fulfilling prophecy of the stereotype where Asian Americans try to be as “nearly white” as the mainstream dominant white individuals (Zhou, 2004).

Many Korean Americans are Christians, mainly Protestant and there are over 3,000 Korean Christian churches throughout different regions in the U.S. (Shin, 2004). Churches in the Korean American community seem to be a central location for exchanging information among members of the church (Shin, 2004), and an important communication resource especially for first generation Koreans (Yu, Choe, & Han, 2002). Organizations such as Korean community
associations, ethnic churches and temples are set up by Korean Americans to offer practical help during the transitioning phase and to support ethnic identification for Korean immigrants (Kim & Ryu, 2005). The extensive church participation by Korean Americans extends beyond the spiritual needs. The Korean church provides a place for Korean immigrants to socialize and share their experience living in a new country which they need to adapt to, and vent their anxiety and emotional stress (Shin, 2004). For second generation Korean Americans, the Korean church is a place where they get to learn Korean values and customs, while simultaneously, church participation tends to strengthen their ethnic and religious identity (Shin, 2004). Hence, the Korean American church transmits and reinforces Korean rules and norms which enable second generation Korean Americans to develop a positive social identity and ethnic group cohesion (Shin, 2004). Korean American’s religious identity plays a significant role in their ethnic identity (Park, 1999). “Their identity is largely maintained by these diverse social networks and personal networks, usually sponsored by local churches” (Lee, 1998, p.84).

Koreans are relatively recent immigrants in the U.S. and therefore their English proficiency level is relatively low. According to the 2000 U.S. Census, 78% of Korean Americans were foreign-born and used Korean at home, and only 21.7% used English alone in the household (Kim & Ryu, 2005). First generation Korean immigrants lack English proficiency compared to their children who are either American-born or raised (ie. second- and 1.5-generation), and the difficulty in mastering the English language has led many first generations to establish small businesses which requires less use of English. Although most children of Korean immigrants learn Korean at home, most of them switch to English once they enter the U.S. school system and gradually lose interest in maintaining their native language in attempt to blend in with other native English speaking students at school (Shin, 2004). Lee’s study (1998) demonstrated that “the ethnic language became a private language which was only used within the family” (p.114).
for second generation respondents, whereas it became an important communication tool among 1.5 generations that can express what English cannot. “For example, to hear 1.5 generation Korean Americans talking, you will notice the distinctive way of mixing Korean and English – putting English words in a Korean grammatical structure, or vice versa” (Lee, 1998, p.114). However, the first generation Korean American’s lack of English skills may become a source for parent-children conflict due to stress of not being able to communicate comprehensively (Shin, 2004).

**Ethnic Identity Development among Korean Americans**

Korean American identity is defined in relation to the interplay between two distinct cultures of America and Korea (Hurh, 1980). Koreans shape their ethnic identity by day-to-day ethnic encounters, with people constantly constructing their realities within the Korean American community (Lee, 1998). Because Korea is fairly a homogeneous country, when Koreans arrive in the U.S. where it is more heterogeneous, they suddenly find themselves as part of a minority culture (Lee, 1998). Hurh (1980) defines the concept of Korean-American ethnicity as “a collective sociocultural entity of those who share a sense of common origin and destiny, whether real or imagined, as being both Korean and American” (p.445).

Table 2 shows the process towards Korean-American identity proposed by Hurh (1980). Hurh (1980) considers immigration as a social process and therefore his Korean-American model is depicted as a developmental process model where there are possibilities of regression, stagnation, and mutation in the identity formation. Hurh argues that there are three interdependent factors that determine one’s identity: (1) who defines (self, others, or both); (2) what aspect (personal, group, or both); (3) in what situation (time and place) (p.453) and these factors are integrated in his identity model. The first stage of Korean American ethnic identity development begins with the Korean immigrant’s strong national loyalty as a defense against cultural shock in
the U.S. Then, the immigrant undergoes acculturation and feels ambivalent about one’s ethnic identity. The third stage is depicted by the Korean immigrant’s optimum level of adaptation into the new culture but faced with limited social assimilation. Finally, the last stage of this developmental model happens after a struggle over an identification crisis that leads to the formation of a new ethnic identity that accommodates both Korean and American values into one’s ethnic identity.

Table 2. The process towards Korean-American identity

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Developmental Stages</th>
<th>1</th>
<th>2</th>
<th>3</th>
<th>4</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>American society</td>
<td>Indifference</td>
<td>Paternalism</td>
<td>Competition</td>
<td>(Pluralism)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Probation</td>
<td>Prejudice</td>
<td>Discrimination</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Possible synthesis</td>
<td>Korean identity</td>
<td>Cognitive</td>
<td>Perception of</td>
<td>New ethnic identity</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(nativism/national</td>
<td>ambivalence</td>
<td>marginality</td>
<td>(Korean-American)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>loyalty)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Korean immigrant</td>
<td>Culture shock</td>
<td>Acculturation</td>
<td>Limited</td>
<td>Accommodation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>community</td>
<td>Mutual aid</td>
<td>Competition</td>
<td>assimilation</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>General ethnic</td>
<td>High</td>
<td>Low</td>
<td>Medium</td>
<td>High</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>consciousness</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Typology of</td>
<td>Traditionalist</td>
<td>Integrationist</td>
<td>Isolationist?</td>
<td>Pluralist</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>marginality resolution</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Traditionalist?</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Integrationist?</td>
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</table>

(Hurh, 1980, p.454)

Table 3 illustrates four possible cultural identity orientations of Korean or Asian Americans based on the theories of cultural self-identity development in relation to the degree of acculturation (Hurh, 1980; Kim, 1999).

Table 3. Four possible cultural identity orientations for Korean/Asian Americans

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Asian values</th>
<th>Western values</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>High</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>High</td>
<td>Bicultural Integrationist Pluralist (bicultural identity: both Korean and American)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Low</td>
<td>Assimilationist Integrationist (assimilated identity: Americanized Korean)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
These tables depict the complex process of forming Korean American ethnic identity. One must go through intensive self-reflection to achieve ethnic pluralism surpassing the identification crisis in the process (Hurh, 1980). Hurh (1980) defined this ethnic pluralism as the synthesis of a new identity where both Korean and American cultures are more than a sum of the two cultures, and are not necessarily mutually exclusive. Asian American identity model proposed by Kim (1981) can also be applied to gain an understanding of Korean American ethnic identity.

An interesting study was conducted by Kang and Lo (2004) who investigated the linguistic features of 1.5 and second generation Korean Americans talking about their ethnic identities. This study focused on the narratives of 18 1.5 and second generation Korean Americans in Los Angeles who were between the ages of late teens and 20s. The results showed that there were two discourses of identity present in their interviews: discourse of dispositions and discourse of agency (Kang & Lo, 2004). “Discourse of dispositions” is when an individual believes that identity is fixed, culturally determined, and localized by a specific culture outside one’s control, and “discourse of agency” has the opposite concept where an individual is the agent who decides what makes up one’s identity and believes that identity is modifiable. This study also introduced some terms that refer to Korean American ethnic identity within their community. Some of the examples of these terms include “Americanized”, “whitewashed”, “Korean-Korean”, “American-Korean”, “Koreanized”, “Westernized”, “Korean-washed”, and “FOB” (Fresh Off the Boat) (Kang & Lo, 2004, p.98). Each of these terms reflects a different kind of social type.

Studies have also introduced a new form of assimilation where Korean immigrants’ strong ethnic attachment in the U.S. did not correlate with their assimilation rates (Hurh, 1990; Kim, 1999; Min, 1999). Further, Hurh (1990) explains how the first generation Koreans’ ethnic attachment is unaffected by their length of stay in the U.S. or their rates of acculturation. Rather,
certain aspects of the new American culture and social relations are integrated without replacing Korean immigrants’ traditional culture (Hurh, 1990; Min, 1999). Some authors called this phenomenon “additive model of assimilation” (Min, 1999) or “adhesive model of acculturation” (Hurh, 1990). Yu, Choe, and Han (2002) summarizes this phenomenon as the following:

the Korean American is no longer a Korean integrating or adapting into mainstream American society, but rather a fusion of Korean and American norms and values forging out their own unique Korean American identity. (p.19)

*Ethnic Identity Complications among 1.5 Generation Korean American Young Adults*

Abundant literature exists on first generation adult Asian immigrants who have immigrated post-1965 to the United States. However, there is a lack of research that focuses on the contemporary second generation immigrants and their adaptation after immigration (Min & Kim, 1999). Recent studies have highlighted the need to investigate the “new second generation” of immigrants which includes both 1.5 and second generation of immigrants on their ethnic attachments and identity (Portes,1996; Zhou, 1997). Portes (1996) states the importance of studying the dynamics of the new second generation and argues that this generation of immigrants who came to the U.S. after 1965 has not been studied extensively. He suggests the need to study the new second generation immigrants further since there seems to be a lack of understanding between the strategic importance of the second generation of immigrants and the level of knowledge about its condition. Zhou (1997) also discussed how previous studies have ignored the important aspects of new second generations and attempted to understand the immigrant experiences and their adaptation processes in her study to gain further insight into this generation. Zhou (1997) describes that the adaptation to a new dominant culture of 1.5- and second generation largely depends on their individual historical contexts and values as well as the
host society’s reception to them. It is also closely related to their perception of how the predominantly white individuals in the host society view them (Min & Kim, 1999). Furthermore, Min and Park (1999) highlights the importance in examining second generation Asian Americans’ ethnic identity through the lens of young adults as ethnic identity usually emerges in young adulthood.

1.5 generation is “a term coined by Ruben Rumbaut to characterize the children who straddle the old and the new worlds but are fully part of neither” (Zhou, 1999, p.7). According to Park (1999) this distinct generation is similar to the term “knee-high generation” used in Hawaiian Japanese American communities. The term 1.5 generation (“ilchom-ose”) is relatively new in the Korean American community (Hurh, 1990) and was first used in the 1970’s in Los Angeles and New York Korean communities (Park, 1999). Hurh (1990) discusses the following as factors that led to the emergence of 1.5 generation in the Korean community in the U.S.:

- first, a large proportion of adolescent Korean immigrants; second, the high socioeconomic background of the parents; and third, their consequent attainment of functional bilingualism and biculturalism. (p.24)

There is a lack of consensus on the specific age ranges for 1.5 immigrants because different studies have defined the meaning of the term according to different emphases on demographic and cultural perspectives. The definition of 1.5 generation Korean American immigrants differs in terms of the individual’s birth place and age range upon immigration. Hence, there are different age cohorts of the 1.5 generation in the existent literature (Kim, 1999). Hurh’s (1990) definition of 1.5 generation includes “bilingual and bicultural Korean Americans who immigrated to the U.S. in early or middle adolescence (generally between the ages of 11 and 16)” (p.23), and according to Zhou (1999) 1.5 generation includes individuals who are foreign-born arriving to U.S. between ages 5 and 12. In another study, the age cohort of 1.5 generation expands
from 5 to 19 years (Kim, 1999). Hurh (1990) defines the term “1.5 generation Korean American” from demographic and cultural perspectives within the Korean American community in the U.S. whereas Park (1999) defines the term from cultural aspect only:

people of Korean descent who came to the U.S. as minors (infants, children, or adolescents), or are U.S. born, and who practice aspects of biculturalism/multiculturalism involving Korean and American cultures, often with conflict. (p.158)

The definition of 1.5 generation immigrants is more inclusive and complex, and it is more than a mere demographic depiction of the population because “they are neither ‘Korean’, ‘American’, nor ‘Korean American,’ while at the same time all three” (Park, 1999, p.142).

During the adaptation process to new cultural situations, Korean immigrants may feel highly insecure and fearful of losing the traditional roles which granted them their identity in Korea (Kim & Ryu, 2005). Their traditional belief systems are no longer functional in the U.S. and this disconnection can lead to dysfunctional behavior. In a study that measured high school dropout rates among seven Asian American populations, the findings showed no significant effects on dropout rates according to generation variable, except Koreans in where the dropout rates for the 1.5 and second generation were significantly higher than the first generation (Zhou, 1999). Moreover, having a sense of belonging and positive ethnic attachment was found to be a significant predictor of problematic behaviors among Korean American adolescents – the higher sense of ethnic attachment, the lower the problematic behaviors (Shrake & Rhee, 2004). On the contrary, the level of acculturation did not have any significant impact on the level of problematic behaviors among Korean American adolescents (Cho & Bae, 2005). The qualitative study conducted by Park (1999) has found that the process of identity formation among 1.5 generation immigrants is situational and complex and yet compartmentalized. Many 1.5 generation immigrants develop “double consciousness” and some of them work towards forming a new
synthesized collective identity that is adaptable to suit the particular situation or context than identifying oneself with one culture or the other (Park, 1999). However, many of 1.5 and second generations have little reconciliation between their double life – ethnic private life and the “American” public life (Lee, 1998).

Hurh (1990) discusses the critical psychosocial ambivalence that 1.5 generation Korean American youths have and how this ambivalence may lead the individual to adopt cosmopolitan or marginal self-identity for oneself. He also suggests five psychological factors that seem to be involved in the development of cosmopolitan ethnic identity in 1.5 generation Korean immigrants; (1) a realistic perception of ethnic marginality in the U.S. (2) positive attitude towards bilingualism and biculturalism (3) conscious recognition of Korean-American pluralism (4) motivation to overcome ethnic marginality by becoming an active member of both Korean and American communities (5) interest and involvement in minority issues in the U.S. and the world. As 1.5ers are in-between two cultures, Korean and U.S., studies have described this generation as being the “bridge generation” or “sandwich generation” spanning the first and second generation Korean American immigrants (Kim, 1999). Individuals in this “bridge generation” who often develop dual identities suffer from psychological ambivalence about the group to which they belong to (Kim, 1999; Park, 1999), and become highly insecure and fearful of losing the traditional identity as Koreans (Kim & Ryu, 2005). “For 1.5ers, it is important to understand that they experience ‘standing with one leg in Korea and the other leg in America’” (Kim, 1999, p.34). Due to being caught in between two cultural values and being pressured to maintain both cultural values simultaneously, 1.5 generations often struggle with frustration with issues related to their ethnic identity (Chu & Mustafa, 2006; Hurh, 1990; Kim, 1999; Park, 1999; Shrake & Rhee, 2004; Zhou, 1999). As expressed by one Korean American woman about her ethnic identity: “[it is a] feeling like [being] the hyphen in between the Asian and the American in
Asian-American” (Chu & Mustafa, 2006, p.65). Another Korean American novelist described her immigration experience as “shuttling between two worlds – and seeming to fit into neither – many felt as if ‘they had no community’ … They had to create themselves” (Chu & Mustafa, 2006, p. 66). The feeling of uncertainty being a 1.5er in between first and second generations is well reflected in this quote: “As a transitional generation, settling into a new land, I must say that I sometimes feel like a space traveler, boldly going where no one has gone before” (Kim, 1999).

The following illustrates some examples of ethnic identity dilemmas from a study by Park (1999) who conducted interviews with ninety-two 1.5 generation immigrants who were in their 20s and early 30s in Los Angeles area. These direct quotes from participants’ interviews not only reflect different perceptions of their ethnic identity but also demonstrate different phases of ethnic identity development. The first quote illustrates an individual who feels stuck in between two cultures:

I consider myself a 1.5 generation Korean American due to the fact that I immigrated at the age of twelve … I am not completely comfortable with Koreans or whites and I do not have absolute mastery over the Korean or English language. Therefore, I am caught right in the middle of the two cultures, which I consider the 1.5 generation situation. (Park, 1999, p.151)

As discussed earlier, 1.5 generations are often seen as the bridge generation in between the first and second generations in the Korean immigrant community:

I think 1.5 are people who are really stuck in between. Not “too Koreanized”, but I really do feel I’m 1.5, you know? I really feel that the Korean community needs more 1.5 generation people who know not just people who speak Korean, but who have experience in the American society that could really be a bridge. (Park, 1999, p.153)

Some 1.5 generation Korean immigrants recalled their struggles over identity issues and how they
managed to juggle between the two cultures and the two identities – American and Korean. For some 1.5ers, social involvement in their ethnic groups seemed to influence them in defining their ethnic identity, and for some participants their ethnic identities were more individually based than collectively based. In relation to previous research in dynamic process of identity development, many participants have addressed their difficult quests to define their ethnic identities over time:

I explain my Korean American identity as a continuation or evolution of their experience. My generation has to build on the experiences of our predecessors, but we’re also bound to improve relations between Koreans and non-Koreans, instead of just wanting to be left alone. (Park, 1999, p.152-3)

My perception of my ethnicity and identity has undergone many permutations and it is difficult to predict how I will feel in another thirty-six years. (Min & Kim, 1999, p.225)

Some participants in Park (1999)’s study have also reflected their thoughts about being an American and what this means to them.

Many of the new second generation immigrants or the children of immigrants assimilate rapidly into the American culture compared to their first generation parents. However, many of 1.5 generation immigrants adopt a bicultural identity (Min, 1999). Hence, unlike the first generation or second generation of immigrants, 1.5 generation Korean Americans experience psychosocial ambivalence due to their backgrounds of being bilingual and bicultural (Hurh, 1990; Kim, 1999; Kim & Ryu, 2005). There is often tension between Korean immigrant parents and their American-raised children (Kim & Ryu, 2005), and these intergenerational conflicts between different generations arise in immigrant families due to clashes between values (Zhou, 1997). Previous studies have proposed that due to most Korean households consisting of Korean-born first generation parents and American-born or –raised children, there are more conflicts in the parent and child relationships that are instigated by difference in cultures (collective versus individualistic) and languages (American versus Korean), and different stages of acculturation and life cycle stages (Cho & Bae, 2005; Kim & Ryu, 2005). “In the process, both generations
miss important contributions of their culture that could actually strengthen them and make their adjustment more productive” (Lee, 1998, p.96). Min and Kim (1999) suggest that these generational tensions stem especially during adolescence, from both their resistance to conform to Asian gender stereotypical values and from the pressure to fit into the dominant white culture outside their home. Another challenge for 1.5 generation Korean Americans is that although they may be highly assimilated to the new culture, they exhibit limited social assimilation (Hurh, 1990; Kim, 1999). Nonetheless, in Kim’s study (1999), many of 1.5 generation Korean American participants viewed their self-identity from a positive perspective and demonstrated a sense of uniqueness and pride in their identity of being the “bridge generation”. In addition, in a study that surveyed 207 of the new second generation of Korean immigrants found that the majority of them had a positive self-concept and was proud of their Korean American identity (Kim, 1995). In sum, there seems to be an emphasis in the literature about the importance of synthesizing a new identity where both Korean and American cultures are integrated (Hurh, 1980; Park, 1999) and this seems to play a significant role in predicting psychological well-being among immigrants (Shrake & Rhee, 2004).

Art Therapy

Art Therapy and Culture

American Art Therapy Association (AATA) and Art Therapy Credentials Board (ATCB) define art therapy as:

a human service profession that utilizes art media, images, the creative art process, and patient/client responses to the created art productions as reflections of an individual’s development, abilities, personality, interests, concerns, and conflicts. It is based on the belief that the creative process involved in artistic self-expression helps people to resolve conflicts and problems, develop interpersonal skills, manage behavior, reduce stress, increase self-esteem and self-awareness, and achieve insight. Populations of all
ages, races, and ethnic backgrounds are served by art therapists in individual, couples, family, and group therapy formats.

Art therapy uses art as a form of self-expression and communication and it can provide a valuable expressive outlet for individuals as an alternative to verbal therapy. The nature of the imagery also allows for unconscious ideas and experiences to be expressed in comparison to the conscious process of censorship that may happen in verbal expressions. It is based on the principle that making or drawing an art object is an important element in the healing process and that art is utilized as a means of symbolic communication (Malchiodi, 1998; Robbins, 2000).

As previously discussed, the changes in immigration policy and influx of individuals from various cultural backgrounds have led to the increase of multicultural awareness in mental health professionals to meet the rising demands of treating culturally diverse population. Cattaneo (1994) defines culture as:

the life of a specific group of people, its history, its adaptation to the physical environment, its artistic expression and appreciation, its verbal and nonverbal expression and means of communication. It refers to a shared pattern of beliefs, feelings, and knowledge. (p.184)

Every individual is shaped by one’s cultural values and beliefs, and this guides his/her behavior and life schema. Due to this interwoven quality of cultural influence on individual’s expression, expression through the arts is also closely linked to one’s cultural attitudes. Since cultural expression is ubiquitous, the term “universal artistic expression” is often used in the field of art therapy to emphasize the effectiveness of artistic communication with culturally diverse population (Cattaneo, 1994). However, Cattaneo (1994) raises concerns for attaching the term “universal” to artistic expression because this term may only be applied within the framework of dominant culture, and suggests that the therapist must be aware of the “personal and culturally
bound aesthetic frameworks” (p.185) in cultural expression through the arts that both the therapist and the clients bring to therapy.

There has been an increase in research about multicultural awareness in art therapy (Acton, 2001; Calisch, 2003; Chebaro, 1998; Cherry, 2002; Gerity, 2000; Hocoy, 2002; Lewis, 1997; Roy, 1999; Westrich, 1994), and graphic indicators concerning issues involved in immigration (Mauro, 1998; Rousseau & Heusch, 2000; Rousseau, Lacroix, Bagilishya, & Heusch, 2003). Several authors writing about art therapy and culture, have discerned the importance of self-exploration and awareness of one’s own cultural beliefs and biases as therapists treating clients from diverse cultures (Acton, 2001; Cherry, 2002; Gerity, 2000; Hocoy, 2002; Lewis, 1997). Gerity (2000) suggests that as a therapist from a dominant culture, one should carefully explore one’s own cultural imposition to the clients/patients. Some studies have also emphasized the importance of understanding the client’s socio-cultural frame of reference and its influence upon one’s particular cultural beliefs, identity, behavior and artistic expression (Gerity, 2000; Lewis, 1997). Moreover, having an understanding of multiculturalism and a healthy respect for people of all cultures and ethnicities by being flexible and inclusive are crucial aspects to be aware of as art therapists and mental health professionals working with these issues of cultural differences (Cherry, 2002; Gerity, 2000). By having this cultural competence, this will prevent individuals from becoming a culture-blind and color-blind therapist “who treats all clients equally without consideration for cultural origin” (Hocoy, 2002, p.141). Neglecting client’s cultural reference may lead to misdiagnosis and inadequate treatment of the individual which may turn into a cultural malpractice. Cherry’s (2002) study has indicated that art therapy graduate students became more aware of their culture and ethnic identities through multicultural, self-exploration courses, and suggests how this kind of multicultural training will allow the future art therapists to become more adaptive to a diverse cultural group in their treatment settings.
However, there is a paucity of research in art therapy with immigrant individuals about the etiology and manifestations of the psychosocial and social reactions to immigration and acculturation. The primary emphasis of research that has been conducted is on the art therapist’s exploration of their own ethnic identity, within the context of cultural awareness in the therapy process, with far less emphasis on the topic of the immigrant’s subjective experience with regard to issues of ethnic identity beyond childhood. For instance, Lumpkin (2006) explored how her own ethnic identity of being an African-American may influence her identity as an art therapist through the use of artistic metaphors. Other methods of raising cultural awareness in art therapists have occurred through multicultural self-reflection courses which seem to aid art therapists to become more aware of both the client’s and the therapist’s cultural background both of which would play an important role in any therapeutic intervention (Acton, 2001; Calisch, 2003; Cherry, 2002; Westrich, 1994).

A few studies have examined some indicators of loss, confusion, and culture-split between the home country and the host country in the creative expressions of refugee and immigrant children, and ways to facilitate a useful tool for expressing their experiences (Rousseau & Heusch, 2000; Rousseau, Lacroix, Bagilishya, & Heusch, 2003; Ter Maat, 1997). Rousseau & Heusch (2000) investigated the creative expressions of refugee and immigrant children about their experiences being dislocated from their homelands, and demonstrated that the use of myths and stories from the home countries might help these children to close the cultural gap. Similarly, Rousseau, Lacroix, Bagilishya, & Heusch (2003) have found that using myths to facilitate drawing activities for recently arrived immigrant and refugee children can provide a useful tool for expressing and sharing their experiences. The authors suggest that by incorporating myths into drawing activities provides a bridge between the home and school, past and present to these children, and helps them to integrate the gaps between their inner worlds that had been
stirred up due to migration. In another study by Ter Maat (1997), she explored Spanish-speaking adolescents’ experience of immigration to the U.S. through 10-week group art therapy intervention. Ter Maat (1997) illustrated the effects of art therapy groups for these adolescents which allowed them to voice their feeling about loss of support, isolation, lack of control over their lives, and anger over being forced to assimilate to a new culture. This study also demonstrated that the group of adolescents were able to share their experiences as new immigrants and became a cohesive group through art tasks. However, the focus of these studies is limited to younger children and adolescents who had been dislocated from their homelands and lacks the focus on the individual’s experience of the migration during the transition from childhood to adulthood. In Moreno and Wadeson’s (1986) study, authors have examined acculturation problems of Hispanic young adult clients through art therapy assessment, and the study revealed that the art therapy assessment allowed these clients to explore their present life situations and acculturation process in the U.S. Many of the participants in this study reflected that through their associations to the images that reminded them of their country of origin brought out unresolved feelings about the losses that they had to go through during the acculturation process (Moreno & Wadeson, 1986). Although this study focused on the acculturation process of Hispanic young adult immigrants, it was delimited to female clients and it aimed more towards assessing these clients for diagnosis purposes than towards understanding their immigration experience in depth.

When discussing the concept of multiculturalism, there seems to be a paradox surrounding the term (Acton, 2002; Kaplan, 2003). Depending on how one puts emphasis on the reference of the culture in multiculturalism that we all live in, the definition of the term changes; culture can be referred to a specific group of people or individual human being can be considered as a culture in and of itself. Some argue that the rising need in multicultural training will further
encourage over-generalization and stereotyping. On the other hand, however, “if we dismiss the
differences in behaviors and beliefs, we are already over-generalizing by using the standards set
forth by the majority culture” (Acton, 2001, p.111). Furthermore, there are universal aspects of
multiculturalism regardless of specific culture (Kaplan, 2003). Hence, there are two arguments
that exist, individual aspect versus universal aspect, in exploring multiculturalism where both
aspects should be embraced when dealing with culturally diverse clients.

Art Therapy as Symbolic Communicative Tool

Meaning of Art as Symbolic Speech

Creating art allows individuals to access a very primal resource of being humans where
pictorial representations anteceded verbal means of thinking. Using images to express inner
experiences may be a way to connect to the unconscious or unrealized parts of ourselves where
preverbal aspects of the human experience are expressed through the creation of and reflection
upon the art making process (Malchiodi, 1998). Robbins (2000) argues that the art form can allow
the individuals to integrate a sense of self before one can put his experience into verbal
expression:

when symbolic form includes multiple levels of communication and transcends its
individual parts to communicate a larger meaning, it approaches the level of aesthetic
communication. (p.23)

Hence, art making can be a more direct participation in experience than in talking about that
experience. Unlike verbal language, art expression can portray many aspects of the individual’s
experience simultaneously (Malchiodi, 1998), and it is more interchangeable and universal
(McNiff, 1984).

The use of universal imagery in art making can serve as a crucial linkage for
communicating and integrating various layers of feelings for the culturally different client
(Westrich, 1994), and for immigrant individuals in particular (Moreno & Wadeson, 1986). Moreover, the nonverbal communication in the arts enhances the development of intercultural awareness and healing aspects in individuals (Lewis, 1997). In fact, since expression through various forms of the arts is prevalent in every culture where it has been used as vehicles of healing in some cultures (Cattaneo, 1994), “creative arts therapists have become some of the modern day healers and shamans” (Lewis, 1997, p.127). McNiff (1984) also noted that “art therapy and other creative arts therapies have a unique potential to construct a cross-cultural theory of psychotherapy based on universal properties of the creative process” (p.126). These qualities of the creative arts serve as universal physiological and psychological forms of human experience and expression as a whole (McNiff, 1984), and can be utilized to facilitate growth and recovery transculturally (Lewis, 1997).

The interrelationship between images and words in therapeutic relationships is complex (Robbins, 2000). Robbins (2000) discusses “using the principles of aesthetics to illuminate psychic process” (p.36) since expression in the art form involves both primary and secondary process thinking that gives a symbolic entity to personal meanings. However, individuals may still encounter times when they are unable to relate the inner metaphor to their personal symbols in their conscious awareness. Robbins states that:

changing art expression into poetic metaphor serves as a transition to the world of words and helps to make sense of the truism that although verbal material is strongly connected to reality, not all of the reality is encompassed by words. (p.36)

Through this process of forming a symbolic metaphor that integrates outer and inner reality, different viewpoints of the reality can be experienced within the realm of non-verbal communication (Robbins, 2000). Furthermore, humans use their conscious and unconscious perception of the inner and the outer world to determine what are represented in their drawings
Drawing is a form of symbolic speech which gives individuals a tool to integrate and have an insight into their interpersonal and intra-psychic conflicts (Hammer, 1958). Cattaneo (1994) denotes that visual expression is part of one’s identity because “through our visual expression, we communicate who we are, how we feel, and how we identify with our particular culture, subculture, or group” (p.185).

However, similar to language, meanings of symbols can vary across cultures and it is not something that has a static value but rather dynamic (Hocoy, 2002). Thus, although art therapy can be used as a symbolic communication tool, its meanings of the symbols should be understood from client’s cultural viewpoints and not from therapist’s own (Acton, 2001).

**Metaphorical Uses in Art Therapy**

Metaphor, which carries the meaning “to transfer or cross over”, has a close relationship to how “the expressive arts build bridges between past and present, between one’s own story and the heroic journey it represents” (Ferris & Stein, 2002, p.42). Ferris and Stein (2002) further suggest that “the use of myth, metaphor, and symbol work because they draw what is inside to the outside [where] the image becomes another reality” (p.45). Metaphor can also be viewed “as a catalyst to a quest for knowledge, at the same time rooting this knowledge in social interaction and a specific process” (Rousseau, Lacroix, Bagilishya, & Heusch, 2003, p.4). There are many different projective drawing techniques that utilized metaphors in imagery in the field of clinical psychology and mental health (Burns, 1987; Hammer, 1958). Hammer (1958) described that these projective drawings tend to reflect the felt self, the ideal self, and the future self in which the person’s self-concept and his perception of the environment are represented through his drawings. One of the projective drawing techniques that was used by clinical psychologists to gain an insight into the individual’s internal and external perception of the self and the world was House-Tree-Person (H-T-P) drawing. Buck was the creator of the H-T-P drawings and as a
psychoanalyst, his interpretations of these drawings were based on psychopathology (Burns, 1987). On the other hand, Maslow viewed these drawings from positive developmental perspectives and attempted to understand human growth and potential through these projective drawings. From Buck’s H-T-P drawing model, Burns later developed another projective drawing technique which was called the Kinetic-House-Tree-Person (K-H-T-P) drawing. This drawing asked individuals to draw all the drawing elements (i.e., house, tree, and person) on a single sheet of paper and show some kind of action in the picture (Burns, 1987). K-H-T-P drawing was created with the purpose of bridging the projective techniques and developmental psychology together (Burns, 1987).

Lumpkin (2006) addressed how metaphors are used in art therapy to illustrate one’s life issues, and she explored her own ethnic and occupational identities through the use of metaphors. Through this self-reflection process of viewing her cultural identity and identity as an art therapist metaphorically, Lumpkin concluded that her identity as an art therapist is not one dimensional and one may hold all four categories of cultural identity (i.e., bicultural; assimilated; separated; marginal) according to different contexts and situations. In Rousseau, Lacroix, Bagilishya, and Heusch’s (2003) study with immigrant and refugee children, the authors have discussed how myth can be used as a metaphor to express their immigration experiences. For these children, drawing their everyday concerns and worries within the framework of myths from their homelands worked as a dual metaphor that allowed them to express their experiences directly related to immigration. Thus, metaphors used in drawings help individuals to understand and explore their emotions, feelings about self, concept of one’s role in life and in relation to others, and function as a transitional space.

Tree Metaphor

The tree metaphor is used universally to depict human development, and it stands for a
projective symbol that reflects a person’s unconscious feelings about self and his perception of self in relation to others (Burns, 1987; Hammer, 1958). The tree is frequently used as a ubiquitous symbol that is portrayed in almost every culture and cultural expressions (i.e. religion, myth, ritual, legends, sacred literature, art poetry, and dreams) for depicting life and self-growth (Burns, 1987).

Burns (1987) states the following:

> the miraculous regenerating growth of the tree from seed to flowering to fruiting to seed has been seen as metaphor for human growth and development...the branching of the tree has symbolized protection, shape, nourishment, growth, regeneration and determination...the tree reflects the yearning of life to grow and move from the earth to the heavens; thus it stands as one of the great universal symbols and metaphors of spirit and self-unfoldment. (p.76)

In Burns’ (1987) K-H-T-P drawing technique, “the tree symbolizes the life energy and direction of energy” (p.54). Hammer (1958) further suggests that it is easier for a person to project conflicting and more unconscious feelings about oneself through the tree representation than person representation in H-T-P drawing. Individuals are less fearful in attributing negative feelings about oneself via tree representation because it involves less of direct self-revelation. Thus, a drawing of the tree may reflect the individual’s transformation process in life (Burns, 1987). According to Jung (1979), “if a mandala may be described as a symbol of the self seen in cross section, then the tree would represent a profile view of the self depicted as a process of growth” (Burns, 1987, p.76)

**Bridge Metaphor**

The bridge metaphor is another universal symbol that represents both a connection between humans and the environment, and a transition in overcoming an obstacle in one’s life (Hays & Lyons, 1981). In fact, “any obstacle, whether natural or man-made, is usually seen as
problematic, negative, or ‘bad’...a bridge is seen as crossing over something ‘bad’ perhaps an obstacle of some type, or going from some place to a better setting” (Hays & Lyons, p.207). Hays and Lyons (1981) used the bridge drawing as a projective assessment tool in art therapy since the bridge has been a symbol that represented our history in human development. The authors were interested in depicting how humans go through difficult transitions in normal development in life through bridge drawing, and they were particularly interested in adolescents as they are “going from some place to some place else” (p.208) in their developmental phase. Hays and Lyons (1981) discuss that “bridges may symbolize man’s control of his environment. They stand as a symbolic act of achievement, defiance, and conquest...building of bridges (communication) is important for the growth and development of the person” (p.208).

The results of Hays and Lyon’s study (1981) indicated 12 different variables in the interpretation of bridge drawings by adolescent participants between the ages of 14 and 18. These 12 different variables include: (1) directionality of the travel on the bridge; (2) placement of self in the picture; (3) places drawn either side of the bridge; (4) solidarity of bridge attachments; (5) emphasis in the drawing by elaboration; (6) bridge construction; (7) type of bridge depicted; (8) matter drawn under the bridge; (9) vantage point of the viewer; (10) axis of the paper; (11) consistency of Gestalt; (12) written associations to the drawing (p.209, 211). Lumpkin (2006) has also used the bridge drawing to explore the ethnic identity of Black American graduate students in a white dominant institution. In sum, the bridge drawing could become an expressive tool for individuals to communicate one’s thoughts and feelings to others which may aid in problem solving or overcoming hardships in life (Hays & Lyons, 1981).

Application of Using Metaphors in Art Therapy with Immigrants

Arts therapies may be a useful tool and an alternative to verbal therapies for migrants because the hidden parts of cultural significance in the individual is usually enacted non-verbally
and unconsciously, which can be expressed through the creative arts (Dokter, 1999). Cherry (2003) states that:

art therapy may well be one of the first modalities introduced to our ever-changing population because of its primarily visual form of communication. Because it can be used with clients of all ages, races, religions, ethnicities, and disabilities, art therapy may be the best clinical approach for ethnically diverse treatment populations. (p.159)

This is similar to the idea proposed by McGoldrick, Giordano, and Garcia-Preto (2005) in that:

therapy involves helping people clarify their self-identities in relation to family, community, and their ancestors, while also adapting to changing circumstances as they move forward in time…helping clients understand their ethnicity as a fluid, ever-changing aspect of who they are. (p.7, 8)

The artistic expression is a form of symbolic speech that gives individuals a tool to integrate and understand their interpersonal and intrapsychic conflicts, and furthermore it can serve as a synthesizer in integrating multiple levels of identity of the individual (Hammer, 1958; Robbins, 2001). Moreover, individuals may be able to develop a sense of self-worth and inner strength by accepting him/herself without the need to identify with the aggressor through art making (Gerity, 2000). The art making process could be taken as a metaphor for reflecting upon the experiences of this particular immigrant population and allow them to express their thoughts and feelings using an alternative form of communication. The use of metaphors and projective techniques in art therapy, such as a tree metaphor and a bridge metaphor, can reflect the person’s self-concept and his perception of the environment surpassing conscious censorship (Hammer, 1958; Hays & Lyons, 1981). Both tree and bridge metaphors may provide a significant vehicle for immigrants as an expressive tool to communicate their thoughts and feelings about their self-concept and transitional struggles to strive in the adopted country.
Since many cultural values and concepts are unconsciously integrated to one’s identity, and since participants in this study have immigrated at a younger age before they have fully integrated a more mature identity or developed adequate descriptive language, art therapy would provide a new means of communication to explore their identities through a creative process. The nonverbal communication in the creative arts therapies provides immigrants a useful medium to express the hidden parts of cultural awareness and this process becomes a healing aspect for them (Dokter, 1998; Lewis, 1997). Moreover, the symbolic aspect of the art form can facilitate the transitional process of immigrants who are trying to make sense of their acculturation and adaptation in their new country. Burt (1993) states that:

for culturally displaced youth being raised in a dominant culture, the visually-oriented communication and expression of art therapy can also serve as a bridge for the youth in their process of reconnection to their culture. (p.144)

Since every transitional state involves a symbolic structure that organizes “a cognitive and perceptual memory of self and object”, the secondary process symbolization through the expressive arts can solidify “a self that maintains continuity among past, present, and future” (Robbins, 2000, p.39, 22). Robbins (2000) argues that the use of art form in art therapy can aid individuals to integrate a sense of self before one can put words to his experience:

the use of symbols can either act as an organizing factor to synthesize multiple levels of consciousness and one’s identity, or it can become a haven in which to distract the outsider from gaining access to the true self. (p.114)

Taking this symbolic communication involved in the art making process, it may allow immigrants to share his/her experiences and issues visually with family members, thereby minimizing possible intergenerational conflict within the family.

Furthermore, it is crucial for therapists to be aware of multiple cultural layers in
immigrants and their internalized culture to avoid any over-generalization and stereotyping (Baker, 1999). The use of imagery and artistic expression can also be beneficial in treatment settings with immigrant individuals. Art therapy in a group format can be effective for immigrant adolescents as well in terms of sharing their struggles adjusting to the new culture bringing up a sense of connectedness within the group members (Ter Maat, 1997). It is more likely for immigrants to have difficulty in expressing their feelings about their immigration experience via verbal means, and art expression can aid these individuals to tap into images and feelings associated with their acculturation difficulties reinforcing communication via symbolic representations (Moreno & Wadeson, 1986). Ter Maat (1997) suggests that “structured art therapy was instrumental in unblocking censored verbal material and speeding up the therapeutic process” (p.18). Hence, art therapy can allow immigrant individuals to create a meaning for his/her new life in a new culture, and also allow them to self-explore their identities within the given framework of social/cultural contexts bridging the gap between one’s past and present selves.
CHAPTER III: METHODOLOGY

Design

The research design for this study was phenomenological. Phenomenology values systematically extracting the essences of the phenomenon being studied from the individual’s descriptions of the subjective experience (Moustakas, 1994). The purpose of this study was to use both artistic expression and in-depth verbal interview to capture the essences of lived experiences of ethnic identity formation for 1.5 generation Korean Americans.

Location

This study was conducted at Drexel University’s Hahnemann Center City Campus in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania.

Time Period

The study began on the date of approval from the IRB and continued until September 2007.

Enrollment

One Korean American healthy young adult who immigrated to the United States between the ages of five and sixteen (ie. 1.5 generation) was recruited for this study. The study was designed for five participants but only one female participant was enrolled. The participant was between the ages 18 and 34, and had permanent residency or citizenship of the U.S. Both male and female volunteers of various religious and socioeconomic backgrounds were eligible for the study.

Participant Type

Participants were Korean American healthy young adult volunteers who were defined as 1.5 generation of Korean immigrants.
Participant Source

Participants were recruited from the three campuses at Drexel University (West Philadelphia campus, Center City Hahnemann campus, Queen Lane campus) and Korean community centers in North Philadelphia area.

Recruitment

Participants for this study were recruited on a voluntary basis through the posting of flyers describing the study. The flyers (Appendix A) were posted at three campuses at Drexel University (West Philadelphia, Center City Hahnemann, Queen Lane) and Korean community centers in North Philadelphia area. The flyers included the title and purpose of the study as well as the inclusion and exclusion criteria. Those reading the flyers were instructed to read the inclusion and exclusion criteria to see if they qualified for the study prior to responding to the co-investigator. Anyone interested in participating in the study who met the criteria described in the flyers was directed to contact the co-investigator by telephone.

When the potential participants contacted the co-investigator, the co-investigator followed the telephone screening script (Appendix B) to confirm once again that the participant met all the inclusion criteria required by this study. If the individual met the inclusion criteria and still wanted to participate in the study, a time was scheduled to meet with them in order to review informed consent and collect the data. If the individual did not meet the criteria they were thanked for calling and told they did not qualify for participation in the study. The first five individuals who met the above requirements were to be recruited for the study.

Participant Inclusion Criteria

a. Participant was between the ages of 18-34.

b. Participant was 1.5 generation Korean American who was Korean-born or foreign-born and arrived in the United States between the ages of five and sixteen.
c. Participant was a permanent resident or a citizen of the U.S.

d. Participant was currently residing in the U.S.

e. Participant had a command of the English language (ie. able to read, comprehend, and speak English).

**Participant Exclusion Criteria**

a. Participants were excluded if they were first generation Korean American who was born in Korea and arrived in the U.S. after the age of seventeen.

b. Participants were excluded if they were second generation Korean American who was either born in Korea or in the U.S. but arrived in the U.S. at pre-school age between the ages of zero and four.

c. Participants were excluded from this study if they were faculty members, staff or students in the Hahnemann Creative Arts in Therapy Program. This exclusion was due to a Conflict of Interest since the co-investigator was enrolled as a student in this program.

**Investigational Methods and Procedures**

**Instrumentation**

*Tree Metaphor*

The tree metaphor is usually used in the House-Tree-Person projective drawing technique where the person’s self-concept and his perception of the environment are represented through the images of a house, tree and person (Hammer, 1958). The tree image is often used as a universal metaphor that depicts a person’s unconscious perception of self and self-concept in relation to others (Burns, 1987; Hammer, 1958) and also reflect the felt self, the ideal self, and the future self (Hammer, 1958).
For the purposes of this study, the tree metaphor was defined as a metaphorical representation that addressed the psychological self and the perceived identity of the individuals. In this study, the first two art making processes involved representations of self through the use of tree metaphor. The first and second art therapy directives asked the participants to represent their concept of self being in the U.S. and in Korea using a tree metaphor. The participants were asked to think of a type of tree that might metaphorically represent their experience of themselves living in these two cultures.

*Bridge Drawing*

The bridge drawing is often used as a projective assessment tool in art therapy and is often a metaphor for transition or connection (Hays & Lyons, 1981). The bridge has universal meaning and history in our lives that represents both a connection between humans and the environment, and it is also seen as a symbol for overcoming an obstacle in one’s life. Hays and Lyons (1981) identified 12 variables that appear in bridge drawings that may communicate individuals’ thoughts and feelings to others. The bridge drawing could become an expressive tool for individuals, which in turn may aid in problem solving or overcoming obstacles.

In this study, the third art therapy directive asked the participants to draw a picture of a bridge going from one place to another indicating where they would be on the bridge and the direction in which they are headed. The participants were asked to think about where they perceive to be in terms of their ethnic identity.

*Open Ended Responsive Individual Interviews*

An open ended responsive interview consists of broad-based questions related to the research topic in which the participant is asked to elaborate on their thoughts, feelings, and
experiences by describing a story about the images that they have created. Some of the questions in the open ended interview were pre-scripted but since each participant related differently to the studied phenomenon, additional probative questions were posed according to the responses of the participant. Additional questions were posed based upon the participant’s responses in order to collect in depth data regarding the phenomenon being studied.

Data Collection

The data collection sessions occurred on two separate occasions. The first data collection session (informed consent, three art-making processes, and the responsive interview) was conducted in person. The second data collection session (validation interview) took place over the phone. The durations for each data collection session are listed below:

1. Informed consent (25 minutes)
2. Brief Demographic Information (5 minutes)
3. Epoche (5 minutes)
4. Art making process I – Representation of Self in the U.S. through Tree Metaphor (20 minutes)
5. Art making process II – Representation of Self in Korea through Tree Metaphor (20 minutes)
6. Art making process III – Bridge Drawing (20 minutes)
7. Break (10 minutes)
8. Open ended responsive interview (60 minutes)
9. Validation interview (30 minutes)
Data Collection One – Informed Consent (25 minutes)

At the initial meeting, the co-investigator informed the participant about the purpose and procedure of the study, and reviewed the process of informed consent. The co-investigator addressed the participant’s rights and confidentiality as a voluntary research participant. The co-investigator also explained that the audio taping equipment would be used to record the open-ended responsive interview portion of the data collection. The participant was informed that he or she would never be referred by the name in order to assure confidentiality. The co-investigator assigned subject identification numbers to the artwork, audio tapes and transcriptions which were collected from the participants. These assigned subject identification numbers were attached to the artwork, the audiotapes, and the transcriptions of audio tapes. It was explained that the artwork, audiotape recordings, and transcriptions of the audio tapes would be kept in a locked, secure space in the offices of the Hahnemann Creative Arts in Therapy program at Drexel University. The participant was made aware that the co-investigator would make color copies of the original artwork created during the meeting to be included in her unpublished thesis. If the participant wished to have the original artwork returned to them, the researcher would do so at the completion of the study. If the participant did not wish the artwork to be returned back to them or if one wished for the artwork to be destroyed, the researcher destroyed the artwork at the conclusion of the study except for the copies. Upon completion of the study, the audiotape recordings from the interview were erased, cut and discarded. The lists that linked the participant’s name to the subject identification number and the brief demographic information forms were also shredded.

The participant was asked to verbally summarize his or her understandings of the study in his or her words. When the participant had verbally expressed an understanding of the study, and when the participant agreed to participate in the study, he or she was asked to sign two
identical copies of the informed consent form (Appendix D). One copy of this informed consent form was given to the participant, and the other was kept in a locked, secure location in the Hahnemann Creative Arts in Therapy offices at Drexel University Center City Campus.

Data Collection Two – Brief Demographic Information (5 minutes)

After the completion of signing the informed consent form, the participant was given a brief demographic information sheet (Appendix E) that asked about the following background information: age when immigrated to the U.S., most comfortable language, marital status, highest level of education, occupation, religion, and the self-ethnic identification. All of this background information was kept strictly confidential and was kept in a locked, secure space in the Hahnemann Creative Arts in Therapy offices at Drexel University Center City Campus together with the signed informed consent forms.

Epoche (co-investigator only – 5 minutes)

The participant was given a 5 minute intermission during which time the co-investigator engaged in a process of epoche in a different room. Epoche is a process in phenomenological research for the co-investigator to set aside any preconceived ideas and presuppositions about the phenomenon. It was her desire to explore and obtain new information and new perspectives from the participant about the phenomenon free from her own subjective bias that might affect the study.

Data Collection Three – Art making process I – Tree Metaphor U.S. (20 minutes)

The co-investigator first introduced the various art materials to the participant. After the participant was introduced to the art media, the researcher explained the first art task. The
participant was provided with 8.5” x 11” and 12” x 18” white drawing papers, no.2 pencils with erasers, colored pencils, markers, crayons, and oil pastels. The following script was used in order to explain the first art making process to the participant: “For the first art task, you have a choice of either 8.5”x11” paper or 12”x18” paper, and you can choose any of the available art materials that you see on the table. The directive for the first art task is to think of a type of tree that might represent how you see yourself or experience yourself in the U.S. This can be interpreted in any way that you want. It is your creation and there is no right or wrong way of doing this. Keep in mind that it is not about your artistic abilities or how the final product looks like. You will have 20 minutes to complete this art making process and it is up to you whether you decide to stop or finish sooner than the allotted 20-minute time.” When the 20 minute time was up or when the participant was finished with the art process, the participant was instructed to put his/her artwork aside and was given instructions for the second art making process.

Data Collection Four – Art making process II – Tree Metaphor Korea (20 minutes)

The participant had access to the same art materials as the first art task. The following script was used in order to explain the second art making process to the participant: “For the second art task, you have a choice of either 8.5”x11” paper or 12”x18” paper, you can choose any of the available art materials that you see on the table. The directive for the second art task is to think of a tree that might convey the idea of how you see yourself or experienced yourself living in your country of origin, which will be Korea, as a tree using any medium you choose. This can be interpreted in any way that you want. It is your creation and there is no right or wrong way of doing this. Keep in mind that it is not about your artistic abilities or how the final product looks like. You will have 20 minutes to complete this art making process and it is up to you whether you decide to stop or finish sooner than the allotted 20 minute time.” When the 20-minute time
was up or when the participant was finished with the art process, the participant was instructed to put his/her artwork aside and was instructions for the third art making process.

Data Collection Five – Art making process III – Bridge Drawing (20 minutes)

The participant had access to the same art materials as the first art task. The following script was used in order to explain the third art making process to the participant: “For the third art task, you have a choice of either 8.5”x11” paper or 12”x18” paper, you can choose any of the available art materials that you see on the table. The directive for the third art task is to ‘draw a picture of a bridge going from some place to some place’ (Hays & Lyons, 1981, p.208). Once you are finished drawing the bridge, ‘indicate with an arrow the direction of travel and place a dot to indicate where you are in the picture’ (Hays & Lyons, 1981, p.208). This can be interpreted in any way that you want. It is your creation and there is no right or wrong way of doing this. Keep in mind that it is not about your artistic abilities or how the final product looks like. You will have 20 minutes to complete this art making process and it is up to you whether you decide to stop or finish sooner than the allotted 20 minute time.” When the 20-minute time was up or when the participant was finished with the art process, the participant was instructed to put his/her artwork aside and was given a 10 minute break before the open ended responsive interview.

Data Collection Six – Open Ended Responsive Interview (60 minutes)

The open ended responsive interview began after the completion of the three art making processes. The co-investigator asked questions regarding the participant’s experience of creating the artwork for each art task. The co-investigator also asked the participant to elaborate and reflect on his or her experience with regard to the entire experience. This interview session was recorded by using an audiocassette tape recorder.
The interview questions addressed the following interview objectives. The objectives were designed to be compatible with the research question. The objectives remained consistent and acted as boundaries for the interview while the questions changed based upon the responses of the participant. Under each objective, examples of open ended questions that might be asked during the interview were listed. These broad based questions contributed to the understanding of the given objectives and also the purpose of the research as a whole. These questions were only examples that guided the participant to explore the experience in depth. Subsequent probative questions were determined by the participant’s responses to the initial broad based questions. Therefore, the questions that were asked during the interview included, but were not limited to the ones listed below:

**Objective I:** To understand the experience of creating a tree as a metaphor for the psychological self as depicted in the artwork.

- Can you tell a story about the picture you have created?
- How would you describe the tree? What kind of tree is it?
- Where did the tree come from?
  - Probe:
    - Where does the tree grow?
    - If you were to assign an emotion to the tree, what emotion would it be?
    - What will happen to the tree in the future?
    - Are there any special qualities or uniqueness about the trees that you have created? What are they?
- What is the relationship between the tree and the environment around it?
  - Probe:
    - How long has the tree grown in this place?
◆ It appears as if the tree is not planted anywhere, can you describe what the experience of not being rooted might be like?

◆ How would you describe the similarities/differences between the two trees that you have created in the first and second art tasks?

**Objective II:** To understand the experience of creating a bridge as a metaphor for representing the cultural transition and their ethnic identities in relation to their community.

◆ How would you describe the bridge? What kind of bridge is it?

■ **Probe:**

◆ Where is the bridge?

◆ Where does the bridge come from and where does it go?

◆ What is the environment like around the bridge?

◆ Where are you on the bridge?

◆ Where are you coming from and where are you headed towards?

**Objective III:** To identify the aspects of the creative process of art making that were most meaningful in discussing one’s ethnic identity. What was the experience of using the metaphor for the individual to describe one’s ethnic identity?

◆ What was your experience creating the artwork?

■ **Probe:**

◆ What were your thoughts/emotions as you engaged in the art making?

◆ How did you experience the directive?

◆ What did you find out about yourself while you engaged in the process of art making?
Can you describe your before and after experiences on your thoughts and/or feelings in regards to your ethnic identity?

What was it like for you to explore your ethnic identity by creating the artwork?

Can you describe anything that you might have learned or discovered about yourself throughout this experience in relation to your ethnic identity?

How do you think this process can be used as an intervention tool to those people who may be struggling with their ethnic identities?

What was most meaningful and least meaningful about this experience?

The interview was conducted according to the guidelines and objectives in the Interview Guide (Appendix C).

**Data Collection Seven – Validation Interview (30 minutes)**

Approximately one month following the art making sessions and responsive interviews the participant was contacted by telephone for a validation interview. The validation interview was a method of establishing a degree of internal validity in the phenomenological research method. The co-investigator presented the preliminary analysis of the data to the participant and she was asked to verify if the co-investigator’s analysis accurately represented their lived experience. If the participant had any additions or corrections, these were added into the final data analysis.

**Data Analysis**

1. Data analysis began after the data collection was completed. The co-investigator transcribed the audiotape recordings from the open-ended responsive interview into written form. Statements made during the art making process and the data in the artwork were also included in
2. The data analysis followed the phenomenological research methodology as described by Moustakas (1994). The steps for this analysis included: a) epoche; b) phenomenological reduction or bracketing; c) imaginative variation; and d) synthesis of meanings and essences.

First, *epoche* was a process for the researcher to set aside any preconceived ideas and presuppositions about the phenomenon that was being studied. Moustakas (1994) views epoche as “an experience in itself, a process of setting aside predilections, prejudices, predispositions, and allowing things, events, and people to enter anew into consciousness, and to look and see them again, as it for the first time” (p.85). By engaging in this process, the researcher enabled herself to explore and obtain new information and new perspectives about the phenomenon free from one’s own subjective bias. As Moustakas (1994) states it, epoche “is a way of genuine looking that precedes reflectiveness, the making of judgments, or reaching conclusions” (p.86).

Second, *phenomenological reduction or bracketing* was used to analyze the collected data. According to Moustakas (1994), the researcher begins the process by placing the focus of the research in brackets so that the purpose of the research is maintained throughout the data analysis. The researcher horizontalized the data by identifying key phrases that were significant to the phenomenon and summarized them into themes of nonrepetitive and nonoverlapping statements. The researcher then constructed a cluster of “meaning units” and used the participants’ quotes and vignettes to develop a textural description of their lived experiences.

Third, Moustakas (1994) states that “imaginative variation enables the researcher to derive structural themes from the textural descriptions that have been obtained through phenomenological reduction” (p.99). It transplants the topic being studied into a new context in order to evaluate the phenomenon from a different perspective. The purpose of this step was “to arrive at structural descriptions of an experience, the underlying and precipitating factors that
account for what is being experienced” (Moustakas, 1994, p.98).

As the final step of data analysis process, the co-investigator engaged in the synthesis of meanings and essences. The experience of the participant was represented through textural descriptions and the meaning and essences of the experience were represented through structural descriptions. Finally, the essential structures for the participant was extracted and identified as holding the essential meaning of the phenomenon being studied.

3. The co-investigator contacted the participant within one month after the completion of art making processes and individual responsive interviews for a validation session. This validation session was to review the co-investigator’s preliminary analysis of the data from the study and was conducted via telephone which lasted approximately 30 minutes.

4. Lastly, the co-investigator finalized the information gathered from the study and any corrections or additional information from the participant was factored into the final analysis of the study.

Operational Definitions of Terms

- **Bicultural self**: a widely used expression in the immigration literature for the psychological self of immigrants, meant to denote the coexistence of behavioral attitudes and value systems emanating from two separate cultures (Akhtar, 1999, p.169).

- **Cultural identity**: the aspect of the core self-representation that is aligned and affiliated with the norms, attitudes, values, and communicative idioms of a group of people (Akhtar, 1999, p.170).

- **Ethnicity**: refers to the culture of a people and includes values, child-rearing practices, sense of history, modes of expression, and patterns of interpersonal behavior (Akhtar, 1999, p.171). It refers to a group’s commonality of ancestry and history, through which people have evolved
shared values and customs over the centuries (McGoldrick, Giordano, & Garcia-Preto, 2005, p.2).

- **Ethnic identity**: a feeling of belonging to a historical community. It results from the exposure of a child to the family’s cultural modes and its particular ways of conducting day-to-day life (Akhtar, 1999, p.171-2).

- **Immigration**: entering a region or country of which one is not a born native for purpose of residence (Akhtar, 1999, p.174).

- **Immigrants**: one who has taken up residence in a region or country other than his place of birth (Akhtar, 1999, p.174).

- **Korean American**: individuals who are either Korean-born or U.S.-born who are American of Korean heritage. This term includes individuals who have immigrated in three distinct waves: those who immigrated between 1903 and 1905; those who immigrated around 1950s; those who immigrated after 1965 (Kim & Ryu, 2005, p. 350).

- **First generation**: those who were foreign-born arriving in the U.S. as adolescents aged thirteen and over (Zhou, 1999, p.7).

- **1.5 generation**: the term first used in the 1970s (of both Los Angeles and New York Korean American communities) and popularized by community leaders (Park, 1999, p.140). For the purpose of this study, this generation includes those who were foreign-born arriving in the U.S. between ages five and twelve (Zhou, 1999, p.7).

- **Second generation**: those who were either U.S.-born or foreign-born but arriving in the U.S. at pre-school age (zero to four years), (Zhou, 1999, p.7).

- **Phenomenology**: Phenomenology is a type of qualitative research method where it “describes the meaning of the lived experiences for several individuals about a concept or the phenomenon” (Creswell, 1998, p.51). Polkinghorne (as cited in Creswell, 1998), described
that “phenomenologists explore the structures of consciousness in human experiences” (p.51).

- **Directed art therapy task**: This study will utilize art therapy tasks where a specific directive will be given to the participants, asking them to draw according to that directive. For this study, the participants will be asked to draw how they see themselves in the U.S. and in Korea using a tree representation.

- **Tree metaphor**: For the purpose of this study, the tree metaphor is defined as participant’s perception and interpretation of their self concept/identity. It will be a product of the directed art therapy tasks which is to “represent self as a tree”.

- **Bridge drawing**: It is usually used as a projective assessment tool in art therapy. However, for the purpose of this study, the bridge drawing is used as a metaphor for participants to think about where they are in terms of their ethnic identities in relation to their community (American and Korean-American). This art making process will also be used as a metaphor for closure and a way of integrating the two aspects of their identities explored in the first two art making processes.

- **Open ended responsive interview**: A method of data collection in qualitative research where “the aim is to determine what an experience means for the persons who have had the experience and are able to provide a comprehensive description of it” (Creswell, 1998, p.13). According to Mertens (2005), “the goal is to have a human-to-human relationship with respondents and to understand their perspective” (p.387). Hence all the questions during the interview will be within the boundary of the research objective.
Possible Risks and Discomforts to Subjects

The participant involved in this study was a healthy young adult recruited on a voluntary basis. Hence possible risks and discomforts to the participants were minimal. There was a possibility that the participant might have experienced some anxiety in relation to engaging in a creative art making process, verbal interview, and discussing the subject matter with the co-investigator.

Special Precautions to Minimize Risks or Hazards

There was a possibility that the participant might have experienced some anxiety when initially engaging in the art making process. Possible anxiety about creating artwork was minimized by informing the participant that the focus of the study was not about her artistic talent but about her experience from the creative process of art making. The overall structure from art media to the open-ended interviews had been designed with the intention of minimizing the participant’s potential anxiety. The participant was assured that everything that she did during the study was strictly confidential and her identity was protected. Participant was provided with intermissions when requested by the individual or when the researcher observed signs of fatigue or agitation. Finally, the participant was informed that she might choose to withdraw from the study at any time and any information obtained during the session was to be discarded. Also, the participant was assured that she might refuse to answer any question inquired by the co-investigator during the study.

The art materials chosen for these three art therapy tasks had been selected to provide some structure to the art making process to avoid possible regression caused by potential anxiety arising from the discussed topic. For all of these art tasks, the participant might refuse to complete either artwork. If the participant refused to complete the artwork, she was asked why they had refused.
CHAPTER IV: RESULTS

Overview

The major findings of this phenomenological study were the identification of the essential structures extracted from significant statements and artwork of a single participant. The essential structures reflected the participant’s lived experience of her immigration experiences being a 1.5 generation Korean American and about her ethnic identity. The objectives of this study were to gain an in-depth understanding of the participant’s lived experience of the phenomenon being studied, and to determine whether the use of metaphors in artistic expressions could be utilized as an intervention tool for 1.5 generation immigrants. The data was collected and analyzed from the participant’s verbal responses to an open-ended responsive interview about the content of the images she produced in the artwork, as well as her experience in the process of creating the artwork. The data was analyzed using the phenomenological data analysis procedures as outlined by Moustakas (1994). These procedures include phenomenological reduction, textural descriptions, imaginative variations, and structural descriptions the ultimate goal of which is to identify the essential structures of the participant’s experience.

The essential structures that were revealed through this data analysis were: self differentiation from the environment; wish for comfort and feelings of connection to other immigrants; bi-cultural identification and awareness; alienation and fear of not belonging in any one identity; ongoing transition of self ethnic identity; individual hardship and a wish for validation of one’s struggles; and artistic expression as a means to exploring ethnic identity.

Participants

Only one participant responded to the recruitment notice during a four month recruitment period. The inclusion and exclusion criteria were amended after two months of this
recruitment phase to broaden for the potential participant pool. The amendment involved expanding the participants’ age range upon immigration to the U.S. and the recruitment sites.

The only participant who responded to the recruitment flyer and who met the inclusion criteria was a 24 year old Korean American female who was enrolled during the second recruitment period after the amendment to the inclusion criteria. She was born in Korea and moved to Germany with her family between the ages of 4 and 11 – lived in Germany for 7 years, moved back to Korea between ages 11-13 – lived in Korea for 2 years, and then immigrated to the U.S. at the age of 13. She identified herself as a Korean American as her ethnic identity and expressed that she was comfortable in both Korean and English.

Summary of Data Analysis Procedures

The analysis of the data in this study followed the procedures of phenomenological research methodology. The data collected from the audiotape recordings of the participant’s verbal responses to the open ended responsive interview were transcribed into written form. The data analysis began with the process of epoche where the co-investigator sets aside all preconceptions and biases about the phenomenon being studied. The next step in the analysis of the data include phenomenological reduction where the participant’s significant statements are horizontalized to be clustered into a set of meaning units, and a textural description of those meaning units are created. As the final steps to the data analysis, imaginative variations are created and the revised meaning units are formed to construct a structural synthesis of the participant’s experience. A validation interview was conducted after the co-investigator’s preliminary data analysis to ensure that the obtained results portrayed the participant’s lived experience accurately.

At the end of the open ended responsive interview, the participant expressed that it was a
meaningful experience having three separate drawings to represent her ethnic identity. Therefore, in order to gain a deeper understanding of the participant’s experience of being a 1.5 generation Korean American immigrant, the participant’s verbal responses to each drawing – tree metaphor: U.S., tree metaphor: Korea, bridge metaphor – and her experiences of the art making process were first analyzed separately exploring both textural and structural descriptions of the experience, and then the themes from these four sets of meaning clusters were combined to create an overall essence of the participant’s experience about the phenomenon being examined. Hence, there will be five sets of data presented in this data analysis where the first three will explore the participant’s verbal statements to the images created through three drawings mentioned above, another set of data that will explore the participant’s verbal statements about her experience in creating the artwork, and the last set of data will be a exploring the essence of the participant’s experience that combines the previous four sets of data.

Data Analysis

_Epoche_

The first step used in the data analysis for this phenomenological study was the process of epoche. The objective of epoche is to set aside any prejudgments and preconceived ideas about the phenomenon being studied by the co-investigator. Through this process, the researcher allows him/herself to clear his/her mind and be open to the phenomenon that is being studied, and also allows him/her to take in the phenomenological experience as it is being described by the participant without the researcher’s personal subjective influences. In an attempt to be fully engaged during the data collection session and data analysis with an open mind, the co-investigator of this study engaged in the process of epoche on two separate occasions. The first epoche was performed prior to the data collection session with the participant. Initially, the co-
investigator found it difficult to clear her mind about her thoughts and feelings since her own experience was closely related to the topic being studied. The co-investigator felt that this was due to her having a mixed feeling of excitement and curiosity about the results of the study. The second epoch was conducted prior to analyzing the data where the co-investigator documented her personal thoughts and beliefs about the subject matter. The co-investigator also engaged in meditative exercises prior to any data analysis session to help her clear her preconceived thoughts about the study.

**Phenomenological Reduction**

The second step in analyzing the data is called phenomenological reduction and its objective is to create a description of the participant’s experience from the data collected in the study. The co-investigator began the process by placing brackets around the verbal statements that were relevant to the focus of the research. The co-investigator then horizontalized the data by identifying significant statements to the phenomenon, regarding each statement as having an equal value. Then these significant statements were summarized into themes of nonrepetitive and nonoverlapping statements. The co-investigator then constructed a cluster of “meaning units” and the selected significant statements within these meaning units were compared to the initial transcripts of the verbal data to ensure that they retained their original meaning. These clusters of meaning units were later used to develop a textural description of the participant’s lived experience.

**Participant Data and Data Analysis**

*Meaning Clusters of Significant Statements: Tree Metaphor – U.S.*

After the process of horizontalization and identification of significant statements made by the participant during the open-ended responsive interview, these significant statements were
categorized into clusters of meaning units. The following depicts the thematic categories of different meaning units in a table format.

Table 4a. 
**Meaning Clusters of Significant Statements: Tree Metaphor – U.S.**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Themes</th>
<th>Significant Statements</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Participant being in the presence of others</td>
<td>• It was harder for me to depict myself without other trees around me. So that’s why I have whole bunch of trees here.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• I ended up being a little bigger than I thought I would be.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• I wanted mine to be more just kind of pointed like trying to move upward and looking around me and looking at the other trees like this one and the other ones like ‘oh they are still big and beautiful’.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• It wasn’t like an immediate like these guys were, they are short but they are already like big and bushy.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• There are some up here, like this little guy over here kind of looks like me but kind of far away, so it’s harder to bond.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• [I look up to] people who had moved before us and had adjusted well already.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• There weren’t that many Korean American families around us although there were some that</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
1. Participant being in the presence of others (cont’d)

- It kind of took some reaching out on our part but not necessarily just Korean Americans but just people like us like Chinese Americans and other countries.
- I think I represented myself as one of many trees but the one that does not necessarily see other ones yet around like not too many that’s exactly like me or similar.
- Maybe I should have some in the background lurking and I’m not seeing them yet.
- Surrounded by a lot of different [trees]…[it’s] a little bit overwhelmed too maybe…there are so many, so much variety and so many different types…
- I’m not really sure or the tree is not really sure where it fits in and what it sees around them.

2. Reaching out for help and receiving help

- My parents are in San Diego, so L.A., San Diego, everyone is Korean, there are people who speak Korean all the time. It would have been a lot easier but I’m not sure if I would have done or adjusted as more, as quickly.
- Yea, definitely [see a lot of similar kind of trees...
2. Reaching out for help and receiving help (cont’d)

- Now]…part of it was just physically moving and meeting more people and acquainting faces with other American born Korean Americans.
- Part of it is also I think it’s just like having your eyes more open towards Korean American role models.
- I think the part of the whole adjustment period thing was just realizing that there are role models to look up to and people that you can reach out for help and they are more than happy to help you out.
- I think there are actually more effort for it now than there was before.
- Now in Philly I mean I guess part of being the University student and also just getting more involved in Korean American organizations on my own part too.
- I did that [tutoring] for a while and that’s how I met a lot of Korean Americans.
- A lot of the times the ones that ARE rooted here that are ARE from here are the ones that are really really to help you out.

3. Alienation/ Being a pioneer in Immigration

- There weren’t other trees around me that looked like me.
### 3. Alienation/ Being a pioneer in Immigration (cont’d)

- So I think that’s why there are certain ones that are together that look like really similar whereas I’m kind of by myself.
- We were the first ones in the country.
- Before it didn’t really enter my mind, it was more like ‘oh there aren’t any around me so I just do whatever I can on my own’.
- In Chicago, there is a big Korean American community but at the time we didn’t really know anyone outside my dad’s company or church.
- It was the only channel through which we met other Korean Americans.
- But in the U.S. there was no precedent, no one has done it before in the family…there was no other Korean Americans so it was harder.
- I think it’s up to the trees to figure out how to extend their roots and suck out the ingredient things.

### 4. Success vs. Failure

- You can try hard and if you are successful then you will be fine.
- Some of the ones that didn’t flourish that didn’t really make it.
- I think the U.S. in general not only for Korean
4. Success vs. Failure (cont’d)

Americans but like immigrants in general, it’s great if you are adjusting well and if you have made the transition but if you didn’t then I don’t think there’s any hand holding.

- The sort of big and bright ones are the ones that are strong and confident and satisfied and flourishing and doing well.
- Maybe some of the dead stuffs are, what’s like a word for, disillusioned I guess.
- I don’t know if it’s as bad as the dying ones, I wouldn’t say that they are dead but maybe the little ones, like they are doing okay but they are still not confident enough to grow really big and have a lot of bright flowers.
- Once this tree started doing okay or living, making leaves, it’s like more confident.

5. Uncertainty/ Confusion

- I wasn’t sure if I’m supposed to draw one tree about myself or draw other ones around me.
- I don’t know if that’s insanely true.
- For Korean Americans too I think a lot of the ones that I ended up tutoring, they are sort of not either this or that so that’s very discouraging.
- Mine would be very confused at the beginning.
5. Uncertainty/ Confusion (cont’d)

- Now it’s doing sort of okay but very confused at the beginning.
- …confused and kind of pressured to do well, to adjust.
- It’s there but it’s not necessarily obvious how you can do it.
- I’m not really sure or the tree is not really sure where it fits in and what it sees around them.

6. Individual adjustment struggles over time

- Since there are no leaves like down here, it took me a while to get there.
- It was a continuous struggle to get to the point.
- I’m fine now but just to get to there it took me a while I think.
- I was raised in Chicago and there was no Asians, all Jewish schools so it was good in terms of fitting in or trying to fit in without taking advantage of speaking Korean.
- I picked up the language pretty quickly.
- I also adjusted pretty quickly.
- But it was that much harder.
- Of course some of them make it harder for you too, like stealing your water supply or overshadowing you or something for example.
6. Individual adjustment struggles over time (cont’d)

- It’s also competition like it’s [resources] limited.
- Now I think I’m comfortable with both places but for me it took a while.
- So I’m not saying like no one reached out to me, it’s just there was struggle on my own part too.
- It’s your own effort too.
- That was really hard for me too…
- I think sometimes it takes a while for trees to figure it out, like it’s harder to grow on your own and it’s easier to get help from other people around you.
- I think for each of the trees, they have their own time.
- You cannot just like ‘oh you are young so you can adjust like this [fast]’ because that’s not true.
- Like some of them adjust really really quickly, make friends on the second day of grade school.
- And then some of them may take a year or two or even longer, like it’s a personality thing, it’s a comfort thing…I think a lot of the times it’s a pride thing too where some kids or some people are more likely to reach out for help because you cannot really do it on your own at the beginning.
6. Individual adjustment struggles over time (cont’d)

- For some, it’s natural, it’s like they just come and they adjust immediately. But they shouldn’t take that for granted.
- Each of the trees are the same way where some of them are comfortable and moving right away and some of them takes a while.
- I think on surface, it seems like I have adjusted pretty quickly.
- My parents didn’t really notice that I was having a hard time or anything.
- It’s different for each person.
- I think that’s just me being not sharing my emotions openly because I didn’t want to come home and be like ‘oh my god, school is hard’.
- It’s sort of like a process of figuring it out.

7. Fantasy vs. Reality of the American Dream

- To me, the U.S. seems like there are so many different people from all over the world and so many, not just ethnic backgrounds, but like social and economical and everything.
- They are mostly deeply rooted.
- They are pretty comfortable.
- The reason the soil is yellow is because it has this perception of being a land where a lot of different
trees can grow.

- It’s more like a perception thing for the soil to look like fertile and yellow and bright and happy.
- I think the U.S. in general not only for Korean Americans but like immigrants in general, it’s great if you are adjusting well and if you have made the transition but if you didn’t then I don’t think there’s any hand holding.
- I think that immigration laws are horrible and it’s getting even worse.
- I don’t think it’s a very foreigners friendly or immigrants friendly that I think it could be.
- I know it’s cliché but the whole American dream and that had definitely wiped out for a lot of people especially if you are starting off with the benefits, like illegal immigrants, so disillusioned, dissatisfied, discouraged, especially the ones that are struggling.
- It’s generally perceived as being fertile and friendly for any tree.
- It’s open for all trees and you can get as much nutrients and whatever is in the soil to grow taller and bigger.
8. Everyone is different and adjusts differently within different time frames

- There are so many different types of trees.
- There are some tree stuffs that are dead. That’s like a black little thing that I have there.
- There are other ones that are clearly flourishing and doing really well like lots of bright colors.
- Some generic looking trees and some of them are really colorful and happy in life and big.
- The culture is very different.
- It’s such a different culture but that’s like another length too.
- Some of them are more colorful and more comfortable having big flowers and being comfortable in this environment.
- Some of the definitely have like these ones [little bushy trees] start producing leaves right away so they adjust pretty quickly. They are still pretty little but it’s easier for the little ones right?
- For the other ones like this stump, is nice and sturdy but it takes a while for them to grow leaves.
- Surrounded by a lot of different, a little bit overwhelmed too maybe, there are so many, so much variety and so many different types…
9. School and school customs

- I moved even after I came here like I was in Boston, so first of all in Chicago, Boston and San Diego and here in Philly.
- In Germany when I moved, I don’t even remember when I moved, I was so young and I picked up the language like this [fast] whereas when I moved here [U.S.] I wasn’t really familiar with the language and the culture and it was also 8th grade.
- In Korea, I wore a school uniform and we had corporal punishment.
- That was really hard for me too, like going from the German school system to the whole like ‘you have to bow in front of the teachers’, ‘you can’t grow your hair long’, ‘you can’t do earrings there’, there was so many things that you can’t do.
- You go from that [Korea] to like here [U.S.] where you wear make up, you know, all that.
- It [German school system] is pretty similar to the U.S. although I think one big difference was the whole respect for teachers thing. In Germany everyone uses that polite form and you always refer to them by Mr. whatever.
- I guess they do that here [U.S.] too, but I don’t
9. School and school customs (cont’d)

- know if there is as much respect necessarily. You don’t really use any of the more polite terms to address your teacher for example.
- Of course it's very formal in Korea how you talk to your teachers. It’s very hierarchical system.
- I think Germany is sort of in between Korea and the U.S. in terms of formality and how much you respect.
- It hasn’t been that hard for me in terms of, Germany was fine and even in Korea, my parents did a good job in prepping me for it.

10. Receiving and offering encouragement as an important part of participant’s adjustment and identity

- I think one thing that I wish I could represent more with trees is how they help each other out.
- I hope some of the dying ones like recover but it kind of looks like it’s pretty hard for them.
- In the future I think the ones that flourish hopefully will help the other trees out.
- Tell them that just keep trying, there’s plenty of sunshine for everyone, there’s enough in the fertile ground for you to pull off of if you can.
- I am an optimist so I am hoping that they would all do well.
- It was sort of more difficult at the beginning like
10. Receiving and offering encouragement as an important part of participant’s adjustment and identity (cont’d)

there wasn’t anything and now that it’s big or starting to get more comfortable in the environment, I’m hoping that it would get bigger and have some more leaves.

**Textural Description: Tree Metaphor – U.S.**

The experience of creating a tree drawing in relation to the participant’s ethnic identity in the U.S. was characterized by: participant being in the presence of others; reaching out for help and receiving help; alienation and being a pioneer in immigration; success versus failure; uncertainty and confusion; individual adjustment struggles over time; fantasy versus reality of the American Dream; different acculturation rates and patterns for each individual; memories of school and school customs; and receiving and offering encouragement as an important part of the participant’s adjustment and identity.

The participant chose 12”x18” white drawing paper and utilized pencil and oil pastels to create the tree that represented her perception of herself or her experience in the U.S. She appeared to be fully engaged in the drawing process and used most of the allotted time for the drawing. More than one tree was represented in her drawing and she identified the tree that was drawn in the upper left center of the page as her own tree (Figure 1). During the open ended responsive interview, the participant stated “It was harder for me to depict myself without other trees around me. So that’s why I have whole bunch of trees here” explaining why there were many trees in the artwork. She then pointed at her tree and expressed that she ended up being “a little bigger” than she had originally thought she would be. She described her tree as “pointed like trying to move upward and looking at other trees”. Throughout the open ended responsive interview, she described her experience within the framework of the tree metaphor and oscillated
Figure 1: “Tree Metaphor – U.S.” (12”x18”)
between the tree metaphor and examples from real life experiences. She reflected her self
identity as being different from other people. Although she acknowledged the cultural diversity in
the U.S. that leads to unique and different identities among different people, she does not seem to
find the environment as comfortable. This relationship between the her tree and environment was
expressed when she stated how her tree is surrounded by a lot of different types of trees, feeling
“a little bit overwhelmed”, and her tree is “not really sure where it fits in and what it sees around
them”. Furthermore, she described how there are trees that look similar to hers but it is “kind of
far away so it’s harder to bond” and that her tree does not yet see other trees that are exactly like
her or similar.

The participant then went on to describe the environment where all the trees were
growing in much more detail. Cultural diversity in the U.S. was a theme that was extracted when
the participant described the many different types of trees and their cultivation status in the
drawing (Figure 1). She described the yellow soil (Figure 1) as the U.S. and stated that “it's
generally perceived as being fertile and friendly for any tree” but it is not “a very foreigners
friendly or immigrants friendly” that she thinks it could be. She discussed the positive and
negative aspects of the U.S. from her point of view conveying the fact that it is a land of
opportunity where “a lot of different trees can grow” and “it’s open for all trees and you can get
as much nutrients and whatever is in the soil to grow taller and bigger”. However, there is another
side of the coin where a lot of immigrants are “disillusioned, dissatisfied, and discouraged
especially the ones that are struggling” due to the misrepresentation of the “American dream”.

When she was describing the situation of immigrants in the U.S. she seemed to
emphasize a clear distinction of the concept of success versus failure among immigrants and how
they adjust to the American culture. The participant described that “it’s great if you are adjusting
well and if you have made the transition but if you didn’t then I don’t think there’s any hand
holding”. Other significant statements such as “if you are successful then you will be fine” and “some of the ones…that didn’t really make it” reflect this theme. She also linked “big and bright ones” in the drawing (Figure 1) are “strong, confident, satisfied, flourishing and doing well” whereas “black little thing…that are dead” are “disillusioned”. Moreover, “the little ones” in the drawing are “doing okay but they are still not confident enough to grow really big”. The participant clearly pointed out the different types and sizes of trees with a category of success or failure and related with particular set of emotions.

Once the participant finished explaining the environment depicted in the drawing, she moved on to describe about her tree. She described that her tree does not have any leaves at the bottom of the tree trunk but is starting to grow leaves on the top (Figure 1). This description of the tree was correlated to her adjustment struggles over a period of time. She described that “It was sort of more difficult at the beginning like there wasn’t anything and now that it’s big or starting to get more comfortable in the environment” and that “it was a continuous struggle”. She also described that the adjustment period depends on the each individual where “they have their own time” to feel comfortable in the environment. She expressed that her tree is still in the “process of figuring it out”. This theme of adjustment issues was also related to feelings of uncertainty and confusion where she described her tree as “very confused at the beginning…confused and kind of pressured to do well, to adjust”. The uncertainty of where her tree fits in the environment was also voiced. Her elaboration on upon the surroundings first and then her own self-representation in her drawing might have reflected her sense of feeling invisible in the environment or a desire to be invisible in her surroundings so that she appears like she blends in with the environment.

When describing her adjustment period in the U.S., she expressed that there was minimal connection with other Korean Americans initially and isolation was experienced because
there were no role models or precedent to look up to. Along with the feeling of isolation, she described the environment in the drawing as competitive among different trees. This theme is reflected in her statement, “I think it’s up to the trees to figure out how to extend their roots and suck out the ingredient things”, which highlights the individual effort required to fit into the environment.

Recollection of the cultural transition that she had experienced was expressed when she described the difference in topic of respect within the educational systems in the U.S, Germany, and Korea. She stated that “Germany is sort of in between Korean and the U.S. in terms of formality and how much you respect”.

A sense of receiving and offering encouragement was portrayed in the participant’s verbal statements and she wished that in the future “the ones that flourish hopefully will help the other trees out”. This theme of helping each other was also conveyed for her own tree through her statement “I’m hoping that it would get bigger and have some more leaves”.

**Imaginative Variation**

As a next step to the phenomenological data analysis, imaginative variation was conducted to evaluate the phenomenon experienced by the participant from a different perspective. This process is done by transplanting the topic being studied into a new context varying the possibilities of meaning that underlies the phenomenon being studied. Hence, the co-investigator created a story based on the themes collected from the data to further explore the phenomenon experienced by the participant.

The same character will be used in the first three set of data analyses for imaginative variation since all three drawings explored the participant’s experience of being a 1.5 generation Korean American immigrant. These three drawings were analyzed separately to gain a deeper
understanding of the participant’s experience at each place – U.S., Korea, Korean American. However, since one participant created all three drawings that reflected her experience in each of the three places represented, the same character named “Jenny” will be used throughout the first three imaginative variations.

*Imaginative Variation: Tree Metaphor – U.S.*

A little girl named “Jenny” was born by a father who was a wizard and a mother who did not have magical powers. They lived in her mother’s hometown where no magic was allowed. Jenny’s family led happy lives until Jenny’s parents separated when she was 10. The court ordered a joint custody over Jenny and Jenny had to follow her father to go to his hometown where magic was permitted all the time.

When she arrived to this unfamiliar magical world, she was first amused to see all the magical things happening around her. She got excited when she pictured herself performing all the magic that she has been dreaming of until these years since magic was prohibited in her mother’s hometown. Everyone looked different and unique to her and it just seemed like there were a lot of opportunities open for her if she chose to explore it.

However her excitement did not last very long. Once she started attending school, she realized that she was radically different from other students who were born in the magical world and who knew perfectly well how to handle magic. Since she was never exposed to magic before, she did not know a single magical skill or little tricks that other children of her age enjoyed for fun. In the magical world, she realized that magic equaled language and communication. And without her magical skills, she felt left out. She missed her hometown where she was born. For the first time, she blamed her parents for making her go through this. There did not seem to be anyone like her. She felt like she was a loser. Since everyone was so unique and different, Jenny
felt like she could not just easily blend in with the group of children from her school and not stick out. She tried to search for friends who might be similar to her, who are just getting used to this new world of magic. The great diversity that was once thought to be exciting was now an overwhelming experience for Jenny.

Although her father was a wizard, Jenny did not feel like she could talk to him. He was struggling with problems of his own and she did not want to worry him. Jenny thought to herself ‘He did not have to go through what I am going through right now. Who can I talk to? I cannot talk to anyone else because they won’t understand how I feel.’ She felt so confused as to what to do to make her feel better. After few years of getting used to the school and the magical world, Jenny made some friends and was slowly getting used to her magical skills. Learning how to do magic was not as easy as she thought it would be. It was not like an instant skill that one could master overnight. But Jenny worked hard and was slowly feeling confident about herself.

On her bedside, Jenny once again put a magical spell to herself that her magical skills would get better the next day and that she would be like one of the wizard’s children some day. She also hoped that someday she will help others who are like her to feel more welcomed in the magical world so that everyone can be happy.

Revised Themes

After the process of imaginative variation, the themes that composed the clusters of meaning units were revised as several new themes were revealed through the process of textural description and imaginative variation.

Revised Themes: Tree Metaphor – U.S.

1. Excitement

2. Diversity/ Unfamiliarity
3. New opportunity
4. Feeling of inadequacy/ Disappointment
5. Isolation/ Sadness/ Alienated and out of place
6. Nostalgia
7. Loss of connection
8. Overwhelming emotions
9. Confusion
10. Struggle to do well/ Competition
11. Individual effort
12. Hoping for the best

**Structural Synthesis**

As the final step of data analysis process, the co-investigator engaged in the structural synthesis where the meaning units and revised meaning units were reviewed to develop the essential meaning of the phenomenon being studied. The themes of meaning units obtained from textural description and imaginative variation process were integrated to provide an overall consistent description of the participant’s experience.

*Structural Synthesis: Tree Metaphor – U.S.*

The essential structures of participant’s experience of creating a tree representation of her self in the U.S. included: hope of becoming idealized self faced by feeling of inadequacy; individual effort to strive to overcome barriers to success; and uncertainty involved in group membership.

The participant’s underlying essential structure extracted from the data appeared to convey her worries and disappointments when she evaluates herself from her perception of
success and failure in the U.S. The different types of trees which she identifies as “big, flourishing” and “dead stuffs” in the drawing (Figure 1) reflected her concept of success versus failure. The participant seemed to be fully aware of the cultural differences but seemed to be limited to find similarities among this cultural diversity. This theme was represented via her significant statements where she expressed feeling “overwhelmed” due to the amount of diversity around her and how it was harder for her to find someone that was exactly like her or similar.

There seemed to be an idealized figure of success for her and that if she tried her best to reach that point she will be fine. She described that there was a clear distinction between well-adjusted versus ill-adjusted immigrants and that she looks up to people who had moved before her and “had adjusted well already”. Her significant statements such as “It was a continuous struggle to get to the point” reflected her idealized self which seemed to be related to her wish that someone had been there for her at the time of her struggles. This was represented in her verbalizations when she stated that “it’s harder to grow on your own and it’s easier to get help from other people around you” and “you cannot really do it on your own at the beginning”. This theme was depicted in the imaginative variation in that Jenny prayed on her bedside that her magical skill would get better the next day and wishing that someday she would be like one of the wizards like others.

The essential structure of the participant’s own effort to overcome the barriers in her environment was extracted from themes in the data. She described how there was minimal connection with other Koreans in the U.S. when she came and had to “just do whatever I can on my own”. There seemed to be an understanding that she had to find her own way to survive because there was no precedent or guidance from her parents to comfort her since her family started from scratch in a new living environment. This experience was also reflected through her depiction of leafless tree trunk where “it took a while” for her tree to figure out how to grow leaves, because although all the resources were available to her in the “yellow, fertile soil”, it was
“not necessarily obvious how you can do it”. Through her descriptions of struggles she faced with adjusting to the environment, she experienced isolation due to a loss of connection with what she had been used to before the transition. She had to compete with others who were “big and beautiful” because it was up to her to get what she needed. This theme of individual effort to compete with others was suggested in her statement where she verbalized “there’s plenty of sunshine for everyone, there’s enough in the fertile ground for you to pull off of, if you can”. She appeared to represent “big, strong, flourishing trees” in her drawing (Figure 1) as Americans or other immigrants who have adjusted well to the transition and succeeding in the U.S. This theme corresponded to Jenny feeling stuck and confused because she could not talk to her father or anyone else who would understand her struggles and therefore she had to work hard and do her best.

Lastly, the participant’s uncertainty about her group membership was revealed as the essential underlying structure from the data analysis. Through her descriptions about the relationship of her tree and the environment, she verbalized how “the tree is not really sure where it fits in and what it sees around them” and stated that “it’s sort of like a process of figuring it out”. Her other significant statements also reflected limited connection to other Korean Americans or to other individuals with whom she could form a bond. There seemed to be some confusion surrounding her status of where to belong in the environment. This theme was reflected in the imaginative variation in that Jenny felt like a loser and found it hard to blend in with other children who knew how to do magic.
Table 4b.

*Meaning Clusters of Significant Statements: Tree Metaphor – Korea*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Themes</th>
<th>Significant Statements</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Familiar/ Comfortable</td>
<td>• I hope what comes through in this drawing is that it’s a very comfortable environment.</td>
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<td></td>
<td>• I haven’t been there that much in terms of years I guess but it’s very familiar and very comforting.</td>
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<td>• I know that Seoul is crazy crowded, but when I think of Korea I always think of mountains and greens.</td>
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<td></td>
<td>• Like green, fresh, very comforting.</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• It’s all green and blue and all happy.</td>
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<td></td>
<td>• For this one [second drawing], they [trees] are similar enough in that it’s very comfortable and that’s the good part.</td>
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<td>• I think in Korea, there’s a lot of solidarity and a lot of national pride which I think it’s really good.</td>
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<td></td>
<td>• It’s very united and very goal-driven society I feel.</td>
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<td></td>
<td>• It’s really good that they can relate to each other really well…it’s also I think a production of or as a result of the education system, the culture where it’s encouraging unity.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Their roots are kind of connected.</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
| 1. Familiar/ Comfortable (cont’d) | • A lot of the trees are a lot more similar [than the first drawing].  
• Family is huge and I’m really close to my family, my direct family and also my relatives…we have a really really big family. |
| 2. Rigid traditional structure being a comfort and a source of connection | • One thing that I didn’t really like in Korea…  
• I think definitely compared to the U.S. and even in Germany, where Germany is not known for creativity, it’s just very structured and hierarchical and in many ways very traditional in terms of like the drinking culture, the school system obviously, school uniforms, regulations and rules.  
• It’s very, and this is all my own perception, very black and white…either you follow the rules or you don’t and if you don’t then it’s just unacceptable.  
• It’s very strict and it kind of tends to make everyone seem similar like very like-minded.  
• Although unity looked in another way it is also conformity where they don’t really encourage people or trees to grow differently.  
• People are very similar and I think the culture encourages people to be very similar, like education wise. |
2. Rigid traditional structure being a comfort and a source of connection (cont’d)

<p>| | |</p>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>It’s very strict and it kind of tends to make everyone seem similar like very like-minded.</td>
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<td></td>
<td>I think it’s similar to the trees in the U.S. where it’s good grown.</td>
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<td></td>
<td>It was really similar in terms of what your parents tell you and what you eat things like that.</td>
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<td></td>
<td>In Korea, when someone says something bad about a Korean, and boom everyone…there’s one big unity and my friends joke about ‘Korean mafia’.</td>
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<td></td>
<td>It’s always sort of, which I’m sure it’s true here too, but it’s just in Korea they are very like ‘oh we are Koreans’.</td>
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<td></td>
<td>It’s all connected, primarily cultural.</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Like anywhere not even just here but in the U.S. too like if you are Korean and if you meet other Korean people you are immediately just welcomed.</td>
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<td></td>
<td>It’s a very tight community I think and some people find it a little intimidating if you are not Korean.</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Korean always stick to each other.</td>
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<td></td>
<td>It’s a part of whole, like I think Koreans are really good at making each other feel welcomed, feel like one of your own.</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>There’s some competition but more trees helping</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
| 2. Rigid traditional structure being a comfort and a source of connection (cont’d) | each other thing.  
  • They are all connected so if I suck in water the other ones get some too.  
  • It was really similar in terms of what your parents tell you and what you eat things like that.  
  • It’s also easier because everyone around you sort of grew up with the same values as you did. |
|---|---|
| 3. Experience of duality | This is good and bad.  
  • It’s very, and this is all my own perception, very black and white…either you follow the rules or you don’t and if you don’t then it’s just unacceptable.  
  • It’s good and bad in a sense that solidarity is obviously good, unity is good but it can also be overwhelming for someone who doesn’t necessarily belong there entirely.  
  • Just like how they are similar to each other, it will get good and bad things.  
  • It’s really good that they can relate to each other really well…it’s also I think a production of or as a result of the education system, the culture where it’s encouraging unity. Although unity looked in another way it is also conformity where they don’t really encourage people or trees to grow differently. |
4. Difficult to belong

- [looking at the drawing] so that’s everyone and that’s me.
- It’s known that you are not from there.
- Like taking you somewhere and you have a lot of food and you are treated really well but ‘oh since you are not from here…’
- Maybe it’s a sense of accommodation but it’s also ‘well, you don’t know this because…’
- They are also very in general, not everyone…if you don’t speak their language well…if you don’t speak it or if you have an accent, they immediately have this sort of like ‘oh you are not from here’ kind of thing too.

5. Feeling of not belonging entirely

- This is me and I’m similar enough to the other ones to not stick out immediately.
- I’m also a kind of palm tree-ish thing whereas the other ones are more fluffy tree kind of thing.
- It’s sort of like a palm tree and the reason why I did a palm tree is that, that’s so clearly not from that place.
- You are comfortable, you are happy and you feel like you are one of the other people too, so far as like the other trees around you. But it’s known that
5. Feeling of not belonging entirely (cont’d)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>you are not from there.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• People are so nice and they are so excited to show you around and so welcoming but you always still have that one little room where you don’t feel like you are quite belonging and they make it known too.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Korea, people are very unified and have solidarity thing but they are not as embracing and welcoming as they could be if you are not from Korea originally and if you don’t speak the language.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• …feeling like you are part of the group but maybe not entirely.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• I always have a sense of longing to Korea.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• I love to go back and love visiting but I don’t really see myself living there for a long time.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• It’s always like a nice trip to go back but I don’t know if I consider it home-home.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• The other trees will continue growing and their foundations will be stronger and roots will be deeper.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• I think if this tree [her tree representation in the drawing] wanted to stay here, it will be fine. It will grow I think more similar to the other ones around it because I think the environments will foster that.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
5. Feeling of not belonging entirely (cont’d)

- It will grow roots and it will grow deeper.
- I think it’ll be fine, comfortable there unless it gets picked up and get deported to somewhere.
- The second one [second drawing] is more like maybe not somewhere where one chooses to be but we will return and we’ll always, it’s not somewhere where ‘oh a long time ago we lived there’ kind of a thing.

6. Memories of short visitations to Korea

- There was two years that I have lived there when I went back between Germany and the U.S.
- I went back a couple of times and the most recent one was last summer and mostly I was back there last summer for like, it was for a conference but it was also sort of seeing my relatives because I have relatives out there.
- Maybe because of like most of the times we spent in Seoul, but my dad’s relatives are in the Southern part so we go there a lot so that sort of like the image.
- I went back after high school graduation before college and that was for like a month or something.
- For some reason it was always at the rainy season and that’s why there’s some blue in there [in the
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>6. Memories of short visitations to Korea (cont’d)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• I think in Korea, when I went back after Germany, it was surprisingly easy to fit in and do well at school and get along with classmates because they were very as I said they were very welcoming and supportive.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• I had a lot of friends because it was very like ‘oh my gosh she’s from Germany’.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>7. Acquired sense of comfort in the U.S. over time</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• In the other drawing where they were all really different…maybe a little too different so that’s the overwhelming part.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• There’s national pride here [U.S.] too but it’s more divisive I think in general.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• I think it [home-home] has become the U.S. It hasn’t always been but it has become more.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• The first one [first drawing] I think I was little more confused and more different from the ones around me. It’s not even just looks but just in terms of thoughts and everything else culturally, what you’ve been used to.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>8. Uncertainty/ Feeling comfortable but worried</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• It’s growing fine but the roots are not as deep and sort of unsure also.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• I know I said uncertainty about the other drawing</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| 8. Uncertainty/ Feeling comfortable but worried (cont’d) | • It’s comfortable but a little uncertain too a little, sort of I guess worried that I look slightly different.  
• I act slightly different and comfortable but not as deeply rooted.  
• …feeling like you are part of the group but maybe not entirely.  
• I think it’ll be fine, comfortable there unless it gets picked up and get deported to somewhere. |
| 9. Adjustment issues/ Perceived acceptance in Korea | • I think it depends a lot on the group or the age even.  
• The young people are much more accepting.  
• I think a lot of it is just the age.  
• I think it’s sort of the tree’s own, like how comfortable the tree feels.  
• I don’t think it will despise the other trees or feel lonely.  
• I just noticed that I didn’t draw any dying trees here but there are definitely some that are dying here too, many for different reasons but probably more like economical.  
• I think in Korea, when I went back after Germany, it was surprisingly easy to fit in and do well at school and get along with classmates because they were |
9. Adjustment issues/ Perceived acceptance in Korea (cont’d)

- very as I said they were very welcoming and supportive.
- The education system was very difficult to adjust to just because of it’s very different in terms of how they teach things like it’s straight up memorization and no understanding and that took me a while too so I actually did no to that well in school.
- Maybe it’s just sheer time.

10. Difference in comfort level in the U.S. and in Korea over time

- In the other drawing where they were all really different…maybe a little too different so that’s the overwhelming part. For this one [second drawing], they [trees] are similar enough in that it’s very comfortable and that’s the good part.
- I think in Korea, there’s a lot of solidarity and a lot of national pride which I think it’s really good. There’s national pride here [U.S.] too but it’s more divisive I think in general.
- I think the biggest difference is the one that I mentioned where the first one it took a while to become as part of the environment and once you were part of the environment it was fine.
- In this one [second drawing] it was easy initially to just like settle down and feel like you belong, but to
| 10. Difference in comfort level in the U.S. and in Korea over time (cont’d) | reach the next level where you really are like one of the other trees, that might take a little while.  
- I’ve already been here [U.S.] for like 10 years so maybe it’s the comfort level in terms of years spent whereas the second one I was there [Korea] a long time ago for only a couple of years and it was just visitations in between.  
- I might even go back [to Korea] like if I’m really really old but I think for now I’m okay here [in the U.S.]. |
| --- | --- |
| 11. Difference in customs which can cause misunderstanding and misinterpretation | …sort of mixed messages from what you have at home versus outside.  
- Like at home, you are supposed to respect of elders and all that and when you are outside you are supposed to be confident and vocal about things.  
- For example, I know this is used a lot but like ‘don’t look directly in the eyes of someone who is older than you’ and if you do that here, I mean here meaning in the U.S., it’s perceived as ‘you are not confident enough or you are not sure or you are even lying, like why aren’t you looking at me in the eye?’  
- So just mixed messages are more confusing and more of a struggle to do well. |
11. Difference in customs which can cause misunderstanding and misinterpretation (cont’d)

- It’s [Korea] not a place that I can just pick up and leave just because if I do become a citizen here it’s not like I’m never going to go back to Korea.
- My parents don’t even really speak English, my dad does because he works, my mom doesn’t really, my relatives most of them don’t so language being a huge part of it…I can’t speak English to them…I only talk to them in Korean.
- It’s [Korea] always like a part of it I think.

Textural Description: Tree Metaphor – Korea

The experience of creating a tree drawing in relation to the participant’s ethnic identity in Korea was characterized by: feeling familiar and comfortable; rigid traditional structure being a comfort and a source of connection; experience of duality; difficult to belong; feeling of not belonging entirely; memories of short visitations to Korea; acquired sense of comfort in the U.S. over time; uncertainty and feeling comfortable but worried; adjustment issues and perceived acceptance in Korea; difference in comfort level in the U.S. and in Korea over time; and difference in customs which can cause misunderstanding and misinterpretation.

The participant chose 12”x18” white drawing paper and utilized oil pastels to create the tree that represented her perception of herself or her experience in Korea. She appeared to be fully engaged in the drawing process and used half of the allotted time for the drawing. More than one tree was represented in her drawing and she identified the palm tree as her tree which was drawn in the center of the page (Figure 2).
Figure 2: “Tree Metaphor – Korea” (12” x 18”)
When asked about the drawing during the open ended responsive interview, the participant first began to describe the environment represented in the drawing. She recalled her past memories in Korea and talked about the last time that she was there to visit. She related her image of Korea to her memories and impression of the few years that she had lived in Korea and few visitations in between her travels. She directly connected the image in her drawing (Figure 2) with her memory about Korea in that there are some blue in the drawing because she always visited Korea when it was a rainy season, and there are mountains in the background because she visited the southern part of Korea a lot where there were a lot of greens.

The participant then went on to describe her own perception of Korea about its familiar comfortable environment. She described Korea and also the environment in the drawing as “a very comfortable environment” where people are “very united”. However, she found that it is also “very structured and hierarchical” in terms of its traditional cultural practices making everyone “very like minded” when compared to the U.S. and Germany. Nevertheless, she seemed to find this rigid traditional structure of Korean custom as a source of comfort and connection. Connection and similarity was experienced by participant being a Korean. She described how cultural values practiced at home such as “what your parents tell you and what you eat” are similar when she goes back to Korea or even among Korean people living in the U.S. She also emphasized the national pride and solidarity emphasized among Koreans which were reflected in her significant statements such as “in Korea they are very like ‘oh we are Koreans’” where they “always stick to each other” like a group of “mafia”. This connection was reflected in her drawing (Figure 2) where all the roots of the trees were connected to each other. On the other hand, alienation was also experienced. The participant described that “it’s known that you are not from there” and Koreans are quick to point out the difference making statements such as “oh since you are not from here…” and “well, you don’t know this because…”. This aspect led to her
experience of duality about Korean traditional values where it has both “good and bad” aspects. She stated that Korea was “very black and white” with nothing in between these extremes and that “it’s really good that they can relate to each other really well” but “it can also be overwhelming for someone who doesn’t necessarily belong there entirely”. Unity and solidarity among Korean people were seen as positive but the very strict and hierarchical structures of the Korean culture that leads to conformity that “don’t really encourage people or trees to grow differently” were seen as negative.

After describing the context of her drawing, she spoke about the feelings of not belonging through her descriptions about the relationship between the trees and the environment in the drawing (Figure 2). The participant stated that she portrayed herself as a palm tree in the drawing because it is “similar enough to the other ones to not stick out immediately” and because it also shows that it is “clearly not from that place”. She described that in the beginning she is happy and feels like she is one of them but the others who are born and raised in Korea make it known that she is “not from there” and not “quite belonging”. Hence, her sense of not quite belonging in Korea was expressed. She also added that the environment of Korean culture will foster the trees to be similar even if the tree is foreign. This theme is depicted in her drawing where every tree represented look similar in size and color but there is one palm tree that is distinguished from the rest of the trees (Figure 2).

Feeling of uncertainty about where the participant stands in the environment was expressed from the data. She described that “it’s comfortable but a little uncertain too a little, sort of I guess worried that I look slightly different” pointing out that her tree roots are not as deeply rooted as other trees around her. She recounted this experience as “feeling like you are part of the group but maybe not entirely”. Feeling of fear that her tree might get picked up and get deported somewhere was also reflected in her verbal statements.
The participant expressed adjustment issues involved in Korea when describing the feelings of her tree in the environment to the co-investigator. She stated that there is individual difference in terms of adjustment period and how one approaches to deal with the cultural transition. Comparison of her self in the U.S and self in Korea was characterized by difference in adjustment pattern. When she compared the first drawing (Figure 1) and the second drawing (Figure 2), she described that in the U.S. “it took a while to become as part of the environment” but “once you were part of the environment, it was fine”, whereas in Korea “it was easy initially to just like settle down and feel like you belong” but it might take a little while to “reach the next level where you really are like one of them”. Her significant statements reflected that adjustment depends on the group, the age and time of the individual.

Along with her perceptions about Korea, the participant expressed her perception about the U.S. in this drawing as well. She stated that although she regards the U.S. as her home at present, there was a lot of confusion at the beginning due to the difference ranging from the physical appearances to cultural values and beliefs. She then compared her tree in the first drawing and in second drawing reflecting herself in the U.S versus in Korea. She stated that currently she regards Korea as some place to go back to live when she grows old and she is content with herself in the U.S.

Lastly, the participant recounted her experience being exposed to two cultures – American and Korean. She stated that there are mixed messages that she gets from home and outside of home which are “more confusing and more of a struggle to do well”. Moreover, she emphasized that although she is now comfortable in the U.S., Korea will always be a part of her identity.
A little girl named “Jenny” was born by a father who was a wizard and a mother who did not have magical powers. They lived in her mother’s hometown where no magic was allowed. Jenny’s family led happy lives until Jenny’s parents separated when she was 10. The court ordered a joint custody over Jenny and this summer she was going back to live with her mother for a few months. Although she had visited her mother a couple of times for the past 9 years since her parent’s separation, this summer was going to be one of the longest stay. Jenny was excited to go back and see what has been changed while she was not there. She felt like she could just relax there and have some good food and enjoy her time there because everyone looked similar and she did not stick out when she was with a group of people. She always felt a sense of belonging there although it was never too strong. But she also knew that these feelings were coming from the known fact that she won’t be staying there for a long time.

Upon arriving at her mother’s place, she decided to contact her old friends to let them know that she was back. Jenny did a little make over with her magical skills so that she looked less wizard-like. Jenny met her friends from when she was younger and they instantly picked up where they had left the last time when she was there. One of her friends suggested that they should go to this secret place that Jenny has not heard of before. Jenny thought to herself, ‘Should I ask them what kind of place they are talking about? or should I just keep quiet and see once I get there? I mean it seems like it’s similar to the hideout places that we went a long time ago… I don’t want to break the flow…that would ruin the fun…”. While Jenny was racing with her thoughts, her friend spoke, “Oh, I don’t know whether you know this place, Jenny, since you haven’t been here for a while…but it’s amazing with all sorts of entertainment! You’d love it! We should have told you what kind of place it was before we all got excited. Sorry…”. Jenny replied, “Oh, no need to be sorry. I’m sure it’s a great place to hang out! Thanks for telling me”. Jenny
always felt this kind of barrier around her when she was with her old friends and the conversations always went back to talking about those days when they were all younger. It was like hearing audio recordings of her past memories over and over again. It was harder to connect with them about her present life.

The secret place looked nice and comforting, and Jenny was having a good time with her friends. All of a sudden, she realized that she was thinking of a café back in the magical world that had similar atmosphere. She was also thinking about her other friends who live in the magical world but who were born here. She was eager to share her stories and knowledge from the magical world to her friends so that she also have something to talk about other than old memories. It seemed like whenever she visited her native town, she was traveling with so many different worlds inside her head and it was almost impossible to not make comparisons. Jenny was well aware of the pros and cons of each hometown since she had to figure out in her head which set of rules she should follow depending on the context that she was in.

Through her travels back and forth between here and the magical world, she realized that she always missed the other place after staying in the one place for a while. But Jenny currently feels that she is more comfortable living in the magical world since she had been living there for almost 9 years now. The magical world has just become more convenient for her these days. Although she is not sure when she will visit her native hometown again, she knows that she can always come back and feel welcomed.

*Revised Themes: Tree Metaphor – Korea*

1. Excitement/ Expectations
2. Sense of longing
3. Wish to connect/ blend in but also wanting to be different
4. Uncertainty/ Fear of losing the connection
5. Temporary transition
6. Not belonging in either place
7. Realizing differences/ Comparisons
8. Ambivalence/ Reluctance to express one’s thoughts
9. Old memories
10. Past versus Present
11. Unknown future

*Structural Synthesis: Tree Metaphor – Korea*

The essential structures of participant’s experience of creating a tree representation of her self in Korea included: ambivalence involved in where one belongs; fear of losing the sense of comfort and connection that have been already established; disconnection between past and present experience; and holding two different values that make up the in-between Korean American identity.

The participant’s underlying essential structure extracted from the data appeared to convey ambivalent feelings of her membership in Korea. She described that although her tree in the drawing (Figure 2) looks comfortable, it is not as deeply rooted as others and it feels like “you are part of the group but maybe not entirely”. Hence feeling of connection and support was experienced in Korea for having similar cultural values but feeling of isolation was also experienced from other Koreans due to being slightly different from the traditional Koreans who were born and raised in Korea. This theme was depicted in her drawing (Figure 2) where she is represented as a palm tree which is similar in size and color to other trees at a first glance but it is known that her tree is a palm tree unlike the other trees around her. In addition, there seemed to
be an ambivalence involved in considering Korea as her “home-home”. She expressed that “it’s always like a nice trip to go back” but “it’s not somewhere one chooses to be but will return and not just forget it”. This theme of feeling confused and ambivalent about oneself in relation to others and the environment was depicted in the imaginative variation in that Jenny prepared herself to look like her friends and was reluctant to express her wonderings about the secret place because she wanted to be seen like she knew what her friends were talking about.

The essential structure of the participant’s fear of losing the sense of comfort and connection that she has already established was extracted from themes in the data. She seemed to characterize Korean people as having a particular bond to their ethnic group. However, as expressed in her significant statement “I think it’ll be fine, comfortable there unless it gets picked up and get deported to somewhere” describing her tree in Korea, there seems to be a part in the participant that fears the loss of connection to her native country because she now feels comfortable regarding the U.S as her “home-home” since she has “already been here [U.S.] like 10 years”. She seemed to relate the feeling of connection to the years spent in the particular culture and its comfort level to a certain extent. This theme was similarly reflected in the imaginative variation where Jenny did not want to ask her friends about the secret place but just wanted to go with the flow. Jenny did not want to give her friends doubts and lose the special connection that she had when she was younger in their hideout places. Also because Jenny feared that she eventually won’t have a common topic of interest to share with her friends, she was eager to share her stories from the magical world to them.

Another essential structure was found to be the participant’s discrepancy in her experience of past and present perceptions of being in Korea. There seemed to be a disconnection between her descriptions of the artwork (Figure 2) and her description of being in Korea. Her description of her artwork about being in Korea seemed to portray the place as comfortable and
feeling supported and welcomed based on her memories from short visitations to Korea. However, when she is describing about being in Korea she seemed to focus on where she stands at the present between the U.S. and in Korea, and she expressed that she feels more comfortable in the U.S. compared to being in Korea. This theme was depicted in the imaginative variation where Jenny found it hard to connect with her old friends about her present life and she was only able to connect with them about the past memories that they shared together when they were younger.

Lastly, the participant’s experience of having an in-between Korean American identity that holds two different values – Korean and American – was revealed as the essential underlying structure from the data analysis. The participant described her thoughts about positive and negative aspects of both Korea and the U.S., and expressed her unique struggles in adjusting to the different cultures. Her significant statements reflect this particular experience as “it’s not even just looks but just in terms of thoughts and everything else culturally, what you’ve been used to”. She described the mix messages that she gets from each culture and how that can be confusing at times. She explained that although she regards living in the U.S. as more comfortable at the present, Korea will always be a part of her. This theme of having double consciousness of two identities was depicted in the imaginative variation where Jenny could not resist thinking about the things that were in the magical world when she was sitting in the secret hideout place with her friends. Jenny also regards mother’s hometown as a part of her cultural background although she is uncertain when she will visit again.
Table 4c. *Meaning Clusters of Significant Statements: Bridge Metaphor*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Themes</th>
<th>Significant Statements</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Cultural transition</td>
<td>• Because of the first two drawings…it’s sort of the transition from Korea to Korean-American or America.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• It’s sort of that transition.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• “I think most people will sort of always be in transition”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Adjustment struggles</td>
<td>• It’s sort of like an up-hill climb.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• It’s not like an easy flat bridge and meaning like it gets easier afterwards…it’s kind of like a struggle initially.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• You are sort of on your own which is part of the struggle.</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• It gets wider because it gets easier but I’m sure there are other struggles that you just adjust to so maybe it narrows down again.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Especially around L.A., there are people who never really adjust.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• They turn away from the parents and struggle.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Parents are like ‘oh we came for you’ but on the kid’s part, it’s like ‘well, I don’t speak the language’.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• It’s hard to find your group and your own niche.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
2. Adjustment struggles (cont’d)  
- They feel like they’ve been picked up and got deported.  
- Like for each person, it’s an individual struggle with different bridges, very high up, sky in the background.

3. Seeking others for help  
- There are other people on the bridges like this one and that one [pointing at other two bridges that the subject has drawn in the drawing].  
- There are other people on other bridges so you can sort of look each other for help which is why there are other bridges.  
- I think like not just for myself but my cousins for example who are Korean-American, my friends…

4. Self-sufficiency  
- You are sort of on your own which is part of the struggle.  
- It’s supposed to be very narrow so it’s kind of like a personal bridge so you cannot drag 6 people with you.  
- You don’t really have like a precedent to look for or someone for advice or anything.

5. Uncertainty/ Danger  
- I don’t know how much is left.  
- I don’t think I’m completely there…it seems like it’s closer but you don’t really know.  
- That’s why it’s sort of open ended on both sides too.  
- I think it’s unknown.
| 5. Uncertainty/ Danger (cont’d) | • It could end right here too.  
• I don’t think I necessarily know at this point how it’s going to turn out.  
• The background is blue because these are all high up in the air.  
• It kind of adds to the danger factor rather than like a bridge over a little brook or something.  
• It’s actually like, not life threatening, but pretty dangerous bridge where there’s a lot at stake.  
• I just had wood bridge in my head.  
• I think it’s sturdy enough to keep it up but it’s not like steel or concrete or something that’s completely indestructible.  
• I think that’s part of the danger factor where it’s sturdy enough and it’s fine but it’s not steel. |
|---|---|
| 6. Not fully belonging in either ends of Korean American identity | • I’m leaning more towards to this end where it’s closer to the U.S. because I’ve been here for a long time and I’m more comfortable living and also having had high school and college here and now I’m in grad school, it has just become, it’s very formative years.  
• I feel like I’m closer to over here [U.S.].  
• It’s also kind of like a bridge ladder so it’s like you are jumping from one thing to another but it gets closer |
| 6. Not fully belonging in either ends of Korean American identity (cont’d) | here [American side of Korean-American], it’s more closely packed together so it’s easier [to get by].
- They never really feel like they are belonging in either ends.
- [The bridge is coming from] maybe not Korea-Korea but just the comfort level of just the Korean community.
- Even if you are in the U.S. like for example my parents are in San Diego, they go to Korean bank, Korean grocery stores, Korean church like everything is very Korean. Like my mom or some of them don’t’ even speak English like ever for weeks and whatever on end. I don’t think that’s necessarily bad but it’s also you are in the U.S. so it kind of makes it harder for, now my sister and I are both older so we are okay but I think in an environment like that it might be more difficult for the children to reconcile the two places.
- This beginning point [left side of the bridge] is that where it’s very Korean oriented so more heavily towards the Korean side of Korean American.
- This [right side of the bridge] is more Korean American maybe even more geared towards the American side. |
6. Not fully belonging in either ends of Korean American identity

(cont’d)

- When I’m here in the east coast, most of my friends are not Korean, I speak English all day, I work in English so I feel like I’ve completely adjusted and it’s fine. When I go back and visit my relatives, I feel like I’m completely back here [Korean side].
- I think it’s also in a way like just kind of jumping back and forth and going back and forth.
- Maybe the ability to do that is actually being here [Korean American side of the bridge].
- If you are here [Korean American side] you can always go and come back on your own will whereas if you over here [Korean side] you can’t necessarily always go there and come back, you are just kind of like afraid to cross the bridge so to say.

Textural Description: Bridge Metaphor

The experience of creating a bridge drawing in relation to the participant’s ethnic identity was characterized by: the bridge as a depiction of cultural transition, uncertainty and danger variable; adjustment struggles; seeking others for help; self-sufficiency in coping with adjustment; and experience of not fully belonging in either ends of Korean American identity.

The participant chose 12”x18” white drawing paper and chose pencil and oil pastels to create the bridge. She appeared to be hesitant at the beginning to make a mark on the paper, and asked the co-investigator to repeat the directive one more time. Once she was engaged in the drawing process, she used most of the allotted time for the drawing. The participant’s response
after the completion of the drawing was that the bridge represented “the transition from Korea to Korean-American or America”. An image of a bridge was drawn in the center of the page stretching from one end to the other end of the paper with no finite endpoints (Figure 3). She drew an arrow above the bridge that was heading to the right, and described that the left side of the bridge was “where it’s very Korean oriented so more heavily towards the Korean side of Korean American” and that the right side of the bridge was “more Korean American maybe even more geared towards the American side”. The participant seemed to represent her ethnic identity as a cultural transition between Korean and American side of the Korean American identity through her description of the bridge in the drawing.

When asked about what the bridge was made out of, the participant described it as a wooden bridge that is “sturdy enough to keep it up but it’s not like steel or concrete or something that’s completely indestructible”. She also described the bridge as being high up in the air where the starting point and the ending point of the bridge is open ended and unknown. She described the bridge as having several “danger factors”. She linked these dangerous characteristics of the bridge with the experience of uncertainty about being 1.5 generation.

The participant then described about how one would cross the bridge that she had drawn. She described the bridge as “not an easy flat bridge” and that “it’s kind of like a struggle initially” to go up the bridge ladder. She stated that the bridge ladder “gets wider because it gets easier” but “there are other struggles that you just adjust to so maybe it narrows down again”. Through her descriptions about the bridge ladder, she expressed the adjustment struggles involved in the transition and shared how some individuals “feel like they’ve been picked up and got deported”. She emphasized that these adjustment struggles are individually based and something that one has to deal with on their own in the end. This is reflected in her verbalization, “like for each person, it’s an individual struggle with different bridges, very high up, sky in the background”.
Figure 3: “Bridge Metaphor” (12”x18”)
A sense of connection and support was expressed by the participant when she described the other two bridges that she had drawn on the background. She stated that she drew other bridges where “there are other people on the other bridges so you can sort of look each other for help”. However, the experience of feeling isolated was also expressed when she described the bridge as “a personal bridge” and stated that “you are sort of on your own which is part of the struggle”. She connected this theme to how she did not have a precedent or someone that she could ask for advice during the times when she was struggling trying to adjust.

Lastly, the participant summarized her thoughts about in-between identity being a 1.5 generation Korean American when describing the red dot on the drawing which represented where she is on the bridge at the present (Figure 3). She described that she was leaning more towards to the American side of Korean American identity. She also reflected her thought about other 1.5 generations that she had seen where “they never really feel like they are belonging in either ends”. She described the 1.5 experience as “more difficult for the children to reconcile the two places”. The participant further described the 1.5 experience as “jumping back and forth” between each culture and stated that this is enabled by being more on the American side of Korean American identity.

*Imaginative Variation: Bridge Metaphor*

A little girl named “Jenny” was born by a father who was a wizard and a mother who did not have magical powers. They lived in her mother’s hometown where no magic was allowed. Jenny’s family led happy lives until Jenny’s parents separated when she was 10. The court ordered a joint custody over Jenny and since then Jenny had to go back and forth between her parents’ places which were distinctively different.

Jenny was now 25 and was once again traveling the large sea going through the harsh
tidal waves to get back to the magical world which now she calls her hometown. When she was under 21, she was able to travel between her parents’ places with no difficulty because she was under the protection of underage guidance for children of the magical world. However, once she became 21, those magical protections were lost and she had to travel alone dealing with the situations in her surroundings as she made her trip across the sea that lay in between the two places. Because the sea was a link between the two different places, Jenny could not perform magic all the time. There were certain zones that she could use magic but there were other zones where magic was prohibited or not applicable. She realized this after many attempts of trial and error on her journey. Although this sea was a common ground that linked the two places, Jenny realized that there were different rules that she had to follow in order to make the transition successfully.

Jenny departed from the port and started sailing on a usual boat that she was on in her other trips. The sea seemed quiet. But it was not long before a harsh tidal wave hit her boat and she had to learn how to balance herself on the boat without using magic. After her hardship and learning from her experience traveling back and forth, her managing skills on the sea became like an instinct. It was like having a dual image of the situations where she can use magic and cannot use magic in her head all the time so that she can make the best choice. However, sometimes having these dual images led to too much ambivalence and time that it was more effort on her part to make the right decisions. Despite her experience and knowledge about the sea, there was always the unknown danger variable that can happen at any time while she was traveling. So she could not let her grip lose on the things that she was holding onto.

Every once in a while she wondered where her real home was. She felt like she knew both places but sometimes she was not too sure. And this made her feel lost and sad. The only thing that rescued her from this sad feeling was that she was doing well and comfortable in the
magical world and currently she feels like she has more fruitful tools at her hands to face any challenge that comes to her. Jenny also realizes deep down in her heart that she will be faced with new challenges no matter how comfortable she feels in her hometown.

Revised Themes: Bridge Metaphor

1. Transition
2. Loss/ Self-sufficiency
3. Obstacle/ Challenge
4. Rules/ Regulations
5. Ambivalence
6. Sadness/ Confusion
7. Danger/ Risk taking
8. Fear of uncertainty
9. Adapting to the environment
10. Sense of belonging and not belonging in two places
11. Growing up

Structural Synthesis: Bridge Metaphor

The essential structures of participant’s experience of creating a bridge in relation to her ethnic identity included: experience of transition between Korean and American side of Korean-American identity; connection and uncertainty factors involved in the transition; and ambivalence involved in where to belong.

The essential structure of the participant’s experience being in transition between Korean and American culture was extracted from themes in the data. The participant’s experience of being a 1.5 generation was described through the concept of a bridge and what it represents
metaphorically. The participant perceived the bridge drawing to be representing a cultural transition involved being exposed to two different cultures and she is transitioning from her Korean side to American side of Korean American identity. Her significant statements such as “jumping back and forth”, “going back and forth”, and “jumping from one thing to another” reflects this transition characterized by being a 1.5 Korean American. Through her description of the bridge where there were no definite end points on either side of the bridge, she seemed to reflect her experience as a constant transition back and forth between two cultural identities and not an either/or entity. An elaboration of life examples of transitioning back and forth balancing Korean values at home and American values outside of home were also described by the participant. This theme was depicted in the imaginative variation in that Jenny had to move back and forth between her parents’ places that are distinctively different.

The participant’s underlying essential structure extracted from the data appeared to convey a connection between Korean and American side of Korean American identity. A sense of connection among other 1.5 generation Korean Americans were also explored by the participant. The significant statements about her experience of the 1.5 identity seemed to reflect a sense of connection to all three aspects of her identity; the connection to her country of origin-Korea, America, and “the comfort level of just the Korean community” in the U.S. It also appeared that the participant spoke for the general immigrant population in the U.S., who went through similar transitional difficulties, when she talked about her identity. This theme of connection in the cultural transition was also represented in the imaginative variation where Jenny was aware of the fact that the sea connects her hometowns and it is the common ground for both of the hometowns but at the same time having different regulations set upon this common ground. Also the dual representation in Jenny’s head when faced with a challenge was similarly depicted in the participant’s description of the double consciousness or multiple consciousness of her identity.
depending on the context that she is situated in.

The underlying structure of participant’s experience of uncertainty in the process of transition or being in transition within her 1.5 identity is expressed through the significant statements representing her feelings of isolation and adjustment struggles. The participant’s description of a “not life threatening but pretty dangerous bridge where there’s a lot at stake” seemed to reflect high levels of anxiety and sense of pressure to succeed in the face of unknown future. She seemed to convey that there will always be some kind of adjustment challenges that she has to face on her own because she is not sure what lies ahead of her because she is trying to make the right next step depending on the context. Similar theme of isolation and constant effort to face the challenge was depicted in the imaginative variation in that Jenny is alone in the sea fighting off the harsh tidal waves where there are a lot unknown variables hidden in her journey to make the transition successfully.

Lastly, ambivalence of where to belong was revealed as the essential underlying structure from the analysis of data. The participant verbalized that the ability to transition back and forth between the two identities that form Korean American identity is when one is more toward the American side of the Korean American identity. However, other significant statements seemed to reflect her ambivalence in her status of where she is in this transition. Her verbal statements such as “I don’t think I’m completely there…it seems like it’s closer but you don’t really know” and “I don’t think I necessarily know at this point how it’s going to turn out” conveyed the meaning that she is still in the process of figuring out her identity. However, she seemed to be hopeful and confident that she will be able to face the challenge that comes to her. This theme of ambivalence in not fully belonging in either identity was presented in the imaginative variation where Jenny was trying to even out the values of two different cultural values and beliefs which consumed a lot of time in her decision making process and led to
feelings of loss and confusion. In addition, the participant’s optimistic attitude toward possible future challenges was also depicted through Jenny when she regarded her dual identity as being a strength rather a handicap.

*Experience of Creating the Artwork*

Table 4d. 
*Meaning Clusters of Significant Statements: Experience of Creating the Artwork*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Themes</th>
<th>Significant Statements</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. New to drawing/ Curious</td>
<td>• I never expressed it in drawing.</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Part of me wanting to do this was the whole curiosity.</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Never done it before.</td>
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<td></td>
<td>• I’m a lot more comfortable expressing myself either in words like written or oral so this was a very unfamiliar and not necessarily something that I’m comfortable in.</td>
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<td></td>
<td>• It was also very different from what I’ve been doing so far.</td>
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<td></td>
<td>• Honestly, one of my questions before all of this was that I was going to ask you was ‘well why not just interview?’.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• It was curiosity more than my ability to draw.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Anxiety</td>
<td>• I was anxious and a little bit worried about the whole drawing thing in general.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Anxiety (cont’d)</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>----------------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
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<tr>
<td>• I was little anxious at the beginning like ‘what if I don’t know what to draw’.</td>
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<tr>
<td>• What I was worried about the most was ‘what if I don’t have anything’.</td>
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<tr>
<td>• That was a little bit anxiety producing at first like ‘I don’t know what to do’.</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Even though I said my mom is a painter, I’ve got none of that skill whatsoever.</td>
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<tr>
<td>• I was a little bit nervous at first because I thought…I just assumed that you would leave me by myself.</td>
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<tr>
<td>• If you were like sitting right there staring at me, maybe it would have been a little uncomfortable.</td>
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</table>

<table>
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<tr>
<th>3. Surprised/ Unexpected realizations</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• I was sort of surprised.</td>
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<tr>
<td>• It was pretty surprising.</td>
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<tr>
<td>• I realized that once I started outlining out, it could be a hanging bridge or a really big loopy one, a flat one.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• There are a lot of different ways to use it to express what you are feeling but at first that wasn’t what I thought.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• I thought trees made it easier and I realized that wasn’t necessarily true.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
3. Surprised/ Unexpected realizations (cont’d)

- I realized that’s not necessarily true.
- …realize also little things that I’ve mentioned before that I didn’t realize before.
- …now I understand it a lot better.
- It was a lot more open ended than I thought it would be.
- Like before when you described the directives and stuff, I thought it would be more detailed like a lot of different things but it was actually pretty open ended and pretty general like tree, place and that’s it.

4. Satisfaction and Feeling of being accepted

- It kind of felt good though in a way because you were really understanding like ‘I’m not going to evaluate you’.
- I felt comfortable doing it.
- It was fine…
- I was satisfied I think because I was able to explain it and attach meaning to it. If I just had let it go at that [just the drawings], I don’t think anyone really would have understood.
- …that was the most meaningful part for me.
- …once I started drawing I was actually glad that it wasn’t very detailed so it was just up to me to
4. Satisfaction and Feeling of being accepted (cont’d)

- Trees and bridges aren’t exactly too difficult to draw also.
- I think it was good that it was both like not just the painting or just the drawing or just the talking.
- I think it’s great that you are doing it [this study] and I hope that you get a lot more subjects.

5. Deeper self exploration

- It ended up there was a lot…
- It was also like whatever I had in my head at the beginning, because I try to lay out beforehand, wasn’t necessarily what came out.
- When I started drawing I thought I was just going to draw myself but I realized, for both of them actually, I realized that it’s almost impossible to do that unless you have other trees around.
- It was good sort of explaining to myself again and what I thought of each place and what I thought of myself in each place.
- I said this is what I’m going to do and I started it and oh wait this doesn’t really show what I’m thinking.
- Whatever I had in my head first I think it’s sort of like an evolving process where you don’t really
5. Deeper self exploration (cont’d)

- Usually when people ask me about, like the case in the first picture, ‘how was the U.S. for you’, I was like ‘oh it’s fine, it was easy’, but I realized that when I thought about it and started drawing, it was actually harder or the experience must have been harder than I had acknowledged because I didn’t draw like a big happy bushy tree.
- …realize also little things that I’ve mentioned before that I didn’t realize before.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>6. Re-examination of ethnic identity</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>- I’ve spent some time thinking about immigration and moving back and forth.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- I think the tree ones came a little bit more easily than the bridge drawing one, I’m not sure why but maybe because it’s like the link between.</td>
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<tr>
<td>- It’s easy to imagine yourself at one place and this other place but this sort of in between area which is also like the part of the whole 1.5 thing.</td>
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<tr>
<td>- Grey in between area, it’s harder to express it and especially hard to draw.</td>
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<tr>
<td>- I started picturing myself as a big bushy tree but it wasn’t always like that.</td>
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<tr>
<td>- It did help me in terms of reliving whatever</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
6. Re-examination of ethnic identity (cont’d)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>because it has already been 10 years and you always tend to remember good things about it but I realized that that’s not necessarily true.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• And same as the second drawing where I started drawing a lot of similar looking trees together, and at first I was going to draw myself as pretty similar one maybe slightly different. I didn’t realize that I will go out and actually draw a palm tree because that’s very very different, clearly not from the area.</td>
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<tr>
<td>• I realized that that’s actually representative in many ways so that’s what I did.</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Because before when I’ve described it to other people and thought about it to myself and it was always all of it together; like U.S., Korea, and Germany. But having it so separated to one, two, three, it really helped me understand each of them I think better.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| • I think when I talk about my experiences in Korea, in the U.S. and in between, I’m pretty open about it but even like for me I think I have shared more than I would have felt otherwise and especially when I’m trying to make sense out of why that,
6. Re-examination of ethnic identity  
(cont’d)

why is it a palm tree, why these are all connected.
- I definitely think that more studies should be done on 1.5 generations.
- There’s a lot on second generation and what they go through and obviously it’s a struggle for them too or first generation, but I think 1.5 have their own unique experiences to learn.
- It’s a little more difficult to struggle between the two different worlds.

7. Artistic expression as potential intervention tool

- If someone told me to sit here and talk about it [ethnic identity] for 20 minutes each or think about it for 20 minutes each, I would have probably stopped after like 2 or 3 minutes without the drawing.
- I wouldn’t have delved deeper into anything [just verbally].
- Having a visual representation of it rather than just words or thoughts in my head, actually seeing it in front of me made it a lot more clearer to me anyway.
- For the tree ones as I said it was a little easier because a part of it was you are allowed to draw other trees to show how you are different or
| 7. Artistic expression as potential intervention tool (cont’d) | • I think it was good that it was both like not just the painting or just the drawing or just the talking.  
• I don’t know if I would have necessarily felt comfortable without all of this just like face to face.  
• Certain things I wouldn’t have just said or written but just having had that focus time on each of the drawings, then it’s just like right there too, it’s in your face like you can’t really go around it.  
• I think it definitely opens up people more or it opens up me more.  
• I’m guessing that for people who struggle it would definitely help them a lot.  
• Another one was how much more you are willing to share and since you are doing like therapy, especially at the beginning if you don’t know the therapist very well or know the person very well, you might not feel comfortable sharing like your perceptions of different ethnicities like Koreans, Korean Americans, or Americans, but having had the drawings done, you are a lot more comfortable to share your honest thoughts and opinions. |
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<tr>
<td>8. Three separate drawings representing the three aspects of the participant’s identity</td>
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<tr>
<td>• The fact that it was three separate drawings too and not on one piece of paper or all at the same time but it was very like first one, second one and in between, it was very sort of clearly differentiated for me.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• If you put into different compartments like that it’s easier to really focus on that one single experience rather than think of it as a whole.</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>• I think most meaningful was just having each of the different pieces of paper devoted to each of the different places and experiences, was very meaningful.</td>
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<tr>
<td>• I think it would be helpful to them to have it lay out like number one is just devoted to that one place and two is devoted to the other place so I think it’s very relevant for 1.5 especially.</td>
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**Textural Description: Experience of Creating the Artwork**

At the end of the open-ended responsive interview, the participant described her experience of creating the artwork about her ethnic identity and immigration experiences. This participant’s experience of creating all three pieces of artwork was characterized by: new to drawing process, curiosity, and anxiety about the art making process; surprise and unexpected realizations via process; satisfaction and acceptance; deeper self exploration; re-examination of her ethnic identity; artistic expression as potential intervention tool; and three separate drawings
as a representation of the three aspects of her identity.

The participant in this study expressed her thoughts about before and after experiences on the process of creating the artwork. She verbalized that expressing her thoughts and beliefs about her ethnic identity and her immigration experiences on paper by drawing was “unfamiliar” and “very different” from her usual form of expression such as using written or oral form of expression. Her curiosity about the art making process was another factor that interested her in this study. She also shared her fantasies that she had prior to her participation in the study about the drawing process.

The participant’s description of her experience completing the drawings was that she was “anxious” and “worried” that she might “not know what to draw” or “do not have anything to draw” due to her drawing ability. The experience of creating the artwork was perceived as anxiety provoking initially, however, she expressed satisfaction about the whole process once she had completed all three drawings for the study. She stated in her verbalization that “I was satisfied I think because I was able to explain it and attach meaning to it” and “I think it was good that it was both like not just the painting or just the drawing or just the talking”. She described the art making process as a meaningful experience due to the reason that she was able to explain what she had expressed in her drawings both via artistic expression and verbalization of her experience.

The participant described the process of engaging in the creation of artwork as surprising and realizing something new that she was not aware of before. She stated that certain things turned out to be different once she began drawing and have come to realize different aspects of her experience in regards to her ethnic identity and memories of cultural adjustment, while she was engaged in the art making process and explaining the artwork. This is reflected in her statements such as “I was sort of surprised”, “I realized that’s not necessarily true” and “now I understand it a lot better”.
A deeper self exploration about the artistic expression process was recounted when she stated how “it was good sort of explaining to myself again and what I thought of each place and what I thought of myself in each place”. She described that although she had planned what she was going to draw beforehand, the images turned out to be different from her initial thoughts and that it was “an evolving process where you don’t really necessarily know upfront”. While engaged in the artistic process, she realized a discrepancy in what she thought was her experience and what actually turned out in the images that she had drawn, and mentioned how “the experience must have been harder than I had acknowledged”.

Along with the deeper self discovery, re-examination of her ethnic identity was expressed in several responses when she described the three drawings explaining her identity in each of the places – U.S., Korea, “the link between” that represented Korean-American. When asked about what was realized about her ethnic identity through the drawing process, she stated “It’s easy to imagine yourself at one place and this other place but this sort of in between area which is also like the part of the whole 1.5 thing…grey in between area…it’s harder to express it and especially hard to draw”. She also expressed that she acknowledges the struggles of the first and second generation of immigrants but that “1.5 have their own unique experiences to learn”. She verbalized her thoughts in regards to being a 1.5 generation immigrant through her statement “It’s a little more difficult to struggle between the two different worlds”.

When asked about the directives used in this study, the participant responded that although tree drawings seemed easier to draw than the bridge drawing, this might have a link to her ethnic identity because the bridge drawing was “like the link between” the American culture and Korean culture. On the other hand, she stated that “trees and bridges aren’t exactly too difficult to draw” and the utilization of drawings to explore one’s ethnic identity could become a useful tool for 1.5 generation immigrants to open up their minds. She described that “having a
visual representation of it [her thoughts surrounding the subject matter] rather than just words or thoughts in my head, actually seeing it in front of me made it a lot more clearer to me”, and that she “wouldn’t have delved deeper into anything” if she just had to describe her experience verbally. She stated that “having had that focus time on each of the drawings” made it a lot clearer to her because the drawings were right there and “you can’t really go around it”. The participant also shared her thoughts about therapy where one might not feel comfortable sharing their perceptions of different ethnicities to a therapist that he/she sees for the first time. She stated that “having had the drawings done, you are a lot more comfortable to share your honest thoughts and opinions”.

Lastly, the participant commented on how it was meaningful for her to have three separate drawing to depict her identity and experiences in each place. She stated in her verbalization that “I think most meaningful was just having each of the different pieces of paper devoted to each of the different places and experiences” and that this aspect is “very relevant for 1.5 especially”. She verbalized how meaningful it was for her to participate in a study that looked into 1.5 generation of immigrants and discussed how more studies should be done on this generation.

*Imaginative Variation: Experience of Creating the Artwork*

There was a girl named Ellen who lived in a tiny village in the forest. Ellen always loved to walk around the forest and explore the area by herself. She had a lot of friends from her neighborhood but she enjoyed the time being alone discovering new things in the nature. One day when she was passing by a small pond, she realized that something was bubbling in the water. She first thought that it was fish swimming in the water and ignored the sound and moved along. But as she listened carefully, the bubbling sound was something different and saw different
colored marbles rising above the surface of the water. Ellen ran to the pond to reach for the marble but restrained herself because she did not know what it was. She was scared that something might happen to her if she picked them up from the water. So she decided to watch them first and see whether it looked safe to touch them. As she waited for the marbles to come up again, she examined them much more closely. They looked a little bigger than her hands. She wondered what they could be. She started to wander off to think about different kinds of objects that had sphere like shapes. It seemed to her that these marbles were smaller than bowling balls and wondered whether they will be heavy. One of the marbles was red, the second one was blue and the last one was yellow. She was so curious to pick them up but was still nervous reaching them out of the water because the marbles never rose out of the water fully. She was afraid that something else might be connected under the marbles.

Ellen could not stop wondering. After an hour of observing the marbles, she finally decided to go ahead and pick one of the marbles out of water. She carefully reached out for the red marble and picked it up. The water felt cold and fresh but nothing scary happened. She held up the red marble with both of her hands and looked at it. She first saw her reflection on the marble. But as she kept staring at it, she saw a different image. She saw herself when she was younger. Ellen was very surprised at what she was seeing inside the marble. This was not what she thought would happen. She placed the red marble carefully on the grass and went to the pond to pick up the blue and yellow marbles. When she stared at the blue marble, she once again saw herself but this time she looked a little older than herself in the red marble. Ellen picked up the yellow marble this time and stared at it. She thought she will find another younger Ellen but this time her reflection in the yellow marble did not change. It was reflecting back how she looked right now as she was holding up the marble.

Fascinated by the experience, she decided to bring these marbles to her village for her
friends to try out too. As she was walking back to her village, she looked at each of the marbles in her arms one at a time back and forth. She felt like she found some of the memories that she had forgotten or had repressed in the past. All those memories all came back to her and she felt like she had just gained three boxes full of enriching memories that made up who she is now.

Revised Themes: Experience of Creating the Artwork

1. Solitary exploration
2. Curiosity
3. Observing
4. Nervousness/ Scared
5. Fantasy/ Free associations about the unknown
6. Surprised
7. Excitement
8. Self reflection
9. Forgotten past memories
10. Sharing the experience with others
11. New self realization
12. Past versus Present self identity

Structural Synthesis: Experience of Creating the Artwork

The essential structures of participant’s experience of creating the artwork included: fantasy about the drawing process; self exploration while engaged in the process and emergent process of creating artwork; cognitive transformations upon recalling her experience about ethnic identity through the process; and drawing process as another form of communication. These essential structures will be described in further detail in the following section.
The participant’s underlying essential structure extracted from the data appeared to exhibit her initial fantasy and speculations about the drawing process. As she has expressed in her verbalization “one of my questions before all of this was that I was going to ask you was well why not just interview?”, she seemed to have had wonders about the process of artistic expression prior to data collection session. The participant’s significant statements reflected her curiosity and unfamiliarity about the artistic expression process, and this seemed to be also linked to her anxiety to draw. She was curious to try out the process that was “very unfamiliar” and “very different” from what she was accustomed to but she also exhibited anxiousness because she was not sure if she knew how to express her thoughts on paper. Similar theme was present in the imaginative variation in that Ellen was excited to see the marbles in the pond and therefore ran toward them with excitement but restrained herself initially because she was fearful of the unknown beneath the water.

The essential structure of the participant’s exploration of self was extracted from themes in the data. This underlying structure was experienced through the significant statements expressing her surprise in realizing new things about herself and her identity in each of the places that she had lived while engaged in the process of creating all three pieces of artwork. The participant expressed that it was an evolving process of looking back at her identity at different points in her lifetime and she seemed to be outlining her experiences on a spectrum making comparisons between them. Furthermore, she stated that these new realizations about her self emerged while she was creating the artwork. The participant had shared that prior to engaging in the art making process, she was worried that she might not know what to draw but once she was engaged in the process things that she had not planned or thought surfaced through her images in the drawings. This theme is depicted in the imaginative variation where Ellen realizes different reflection of herself through the three marbles that represented her at different time frames.
The participant’s experience reflected an essential structure of cognitive transformations upon recalling her experience about ethnic identity through creating and describing the artwork. She made several significant statements that expressed her before and after realizations about her thoughts and beliefs about her ethnic identity and her experiences as a 1.5 generation. She described that some of these new realizations and re-examination of her ethnic identity occurred when she was engaged in the drawing process and some were experienced when she was describing the artwork to the co-investigator. Through these verbalizations, she seemed to remember memories or/and emotions that had possibly been repressed in the past and she seemed to express this awareness by describing her perceptions of the similarities and differences between cultures that she has experienced.

The last essential structure obtained from the data was the experience of participant’s thoughts on using artistic expression as another form of communication for immigrants. In her significant statements, she stated that having a tangible product such as visual representations of her thoughts in front of her helped her to describe and explain her experience to another person, and also clarified what was in her head about the experience. She has also mentioned that having three separate drawings, to represent each of the two cultures – U.S. and Korea – and the link between these cultures, was easier for her to think about her ethnic identity as a 1.5 generation Korean American and organize her thoughts around the topic. The participant seemed to take the three drawing procedures as being separate but also as one whole that links each other about her experience from the way how she described her drawings by making comparisons among the three drawings back and forth.
Experience of Ethnic Identity of 1.5 Generation Korean American immigrant through Artistic Expression

The co-investigator combined the meaning clusters obtained from the previous four data analyses that included the participant’s reflections on the three artwork about her ethnic identity of being a 1.5 generation Korean American, and her thoughts on the overall process of artistic expression. The following themes were combined from the textural descriptions, imaginative variations, and structural syntheses of all four sets of data analyses.

Combined Meaning Clusters of Themes

1. Relationship between self and the environment
2. Curiosity/ Excitement
3. Wish for comfort and connection
4. Alienation/ Not belonging to either side
5. Competition/ Striving for survival
6. Confusion/ Anxiety/ Fear/ Disappointment
7. Overcoming barriers
8. Dual perception of the environment
9. Diversity/ Unfamiliarity
10. Transition
11. Recollection of past memories
12. Self exploration
13. Ambivalence to where one belongs/ In-between experience
14. Receiving and offering help from/to others
15. Uncertainty about present and future
It felt all dizzy… ‘Where was I? Where am I? Can I open my eyes? What if I’m in the middle of nowhere? Okay…Let’s not panic. I will open my eyes slowly…one…two…three…’ A girl opened her eyes and she was lying on the grass. She seemed to have lost her consciousness when she fell to the ground. She had vague memory of what had happened. She just remembered that she had lost her balance. ‘But doing what?’ the girl wondered. She found a notebook beside her that had her picture and information of her identity. It read that she was born from a planet called “Cham” and that she had been transported to carry out an important mission in a planet called “Dax”.

The girl stood up and looked around. There was a sign that visibly said “Welcome to the land of opportunity, the planet Dax!” and under this sign there was a list of instructions for newcomers. It read, “If you are visiting our planet Dax for the first time, please proceed to the Registry office located on your right and register yourself”. As she was heading toward the Registry office, she realized that things looked different. She felt she was different from everyone else but also everyone seemed different from each other. She searched around to see whether she could find someone who might be from planet Cham. But it was hard just by looking at them. As she stepped into the Registry office, there were so many other individuals who were there to register themselves in planet Dax. It seemed like many of them were also on a mission like she was. She found a bench and sat down as she waited for her turn. Someone beside her dropped his identification on the floor. As she was reaching out her arm to pick it up, she realized that he was also from planet Cham. Although she had never met him before, she felt relieved and happy to have met someone from her native planet. She felt an immediate sense of comfort just knowing
the fact that they were both from planet Cham.

After she took care of the administrative business, she decided to have a walk to explore the area on her own. She was surprised to find something that resembled a form of a bridge, hidden among many large bushy leaves. There was a sign near the bridge that read “This bridge links planet Cham and planet Dax. Warning: Cross this bridge if you dare. Safety is not guaranteed.” and there were many doodles below the sign which gave her mixed messages. The comments ranged from positive experiences to negative experiences, and some of them reflected their scary moments on the bridge. Although she felt worried and anxious to cross this unfamiliar bridge after reading all those doodles, she decided to explore the bridge and not let her anxiety take over her curiosity. She did not know how long this journey would take her. She could not see the end point of the bridge from her standpoint. She watched her steps as she slowly crossed the bridge because she could not see anything below the bridge and it did not look too safe. She thought some repair could be done to this bridge and then people will come more often and use the bridge.

As mentioned in the doodles, the journey crossing the bridge was not as easy as she thought it would be. She looked around to see if there was anyone to seek help but there was no one. She felt lonely and anxious thinking that she had to go through this alone with no one to guide her. She carefully sat down on the bridge. All of a sudden everything seemed so dark around her. She debated whether she should just give up and go back to where she had started. But she had lost a sense of time and was not sure how long she had been crossing this bridge. She felt stuck in the middle…she felt it was too late to just go back since she had come this far to the point where she is standing, and she was too fearful to go forward to the unknown. However, she decided not to pity her situation but face the challenge with her positive spirits. She stood up balancing herself again on the bridge and brightened herself. Once she calmed herself down, she
was able to see other things on the bridge. She realized that there were little cards hanging on the railings of the bridge. She carefully examined those cards and they turned out to be suggestions and guidance from others who have once crossed the bridge in all different languages. Some of them even had voice recordings of the person who had created the card. She was able to recognize the language used in planets Cham and Dax. Although she was alone on the bridge, those cards made her feel like she had someone watching over her, and she got to explore more about the bridge when she made her tiny steps on the bridge.

After a while, she finally arrived at planet Cham and she felt instant comfort. She felt happy that she was back to her native planet. People were so nice and welcoming. But she felt like a tourist. Although she remembered flashbacks from her past memories it seemed like the planet had changed while she was away. While she was lost in her trains of thought, she remembered that she was on a mission and had to go back to planet Dax soon. She promised those people in planet Cham that she will return some day and she won’t forget their generosity and what they have shared with her. As she was making her way on the bridge again, she realized that many things were changing in the surrounding as she was crossing the bridge. She wondered why she did not realize this the first time she crossed the bridge. She realized that she was too focused on herself and fearful to even look around when she first crossed the bridge. She was mesmerized by the experience and the new discovery and forgot her struggles on the bridge for a moment.

She had a big smile on her face when she turned to cross the bridge once again. This time, it was not a long unknown bridge. She saw a different bridge…a bridge that led to a new adventure every time she made another step. It felt like no matter how many times she crosses this bridge, she will experience different things each time. She decided to document her findings to a card to tie in the railings of the bridge. She wrote and recorded her voice about how she
crossed the bridge hoping that her cards could someday act as a holding hand for others who will be crossing the bridge in the future. It also made her feel like a legend validating her effort so that it does not turn into a waste. As she was tying her card, she realized a familiar card that had a big smiley face on it. She pushed the button on the card to listen what kind of message it had. The voice recording said “Don’t give up. Keep trying and do your best and you will get to the point someday”. The voice seemed strangely familiar to her ears. ‘Was this her voice? Was she on this bridge before? Why can’t she remember? Is this the point where she lost her balance and fell? Is she going to fall again? What can she do if she doesn’t want to fall again? Was this part of her mission?’ Her mind was racing back and forth with flashbacks. She was once again lost in her trains of thought.

Revised Themes

1. Difference/ Dual perception of the environment
2. Curiosity
3. Reaching out for connection/ Striving for survival
4. Comfort/ Support/ Indirect guidance
5. Alienation/ Isolation/ Loneliness
6. Individual hardship and effort/ Solitary decision making
7. New learning from overcoming barriers/ Cognitive reorganization
8. Confusion/ Anxiety/ Risk taking
9. Memories of the past experiences
10. Self realization/ Re-examination of self identity
11. Ambivalence/ Not belonging in either place
12. Fear/ Uncertainty of the unknown
13. Hope of the idealized self
14. Different form of communication
15. Wish for validation
16. Ever-evolving new self/ adventure

Structural Synthesis: 1.5 Generation Korean American Ethnic Identity

The essential structures of the participant’s overall experience were: self differentiation from the environment; wish for comfort and feeling of connection to other immigrants; bi-cultural identification and awareness; alienation and fear of not belonging in any one identity; ongoing transition of self ethnic identity; individual hardship and a wish for validation of one’s struggles; and artistic expression as a means to exploring ethnic identity.

The essential structure of the participant’s experience of self differentiation from both American culture and Korean culture was extracted from the combined themes of the data analysis. When describing and identifying her self in the drawings (Figure 1, Figure 2), she seemed to be removed from the immediate experience and rather described the relationship between self and the environment by evaluating both the positive and negative aspects of the two cultures. The participant also appeared to use the pronoun “they” rather then “my” or “us/ we” when describing about her identity in both cultures. She seemed to acknowledge and recognize the difference between American and Korean cultures and this was reflected in her significant statements about her experience in that she obtained through her transitions between the two cultures. She also recounted about the potential deceptions that may exist about the general perceptions about these two cultures by comparing their cultural values and social/ educational systems. Many of her verbal statements reflected general thoughts and opinions about the experience as an immigrant who has undergone a transitional period rather than self as a Korean
American only. In addition, she seemed to be assessing her ethnic identity through the lenses of both American and Korean cultures. She seemed to express a feeling of being overwhelmed in adjusting to either culture and yet a sense of comfort was experienced in both cultures.

A wish for comfort and feeling of connection to other immigrants were extracted as an essential structure of the participant’s experience. The sense of comfort felt in each culture seemed to represent the participant’s idea of successful transition to the two settings. However, there appeared to be a contradiction in her artwork and verbal statements about her experiences on this issue of comfort. She described Figure 1 as being an unfamiliar and less comfortable place in the drawing but her verbalizations revealed that it was in fact a comfortable place compared to Korea and also a place she calls home-home. On the contrary, she draws a palm tree for her self representation which does not seem to fit-in in the environment even though she talks about the homogeneity particularly in appearance. Through her three drawings, she described feelings of wanting to reach out, connect and support other immigrants including Korean Americans who are struggling to make a successful transition in the U.S. There also seemed to be a connection among people who understand and go through similar struggles with the participant.

Bi-cultural identification and awareness was the next essential structure obtained from the data. The participant described in her significant statements how there is an identity dichotomy as a 1.5 generation Korean American living in the U.S. because she has to follow American values outside of home and Korean cultural values at home. She defined Korean American ethnic identity as having both Korean and American side and therefore not complementary or mutually exclusive identity. She emphasized that being a 1.5 means that she can go back and forth between the Korean side and the American side of Korean American identity, and that the difference in the degree that she identifies with each side depends on the cultural and situational context that she is in. There seems to be a constant transition back and
forth between the two cultural aspects of her Korean American identity and therefore Korean and American cultural values coexist in her rather than being an either/or entity. This theme was also represented when the participant expressed her feeling of being uncertain and not belonging in any one identity that is either American or Korean. However, she expressed that the ability to transition back and forth between the two cultural aspects is if one is more toward the American side of the Korean American identity. Moreover, her descriptions about her evaluations of the two cultural values about certain topics such as the attitude of the host cultures to new immigrants, seems to reflect an aspect of double consciousness where she seems to hold multiple cognitive representations of particular situation and is processing them simultaneously. A possible sense of confusion also seemed to be associated to this bicultural awareness.

Alienation and fear of not belonging in any one identity were experienced during the development of her Korean American ethnic identity and this theme was reflected throughout the data. The participant expressed experiences of feeling alienated and lonely in both cultural groups, and this is reflected in her tree drawings (Figure 1, 2) which are depicted by lack of tree root connections and the firm grounding status of the trees. She seemed to be uncertain and unstable in terms of her future identity status in each culture. There seemed to be this fear that the connections and accomplishments that she has established over time through overcoming obstacles to feel comfortable in her identity might disappear at some point. This is visibly depicted in her bridge drawing with the representation of a wooden bridge that is high up in the air (Figure 3) which may be associated with her fear of not belonging in any one identity of her Korean American ethnic identity.

Another essential structure emerging from the data was the participant’s perception of ongoing transition of her ethnic identity. She stated that her ethnic identity as a Korean American is still in transition and that she is constantly on the move transitioning back and forth on the
Korean American identity spectrum. As depicted in her bridge drawing where the bridge is “high up in the air” (Figure 3), her 1.5 Korean American identity seems to be “up in the air” as the uncertainty and vulnerability to change are involved in the center of this transitional identity. The ever-evolving self and ethnic identity was also reflected in her verbalization and in her drawing where there were no definite ends represented on either side of the bridge (Figure 3).

The participant’s wish for validation of her individual hardship and her current status was revealed as an essential structure through the analysis of data. Her significant statements demonstrated that there were adjustment struggles that followed being a 1.5er trying to accommodate between the two different cultures. Many of her significant statements that conveyed the meaning of “I’m doing okay now but it was hard in the beginning” seem to reflect her wish to be seen as an individual who has made the transition successfully, and seem to reflect her history of individual hardship and effort to reach the point that she had defined as the ideal. Her immigration experiences through her descriptions of her memories from the past were characterized by the process of solitary decision making to strive for survival by overcoming barriers with the hope of the idealized self. Also, when she described her experience tutoring other 1.5 and second generation Korean Americans and how she helps to mediate between the parents and the child to make smoother transition in the U.S., she seems to be wishing for recognition of her accomplishments as a 1.5 generation who had no precedent to look up to or support her to make her transition easier.

The last essential structure obtained from the data was the participant’s experience of using artistic expression as a means to exploring her ethnic identity. Her overall experience of the artistic process was characterized as curious and anxiety provoking initially. However, upon completion of the drawing processes, the participant’s significant statements reflected a deeper self exploration, new realization about self, and re-examination of her ethnic identity through the
emergent process of creating artwork. She also described the experience of creating the artwork as a different form of communication that would act as a leeway to open up people’s mind and enable cognitive reorganization to get a clearer picture of her ethnic identity. In addition, having three separate visual representations that depicted each aspect of her ethnic identity seemed to have been meaningful for her.

Validation Interview

Approximately one month following the art making sessions and responsive interview the participant was contacted by telephone for a validation interview. The validation interview was a method of establishing a degree of internal validity in the phenomenological research method to ensure that the co-investigator has an accurate picture of the participant’s experience. The co-investigator presented the preliminary analysis of the data to the participant and she was asked to verify if the co-investigator’s analysis correctly represented her lived experience. The participant was allowed to add, remove or modify any data that did not reflect the participant’s experience or if the participant felt that the data did not convey the accurate meaning intended. The participant was in accord with the co-investigator’s data analysis and agreed that the results conveyed the same meaning intended by the participant at the time of the responsive interview.
CHAPTER V: DISCUSSION

Overview

The purpose of this study was to explore the formation and development of ethnic identity and its psychological implications among 1.5 generation Korean American young adults through the process of creating and reflecting upon one’s artwork. The literature reviewed for this research study has included an overview of the dynamic concept of ethnic identity and its psychological implications; on the formation of ethnic identity in Korean Americans among different generations of immigrants; and the application of the metaphorical uses in art therapy with immigrants.

The topic was investigated through asking participants to create three drawings that involved two tree metaphors and a bridge metaphor; and also through an open ended responsive interview. A phenomenological research design was used in order to gain a deeper understanding of the topic of interest. One participant qualified to participate in the research study. An analysis of the artistic and verbal data collected from this one participant was analyzed by using a total of five data sets. The first three data analyses explored the participant’s verbal statements associated with the images created through the three drawings. Another set of data explored the participant’s verbal statements about her experience in creating the artwork. The last set of data explored the essence of the participant’s experience that combined the previous four sets of data analyses.

The purpose of this chapter is to provide an overview of the phenomenon being investigated through the synthesis of the literature and the results of this study. The results of this phenomenological study are in the form of the essential structures systematically extracted from the artistic and verbal data. The essential structures described the in depth lived experience of the participant’s ethnic identity as it emerged in the art making and verbal portions of the data collection. This chapter will first outline each of the essential structures of the participant’s
experience obtained from the results section of this study and further interpretations of the findings will be explored by incorporating the literature. The findings will also be examined from the psychodynamic perspectives of the identity change upon immigration (Akhtar, 1999). Then clinical implications and limitations of this study will be discussed which will be followed by suggestions for future research surrounding the topic.

Essential Structures of the Experience

Description of Major Finding

While the study results themselves only reflect the experience of one female Korean American young adult studied in depth, this single participant’s description of the experience is congruent with other findings in the literature reviewed in the earlier chapters. The essence of the participant’s experience of immigration and formation of ethnic identity appeared to be represented by essential structures of: self differentiation from the environment; wish for comfort and feelings of connection to other immigrants; bi-cultural identification and awareness; alienation and fear of not belonging in any one identity; ongoing transition of self ethnic identity; individual hardship and a wish for validation of one’s struggles; and artistic expression as a means to exploring ethnic identity. These essential structures will be discussed in more detail below.

Before the data collection session began, the participant was curious as to how the co-investigator decided to study this topic and whether the co-investigator was also a 1.5 generation Korean American. The co-investigator felt that it was appropriate to answer her questions and shared that she was not a 1.5 generation Korean American but that she had traveled extensively across different countries. As the data collection began, the participant appeared relaxed and curious about what she was going to do in the session. When asked about her reaction to creating
artwork about her ethnic identity, she expressed satisfaction and feeling of acceptance from the co-investigator. Moreno and Wadeson (1986) suggested that “having a Hispanic therapist who was bilingual, bicultural and an immigrant herself, facilitated communication and trust in the group [of Hispanic clients]” (p.129). The co-investigator being bilingual and bicultural might have led to a sense of comfort in the participant knowing that there was a shared ethnic cultural background. On the other hand, this might have implicitly influenced the participant in terms of how and what kind of information she chose to share with the co-investigator. It would have been interesting to have asked her what her assumptions were about the co-investigator since her reaction and relationship to the co-investigator might have stemmed from her assumptions about the Korean culture and Korean people. One wonders whether the participant would have reacted differently about her beliefs and thoughts about her ethnic identity if a non-Korean and non-Asian was the investigator of this study. It also seems crucial for the therapist to set aside one’s assumptions and ideas about his/her client and monitor one’s countertransference toward the client, especially if the client is from the same country of origin as the therapist.

Self Differentiation from the Environment

The essential structure of the participant’s experience of self differentiation from both American and Korean culture was revealed through the data. Throughout her verbalizations of her experiences, many of her statements depicted the differences between the cultures and also within each culture possibly categorizing them to positive and negative aspects. The framework of difference can be regarded as enriching and empowering because one can objectively view the world and use as a tool in human interactions. However, sometimes the perception of difference or being different may be registered unconsciously in ourselves and may act in certain ways without us realizing it. Taking this into consideration, “the immigrant is vulnerable to splitting of
self- and object-representations” (Akhtar, 1999, p.79) where the participant’s view of ‘good versus bad’ and ‘success versus failure’ may represent the splitting of extreme ends about two cultures which seems to parallel the rapprochement phase of Mahler’s individuation process. Initially, the participant may resort to this ‘splitting’ which is an earlier form of defense mechanism because she may not yet have more higher order ego defenses to synthesize the two extreme ends at the beginning phases of acculturation. Akhtar (1999) states that “splitting becomes predominant and colors the immigrant’s feelings about his two lands and his own two self-representations” (p.80). He also suggests that these splits can alternate depending on the situation and day by day basis where it can be idealized one day and devalued the next day. It seems like the participant in this study idealizes the unity and solidarity valued in Korea but later states that this could be a form of conformity that could be overwhelming for a person who does not entirely belong to Korea. In contrast, the participant seems to idealize the diversity which encourages individualism in the U.S. but again states that this could be intimidating. The cultural values idealized in one country seem to be devalued in the other and vice versa. Both individualism and collective solidarity are seen as overwhelming to the participant and this perhaps represents her awareness of the implications involved in the extremities of each cultural values. The participant also seems to make general statements rather than extreme statements using neutral words which may reflect her sense of acknowledgement of the differences in two cultures.

In addition, the participant seemed to be assessing her ethnic identity through the lens of both American and Korean cultures. The concept of difference or being different seemed to be represented differently by the participant depending on the two cultures. In Korea, the word “difference” seems to represent either in-group versus out-group concept or as a form of initial connection due to being perceived as a topic of interest; “I had a lot of friends because it was very
like ‘oh my gosh, she’s from Germany’”. In the U.S. on the contrary, the participant seems to use the same word to represent individualism where it is taken for granted that everyone is coming from a different cultural background, or as a representation of ill-adjusted individuals who have not quite made it in the competitive American society.

When looking at the first two drawings (Figure 1, 2) in terms of the relationships between the trees and the environment, her tree representation in the U.S. (Figure 1) looks like it was picked up from their original place and transplanted in a new, unfamiliar environment. There seems to be a lack of cohesion with the object and the environment in the first drawing while there seems to be more of a cohesion in the relationship between the trees and the environment in the second drawing (Figure 2). Perhaps her use of idiosyncratic colors in the first drawing (Figure 1) reflects her initial experience feeling fragmented when she first arrived in the U.S. and may illustrate a representation of some sort of culture shock. She also drew herself as out of place in Figure 2 by drawing a palm tree which may be related to the individual construct of her personality. This may be seen as an “introjection” of her feelings and experience onto the art product. Introjection is one of the primitive defense mechanism where it is “utilized in the process of identification in which the child carries out caretakers’ (parents) demands as if they were his own even when parents are absent” (Levick, 1983, p.131). Rumbaut (1994) discusses that “the children’s ethnic self-identities strongly tend to mirror the perceptions of their parents’ (and especially their mother’s) own ethnic self-identities, as if they were reflections in an ethnic looking-glass” (p.790). Taking this into consideration, the participant’s unconscious attempt to avoid the painful awareness of separateness or the threat of loss involved in immigration might have been reflected through her images in the drawings.
There appeared to be an essential structure of the participant’s experience of wishing for comfort in the environment in many of her significant statements, especially when she described her trees in Figure 1 and 2 in relation to its environment. The sense of feeling comfortable in the surrounding that one is in seems to be a representation of a successful transition to the new cultural setting. The participant expressed a sense of comfort in both Korea and the U.S. via her verbal descriptions of her tree drawings (Figure 1, 2). However, there seems to be a contradiction in her descriptions between her drawings and verbal statements about her experiences on the topic of this sense of comfort. When describing her tree drawing in the U.S. (Figure 1), she described the U.S. as being not too comfortable environment – “Surrounded by a lot of different [trees]...[it’s] a little bit overwhelmed too”; “I’m not really sure or the tree is not really sure where it fits in”; “I don’t think it’s a very foreigners friendly or immigrants friendly that I think it could be”. However, when she freely associated to her experiences in the U.S. she suggested the opposite - “I’m more comfortable living [in the U.S.]”; “I think it [home-home] has become the U.S.”; “Now that it’s [her tree in the U.S.] big or starting to get more comfortable in the environment”. This similar contradiction is also seen in her tree drawing in Korea (Figure 2). The feeling of comfort was present in her verbalizations of her drawing – “It’s a very comfortable environment”; “You are comfortable, you are happy and you feel like you are one of the other people too”. However, this was contrasted by her evidently different looking palm tree compared to other trees in the environment, and a lesser degree of comfort was expressed as she elaborated on her experience in Korea – “comfortable but not as deeply rooted...feeling like you are part of the group but maybe not entirely”; “I don’t know if I consider it [Korea] home-home”; “maybe not somewhere one chooses to be”. Interesting distinction in these contradictions seems to be that U.S was described as not as comfortable environment initially but has become more comfortable
for the participant whereas Korea was seen as comfortable environment in the beginning but has become less comfortable.

The contradiction in her verbalizations when describing her artwork and when recalling her experiences about the sense of comfort may be related to the initial memory and the first impressions of each culture that the participant had in the past. Since there is no time element involved in artistic expressions, her tree representations may symbolize a condensation of her experience at different time periods all in one sheet of paper – coexistence of past and present. Hence, the discrepancies between her verbalizations may have arisen from relating to her emotionally charged past memories being in each place initially but as she elaborated further the time frame seemed to have shifted to present to her current thoughts and feelings about each place. Perhaps, the new realizations and a deeper self exploration came from this emergent process of the participant realizing her discrepancies when reflecting upon her artwork to the co-investigator. This experience might be related to how “certain affectively charged, specific attributes of others are internalized without being fully assimilated into the self-image” (Akhtar, 1999, p.54). This may be the reason why the unconscious latent content of her experiences in each place was revealed through the emergent process of artistic expression.

Considered from a psychodynamic perspective, the participant’s wish or perhaps the need for comfort in both cultures might be viewed from the childhood separation-individuation phase, where one is conflicted with the “wish to let go” and the “wish to hold on” to the mother figure. Falk stated the following in Akhtar’s (1999) study that:

countries or territories on the two sides of a border often unconsciously symbolize early parental figures [italics added]. One country (usually that of origin) might come to represent mother, and the other country, father, thus setting up a fertile ground for oedipal fantasy and enactment [italics added] on the immigrant’s part. (p.80)
Grinberg and Grinberg further elaborates this oedipal fantasies in the following statement:

The mother, in the boy’s unconscious fantasy, emigrates to follow the father and does not consider the harm it may cause the child; the father, in the girl’s unconscious fantasy, emigrates to offer security or well-being to the mother without considering the girl’s suffering. (Akhtar, 1999, p.12)

Following this explanation, Korea would symbolize ‘mother’ and the U.S. would symbolize ‘father’ for the participant in this study. Akhtar (1999) postulates that “older children facing migration tend to elaborate fantasies involving the event”, and migration during adolescence causes “inner disengagement from the primary love object of infancy and childhood” leading to “drive disregulation and confusion regarding one’s identity” (p.12). Although the participant has immigrated to the U.S. when she was 13 which would fall under early adolescence, her travels to Germany at the age of 4 and transitioning back to Korea at the age of 11 seem to add to the complications involved in migration where early and older childhood psychological developmental needs may not have been met during those transitions. Korea and the U.S. being represented as early parental figures in the unconscious of the participant, certain images in her tree drawings may represent her oedipal fantasy. Using the psychoanalytic terms surrounding the topic of the Oedipus complex, her castration anxiety and penis envy may be represented through her images that symbolize the male genitalia: black dead tree stump in the center (Figure 1); participant’s upward pointed tree in the center (Figure 1); and a tree in the center that is connected to a slanted smaller tree (Figure 2). The participant’s image of overlapping mountains (Figure 2) which may symbolize the nurturance of the female breasts or the archaic mother, may be associated with her regression to the pre-oedipal stage. In relation to this symbolic figure, the “mother country” may have been represented in the drawing by the large mountain images in the background of her tree drawing in Korea (Figure 2). Akhtar (1999) suggests that “the resulting
narcissistic injury [from oedipal stage] is compensated for by the projection of infantile narcissism onto the parents (especially the same-sex parent) and the formation of the ego ideal” (p.55), which has implications of both “hope and future” (p.55).

One aspect that seemed of a particular interest to the co-investigator was the sense of comfort and longing that the participant seems to have about her country of origin – Korea. Some examples of her significant statements related to this experience were: “I always have a sense of longing to Korea”; “I love to go back and love visiting”; “It’s always like a nice trip to go back”; “We [her family] will return and we’ll always, it’s not somewhere where ‘oh long time ago we lived there’ kind of a thing”; “It’s [Korea] always like a part of it I think”. The participant’s instant feeling of comfort and longing for Korea might be due to the popular perception of the Korean culture being a collective society with a great emphasis on solidarity. From another perspective, this experience may be considered from Mahler’s rapprochement phase of individuation process. Akhtar (1999) explains this process as the following:

In the rapprochement subphase, no distance from the mother appears satisfactory, but if mother remains emotionally available despite the child’s oscillation the capacity for optimal distance gradually develops. (p.185)

Therefore, when the immigrant leaves one’s home country which is considered as a ‘mother’ in the unconscious mind, “the immigrant’s ego loses the support it had drawn from the familiar environment, climate, and landscape – all unconsciously perceived as extensions of the mother…[and] a fantasy of return to home also emerges” (Akhtar, 1999, p.85). Thus, because migrating out of one’s homeland is seen as a loss of psychic comfort as in losing one’s mother, a fantasy to return to the motherland emerges to provide an emotional comfort and “unconscious extensions of the mother” for the immigrant. This may inevitably lead to the distance between the reality versus the ideal, and false self versus true self.
Once the immigrant realizes this separation, “the immigrant often resorts to a hypercathexis of the lost objects…this results in an idealization of the immigrant’s past. Often such idealization centers more upon memories of places than of people” (Akhtar, 1999, p.90). This theory may be one explanation of the participant’s perceived ‘happy memories’ and ‘easier transition’ in Korea in which she later verbalized otherwise. Akhtar (1999) suggests that immigrants tend to cling to “memories” and to the “fantasy of a lost paradise” which is defined as “if only” fantasy and “someday” fantasy respectively (p.90, 94). The “if only” fantasy implies that if the immigrant had not left his motherland, his life would have been fine without any problems, and the “someday” fantasy manifests that the immigrant will return to their homelands. Akhtar (1999) asserts that often these two fantasies coexist and act as a defense strategy against frustrations in one’s current life as an immigrant. These fantasies seem to be inherent in the participant’s verbalizations as well. The “if only” fantasy is depicted in the following statement:

I think if this tree [her tree representation in the drawing] wanted to stay here [Korea], it will be fine. It will grow I think more similar to the other ones around it…it will grow roots and it will grow deeper. I think it’ll be fine, comfortable there, unless it gets picked up and get deported to somewhere.

The “someday” fantasy is depicted in the following statements:

I might even go back [to Korea] like if I’m really really old but I think for now I’m okay here [in the U.S.].

We [her family] will return [to Korea].

It’s not like I’m never going to go back to Korea.

Both of these fantasies seem to reflect earlier psychological issues involving fixation of the past (“if only”) and fixation of the future (“someday”). According to Akhtar (1999), the “if only” fantasy represents one’s wish that one did not lose the symbiotic relationship with her mother and
also the oedipal boundaries, whereas the “someday” fantasy represents one’s wish to recapture the lost symbiosis with the mother and overcome oedipal boundaries. These fantasies also seem to prevent the participant to give full commitment to her present life which might parallel with the lack of connection to either side of the bridge/country in her bridge drawing (Figure 3). Perhaps, her short visitations to Korea during school breaks may test her fantasies about returning to Korea providing a glimpse of the reality which may leave her with a state of ambivalence and confusion. On the other hand, it may be that through making these primitive longings conscious, the participant may resolve this – begin to see it more as a primitive longing with not much reality and therefore be able to let it go and commit to her current country affiliation.

The participant described feelings of wanting to reach out, connect and support other immigrants including Korean Americans who are struggling to make less turbulent transition in the U.S. There also seems to be a connection among people who understand and go through similar struggles with the participant. This was expressed through her verbalization – “there are other people on other bridges so you can sort of look each other for help” – and depiction of other bridges in her bridge drawing (Figure 3). In connection with Mahler’s rapprochement phase, the immigrant seeks to find similar qualities as one’s native homeland to fulfill the loss of losing the ‘mother’ by making connections to one’s ethnic group in the new culture. This provides a ‘holding environment’ for the individual. Lee and Mock (2005) pointed out that the ethnic communities that reflect their cultural customs in Asian immigrant society usually acts as a buffer against the stresses of migration. It also “creates a buffer zone to ease the tension between individual self-fulfillment and family commitment” (Zhou, 1997, p.85). It appears that the participant’s tutoring experiences with other Korean American children mediating between other children and their parents seems to represent her effort to support other immigrant families undergoing transition. Her experience of reaching out to her ethnic group or people who are
similar to her is reflected in her statements such as “Part of it is also I think it’s just like having your eyes more open towards Korean American role models” and “It kind of took some reaching out on our part but not necessarily just Korean Americans but just people like us like Chinese Americans and other countries”. This seems to support the reported findings that the absence of parental guidance and Asian role models may foster an identification with other minority groups (Min & Kim, 2000).

Bi-cultural Identification and Awareness

Bi-cultural identification and awareness seemed to be one of the essential structures that was prevalent throughout the data. The participant expressed the dichotomy of her ethnic identity through her comparisons of American and Korean cultures, and also via different representations of her trees in Figure 1 and Figure 2. However, instead of these two identities being marginal and mutually exclusive to each other, the participant explains that being able to transition back and forth between the American side and Korean side of the Korean American identity is what defines her 1.5 status. She stated that the two cultural values coexist in her mind and thought processes, which seems to reflect the aspect of ‘double consciousness’ that is usually found among 1.5 and second generation of immigrants. “Immigrants identify simultaneously with multiple groups” (Horenczyk & Schwartz, 2000, p.331) and many of 1.5 and second generation Asian immigrants “recited the reality of a double-life, the ethnic private life and the ‘American’ public life, with very little mediation between the two” (Lee, 1998, p.97). The participant in this study also made references to the cultural and linguistic differences that exist at home versus outside of home, and expressed the difficulties involved in reconciling the two worlds.

The participant found the bridge drawing (Figure 3) to be harder than the tree drawings. Perhaps, the meaning of a bridge may convey the need to reach a destination or thought as a tool
to cross over from one place to another. Since the participant’s Korean American identity was not a question of which identity either American or Korean she identified or related to the most, but rather represented the degree of identification with both aspects of her identities, the depiction of a constant transitional identity might have been difficult using the bridge metaphor. The transition back and forth on the bridge may also represent the participant’s transition between her idealized self where she would like to be and her ought self where she thinks should be. And when she perceives that her actual self is discrepant or in conflict with either her idealized self or ought self, she may be feeling stuck in the middle in a state of confusion.

This bi-cultural identification and awareness may be connected to maturation of the participant. Many of respondents from previous qualitative studies have reported a heightened interest in immigrant young adults’ ethnic heritage and identities in college and that there was more effort to find their ethnic roots by being involved in co-ethnic organizations in college (Min & Kim, 2000). This aspect of immigrant young adults was also reflected in the participant of this study where she stated that she sought out to find other Korean American students and joined Korean American student organizations when she started college. Min & Kim (2000) further explains this phenomenon in that:

As they grew older, they realized that they could not dismiss their differences, particularly their non-white, physical differences. Growing up, they became increasingly aware that, regardless of their efforts, they would not be accepted as completely ‘American’. (p.750)

One aspect worth considering is that, the participant discussed how one needs to be more toward the American side of the Korean American identity to be able to transition back and forth between Korean and American values. Her statement may refer to the fact that only those of whom who had been to the extreme sides of the Korean American identity spectrum would know
the degree in which one would identify with each cultural aspect. She may be implying that one needs to go through the experience of wanting to totally assimilate to the American culture and undergo the psychological turmoil involved in ethnic identity formation to discover one’s true self and where one stands. This might be related to Mahler’s concept of self- and object-differentiation in that the “differentiated we” develops after “mine” and “yours” (Akhtar, 1999), where the “differentiated we” is the integration of both Korean and American values being a Korean American and “mine/yours” being the extremities of Korean and American values. Akhtar (1999) states that “for a considerable time after his arrival in the new land, the immigrant resorts to a ‘mine’ and ‘yours’ split. It is only by resolving this split that he can experience ‘ours’” (p.96). This transformation may be also related to the maturation process discussed above where one has to go through an “inner journey toward greater self-acceptance” (Min & Kim, 2000, p.751) to feel comfortable transitioning back and forth. The degree of identification between Korean and American values may be indicative of selective acculturation and additive acculturation where acquisition of norms and values in the new culture is adapted and incorporated into the person’s already existing norms and values without dismissing those from one’s native culture. It would have been interesting to have asked the participant whether this bridge had other functions to see if it symbolized anything else that might be personal to her.

Another interesting aspect of the participant’s bridge drawing (Figure 3) seems to be in the way how the bridge was drawn to represent her transitional status being a 1.5er. The bridge seems to be drawn with an attempt to show some perspective and depth. However, it appears as though there are two solid distinct tracks that are running parallel to each other and bars that are scattered in between to link these two tracks. One wonders if there is a discrepancy in how the participant verbalizes her transition between the two cultural values and how she really feels about this transitional space. She may be fully aware of the differences between the two cultures
and have acquired the knowledge and the skills to transition back and forth on a cognitive level but may not yet have fully integrated this in her psyche. Instead of the two distinct cultural values being integrated as one – “differentiated we” – where in-between transition becomes an effortless process, she may be holding the two cultural values separately on each side of her hands as two different entities – “mine/yours” – and trying to juggle between the two, still in a transition of “figuring it out”.

Alienation and Fear of Not Belonging in Any One Identity

The participant experienced feeling of alienation and fear of not belonging in any one identity entirely during the development of her Korean American ethnic identity. As noted earlier, individuals who belong to 1.5 generation often develop dual identities and suffer from psychological ambivalence about to which group they belong (Kim, 1999; Park, 1999). This is due to the contradictions between Americans and Koreans posing a dilemma in developing a cohesive and well-integrated self-concept. The two linguistic worlds using Korean and English at home versus outside of home may also lead to splitting of self representation (Akhtar, 1999). The following quotes from 1.5 Korean Americans in Kim, L. (1999)’s study demonstrate the sense of ‘not belonging in any one identity’ which is in accordance with the participant’s experience in this study: “the 1.5ers feel more like foreigners, more marginalized, feeling they’re in the middle of two cultural worlds they do not quite belong to” (p.36); “I think that, while the 1.5ers belong to neither of the two cultural worlds completely, for some, they are able to belong to both worlds more completely” (p.36).

This sense of ‘not quite belonging’ was also represented in the participant’s tree drawings. In Figure 1, the roots of her tree in the U.S. are less visible and are not covered up with the ‘yellow soil’ like other trees around her. This may suggest that her tree is not as firmly
grounded as other trees in the environment. In Figure 2, the roots of her tree in Korea do not appear to be as distinguished as other trees in the environment and her tree roots do not seem to have many connections with other tree roots in the surrounding. Her verbalizations such as “not really sure where it fits in” and “the roots are not as deep and sort of unsure” reflect a lack of strong bond in both the U.S. and in Korea. Her tree representation in Korea (Figure 2) as a palm tree also seem to reflect her sense of ‘not quite belonging’ in relation to the collective nature of other trees in the environment. The implication of being a 1.5er and having “a mixed sense of belonging to multiple places while at the same time not truly belonging to any of them” (Akhtar, 1999, p.104) may result in ambivalence and confusion. It is possible that the lack of integration and connection between Korean and American values may have created the sense of ‘not quite belonging’ and limited social ties that “buffer and contain the confusions and uncertainties of the transition to adulthood and the formation of the young person’s adult identity” (Yedidia, 2005, p.160). Grinberg and Grinberg (1989) explain that the basis of all the confusions and uncertainties of the cultural and developmental transitions comes from the “disorienting anxiety”:

Problems in differentiating one’s feelings about 2 subjects of interest and conflict: the country and people one has left behind and the new environment…Confusion increases when culture, language, place, points of reference, memories, and experience become mixed up and superimposed on one another. Confused states also result from defensive attempts to stave off persecutory anxieties in the face of the unknown. (Akhtar, 1999, p.79)

Since the formation and development of ethnic identity varies according to the context, the degree of adjustment and the disorienting anxiety may also vary depending on the individual’s personality and psychodynamic factors within one’s self and one’s family. Kahn (1997) states that “anxiety about the unknown may trouble parents…[and]…sometimes the children bear the brunt of their parents’ fear of losing their bearing” (Akhtar, 1999, p.13). This seems to be relevant for this participant as well in that she seems to be fearful of losing the comfort and accomplishments
that she has established over time. This theme was reflected in her descriptions about the tree metaphor in Korea (Figure 2) and in the bridge drawing (Figure 3). In Figure 2, the participant describes how her tree will be growing without any problems unless it gets deported somewhere, and in Figure 3, she described the bridge as having no definite end points because anything can happen beyond the point where she is standing on the bridge and there is uncertainty about what is ahead of her. This fear of losing connection and comfort may be arising from cultural transition issues coupled with developmental issues. As discussed previously, when one undergoes developmental transitions from childhood to adulthood the sense of comfort diminishes or the type of comfort is transformed creating a fear of that lost connection. From a cultural perspective, there is often a role reversal within immigrant families due to the different rates of acculturation between family members, and there seems to be a different kind of fear that exists among the older and younger generations of immigrants. The older generations fear that their children may dismiss their ethnic culture and will depart them whereas the younger generations are “anxious that they might never become ‘American’ because of these intrinsic family ties” (Zhou, 1997, p.84).

During the open ended responsive interview, the participant discussed about how the generational dissonance is often manifested between the immigrant parent and the child in the context of the reason for immigration. The parent-child conflict on the issue of immigration decisions could be extracted and summarized from the participant’s significant statements as parents saying “oh we came for you” versus child responding back with “well, I don’t speak the language...I feel like I’ve been picked up and deported”. Shin (2004) argues that many Koreans immigrate to the U.S. with a determination to sacrifice their lives to seek better educational opportunities for their children. However, the children of immigrants may feel deceived and angered by having no vote on the family’s uprooting from their country of origin. There is also a
parent-child split on the focus of the acculturation process. Parents are primarily concerned with retaining a traditional family life in the new environment whereas the children are primarily concerned with trying to balance the different demands of the American and Korean culture (Zhou, 1997). Yedidia (2005) and Zhou (1997) suggest that children of immigrants often feel ashamed of the traditional lifestyle adopted by their parents in the new culture, and it seems possible that this may also create feelings of self-hate for feeling ashamed of their parents creating intrapsychic complications. These splits in one’s lifestyle that involve a split in the broader cultural context, within family context and within one’s inner psyche may all provide the context for the development of a sense of ‘not belonging in any identity’ leaving the individual in a state of greater ambivalence and confusion.

The participant’s feeling of alienation and ambivalent feelings about where to belong could also be explained from the difference in American versus Korean cultural values. Individualism may be more emphasized in the U.S. whereas collectivism may be more emphasized and practiced in Korea. “Acculturation that emphasizes individuation often causes psychological distress” (Baker, 1999, p.953), if the individual had lived within a collective society prior to immigration. Thus, the Western principle of “individualism” may be viewed as “selfishness” in a collectivist society, hence for the possible confusion on the part of the individual who is experiencing this cultural transition.

Another source of ambivalence and alienation could be explained from the different external expectations of the participant. Horenczyk and Schwartz (2000) postulate that:

Immigrants are likely to perceive expectations from many groups with which they identify: the immigrant community, their family, their close friends, the society they left behind, and so on. Each of these groups may hold different expectations regarding the social identity they should adopt. Conforming to the expectations of one group may
therefore conflict with conforming to the expectations of another. (p.331)

The above statement emphasizes the important internal and external process involved in shaping an individual’s identity. Although there may be universal element involved in acculturation, how someone experiences and interprets the world through their own personal lens may differ for each individual. Therefore, the degree of confusion and ambivalence may differ according to the intrapsychic structure and personal experience of the individual dealing with the cultural transitions. The participant’s statements in her first tree drawing (Figure 1) – “it was harder for me to depict myself without other trees around me” and “feeling overwhelmed due to much diversity” – may be reflective of her own subjective experience of the U.S. as the host country.

There also seems to be a confusion surrounding the levels of comfort felt in Korea. As noted earlier, Korea is under the influence of Confucian and collectivist principles and therefore the ‘collective self’ might be more distinguished and emphasized than the ‘individual self’ compared to the U.S. This collectivist principle in Korea might give the impression that everyone in Korea receives the same basic education and cultural ethical code, hence being more likeminded. Due to this rather stereotypic presumption, the participant may feel like there is more sense of belonging in Korea. However, when she gets to explore what underlies beneath the ‘perceived sameness’ of Korean people, she seems to realize that they are not as likeminded to make her feel like she is one of them. Since the individual nature of human beings may create both the longing for and the fear of being consumed by the group, this may be another source of confusion for the participant in regards to her connection to the Korean identity. In sum, for individuals who live simultaneously between two cultural settings may need to negotiate within themselves and within the value systems of both cultures to prevent personal and cultural dissonance. The consequence of personal and cultural dissonance may be indicated in the participant’s bridge drawing (Figure 3) where her bridge appears to be an overlap of three
different tracks rather than one solid looking bridge.

Perhaps the lack of commitment to any one aspect of her identity is represented in her bridge drawing (Figure 3) that has no definite ends to either side of the bridge. This may speak to her feeling of not belonging to one side of her identity entirely. Or because her energy is mostly concentrated on reconciling between the two aspects of her ethnic identity, the link in between is seen as most important in defining the identity of 1.5 generation. Yedidia (2005) discerned that “the bridge serves as a ready symbol of transition (whether adolescent or immigration) and thereby enables persons who draw it to convey their sense of themselves and their world in the course of the transition” (p.163). In Yedidia’s study (2005), that utilized the bridge drawing to help immigrant therapists to recognize their identity conflicts, one individual’s bridge drawing exhibited similar characteristics to those of the participant’s drawing in this study were evident.

This individual’s description of the bridge was expressed as the following:

Eva drew an iron bridge with a high, strong safety wall. The water below was turbulent, dangerous to anyone who fell in, she said, but the wall prevented them from falling. One end of the bridge [representing her native country], which she said was the end at which she alighted, hung in the air unattached to the ground, while the other end [representing the country to which she immigrated] had steps that one could descend. She drew herself standing in the middle…She expresses the feeling that this [the side of the bridge that has steps] is the only direction in which can safely go, but she is not there…In particular, Eva does not allow herself to feel the fears and vulnerabilities that would arise from the turbulent, dangerous waters beneath the bridge, and that represent the truth of her inner state. (p.166-7)

There are similar components of the bridge drawn by the participant and Eva in terms of it being high, the lack of attachment to the ground and the feeling of danger, fear, ambivalence, and vulnerabilities of the unknown and uncertainty. The destabilization and restabilization may be reverberated through the danger factors involved in these individuals’ bridges about their ethnic identities.
The previous section discussed how the wish for comfort was inherent in the participant’s experience. One wonders whether not entirely being identified as one or the other identity also bring about comfort. In other words, the participant may be comforted by being able to distinguish herself as not being identified as ‘one of them’ when she does not wish to identify with a particular aspect of the two ends of her Korean American identity spectrum. Both feelings of comfort and a sense of alienation and isolation of not belonging in any one identity may coexist, hence, resulting in ambivalence and confusion.

**Ongoing Transition of Self Ethnic Identity**

There appears to be an essential structure of experience of ongoing transition of the participant’s self ethnic identity as 1.5 generation Korean American. Through her verbalizations about her bridge drawing (Figure 3) she has expressed that she is still in transition where she does not “necessarily know at this point how it’s going to turn out” and that she constantly transitions back and forth between the Korean side and American side of Korean American identity. She explained this transition in terms of culture and language differences between the two places. This is reflected in her example where she states that she is using English all day at school and work and converses in English with her friends whereas when she goes back home she is speaking Korean with her family and relatives. Her sense of ongoing transition could also be explained from a developmental perspective: “For the adolescent or young adults most of the changes are still part of the growth and development” (Kolm, 1967, p.128) and that “the identity change of immigration continues to evolve throughout the life span” (Akhtar, 1999, p.102).

The participant depicted uncertainty and inconsistency involved in this transitional identity where she is uncertain about what future identity holds for her, and she also seems to convey that it is a continuous struggle with her own self balancing on the bridge. This feeling of
ever-evolving self and identity appears to be apparent in her bridge drawing (Figure 3) where she might be going up the bridge just to notice that it might be a downfall the next. She seems to portray the bridge as arching upward but the end point of the bridge is unknown and it is not an “easy flat bridge” but a “sturdy enough wooden bridge that is high up in the air” where a lot of things seem to be at stake. The participant seems to acknowledge her ongoing transition of her ethnic identity but also seems to hold a sense of fear that it might never end and that it will keep changing according to circumstances. Akhtar (1999) quotes the following statement from Copelman in regards to this experience:

Instead of synthesis, there is the frightening but also exciting potential of multiplicity. Instead of completion or closure, there is the anxiety of partial identities as well as the challenge of ongoing process. (p.103)

There also seems to be an indication of the participant’s belief that her 1.5 generation Korean American identity has to be flexible to accommodate the changes that comes to her in order to transition back and forth between her bicultural identities. However, the co-investigator also sensed a possible ripple effect that might have on her ethnic identity if she tries to accommodate her environment and the demands of her own values and external values, in that it might lead to a constant fear that she might not withstand her balance or lose her balance on the Korean American identity spectrum. Furthermore, her perception of self may change whenever she tries to define where she stands in relation to her external contexts. Park (1999) seems to summarize this phenomenon in her statement below:

Among 1.5er Korean Americans, identities are fluid and constantly evolving to some extent. More importantly, in this process some come to demystify their images and identities of Korea and the U.S. and develop a more complex understanding of two nations…On the other hand, the process of identity formation among these Korean Americans is situational and complex and yet contradictory and compartmentalized. It is also time, space, and speaker specific. (p.157-8)
Individual Hardship and a Wish for Validation of One’s Struggles

The participant’s experience of individual hardship related to acculturation, and a wish for validation of these struggles were extracted as an essential structure of the phenomenon. The participant’s struggle to adjust and fit in to the American culture and the Korean culture was reflected in the tree drawings (Figure 1, 2) respectively. In the first tree drawing (Figure 1), the participant described how there weren’t many similar looking trees around her and that there was no precedent to look up to for guidance. Her tree representation in the first drawing (Figure 1) seems to represent her individual hardship and effort more than in the second drawing, which may reflect that it was harder for her to fit-in in the U.S. compared to Korea. Min and Kim (2000) suggests that “the process of claiming their ethnicity often unfolded over years and involved tremendous pain and inner conflict” (p.750). A heavy emphasis on the tree trunk with no leaves at the bottom in the first drawing and her verbalization – “you are sort of on your own which is part of the struggle” – seem to echo her experience of individual hardship. The difficulty in adjusting in Korea seems to be reflected by less root connections with her own tree and other trees around her and also her tree looking slightly different among other “very similar looking” trees (Figure 2). Along with her visual representations, many of her significant statements conveyed the meaning of “I’m doing okay now but it was hard initially and it took a while before I got to this point”. This seems to reflect her wish to be seen as a successful case of an immigrant who had to find her own way to make the transition successfully without any support from outsiders. This wish for validation of her struggles seem to be also related to her desire to be supported and guided which is reflected in her statement “you cannot really do it on your own at the beginning”. Moreover, although the participant seems to be keep stressing the point that “she is doing fine now”, her tree image in the first drawing (Figure 1) seems to be fragile in that it looks like the tree is lacking a firm base such as strong deep rooted roots and wide tree trunk to hold the prospering tree leaves
and branches that are growing at the top.

The participant seems to be holding a clear concept of success versus failure and is in a state of conflict between her realizations of the fantasy versus reality of her status in the U.S. Her wish to be idealized as a successful individual in the U.S. may be due to the contemporary image of Asian Americans being a model minority that carries a sense that they have “made it” in the American society (Sue & Sue, 1999). Sue and Sue (1999) discusses how there is a stereotypical belief that Asians in America are highly successful and that they do not experience any difficulties. Furthermore, acculturation patterns and adaptation of immigrants are also influenced by the acculturation expectations of the receiving society (Horenczyk & Schwartz, 2000). Hence, this idea of “one should succeed and do well” might have been unconsciously picked up by the participant from the model minority image of Asians in the U.S. This seems to express that the “American dream” or the concept of “model minority” placed on Korean Americans or Asian Americans in general is only one side of the story and that one needs “to look behind the success myth and to understand the Asian experience in America” (Sue & Sue, 1999, p.257). In her first drawing (Figure 1), she describes the “yellow soil” as having the “perception of being a land where a lot different trees can grow” and how it is “perceived as being fertile and friendly for any tree”. This ‘yellow soil’ seems be representing the fantasy that the participant and immigrants have about the “American dream”. In sum, the feeling of wanting to be validated may be arising from the realization that her wish and those of reality do not coincide, and that the desire for recognition of her individual hardship may be her attempt to restore what has been lost during the times that she was not psychologically available to attend to those unmet needs. Also, these unmet needs may be related to her underlying personality structure where her wish for validation may serve as a self-reassuring tool for the participant to meet the demands of her personally constructed world that may be unrealistic or highly idealized.
Sue and Sue (1999) also highlighted how “these stereotypes reassert the erroneous belief that any minority can succeed in a democratic society if the minority group members work hard enough” (p.257). This is portrayed in the participant’s hope for the idealized self and the world where she remarks the following: “You can try hard and if you are successful then you will be fine”; “Tell them that just keep trying, there’s plenty of sunshine for everyone, there’s enough in the fertile ground for you to pull off of if you can”. The concept of “if you work hard, you will succeed and get what you want” may also be derived from the Asian culture where a great emphasis is placed on hard work and education.

The participant makes relative statements about the misconceptions about the acculturation process in that people should not take for granted. The most prominent misconceptions is that younger people will make the transition quickly with no difficulty. The participant illustrated that the rate of acculturation and the degree of acculturation depends on each individual when referring to her trees in Figure 1 which are all growing at different rates. However, although the participant says that people should not assume that younger people make easier transitions to the U.S. or make quicker adjustments, she makes contrary remarks about acculturation process that it in fact depends on the individual’s age, group and time of immigration. The idea of easier cultural transition and adaptation at a younger age was also represented in her description of her tree drawing (Figure 1) where she expressed “These ones [little bushy trees] start producing leaves right away so they adjust pretty quickly. They are still pretty little but it’s easier for the little ones right?”.

Perhaps, the participant’s desire to be supported may be arising from the need to fulfill the absence of parental guidance that was lacking when she initially went through acculturation difficulties. Lee (1998) stated that “the first generation Asians can understand the situation in an abstract way, but they had not gone through similar experiences during their childhood” (p.98)
and this coincides with the participant’s statement “obviously it’s a struggle for them [second
generation] too or first generation, but I think 1.5 have their own unique experiences”. Also, there
are differences in the rates of acculturation of family members within a household (Lee & Mock,
2005) and “parents may acculturate more slowly than their children, creating a problematic power
inversion” (McGoldrick, Giordano, & Garcia-Preto, 2005, p.25). The monolingual parents may
depend on English speaking children as interpreters (Lee & Mock, 2005) and “children are left
without effective adult authority to support them and without a positive ethnic identity to ease
their adaptation to life in the new culture” (McGoldrick, Giordano, & Garcia-Preto, 2005, p.25).
The role reversal of parent and child may have pushed the participant to adopt a hurried,
determined, responsible, and parentified self where her developmental needs were not fully met
as a child. This might be the reason underlying the participant’s wish for validation and
recognition about her accomplishment and endeavors. Yedidia (2005) summarizes this particular
phenomenon as follows:

> Immigrant adolescents can usually obtain less help from their parents in developing their
self-identity than do local adolescents. Their parents are usually unfamiliar with the
social codes of the host society and lack the formative experiences common to persons
who grew up in the society. This makes it difficult for their children to view them as role
models or as reliable sources of help and advice on issues with which they must grapple
as they mature. (p.160)

The participant’s experience of acculturation seems to be in accordance with the above statement.

**Artistic Expression as a means to Exploring Ethnic Identity**

When asked about the directives, the participant expressed that the tree drawings (Figure
1, 2) were perceived to be “easier” than the bridge drawing (Figure 3) initially, and it seemed like
she experienced more anxiety during the creation of the bridge drawing. She appeared more
hesitant to draw the bridge and the co-investigator repeated the directive for the bridge drawing
one more time as requested by the participant. Also, there seems to be more overshoots and undershoots in the bridge drawing and it looks as if she did a quick sketch of a bridge although the participant took more or less the same amount of time creating the bridge drawing as she did with the other two tree drawings. Her use of the art materials during the bridge drawing also seemed aggressive especially when she was drawing in the direction of the travel on the bridge and herself as a dot to indicate where she is on the bridge. She first used the pencil to draw the arrow and the dot and then went over with a red oil pastel in a pressured and repetitive manner. These changes in her attitude of handling the art materials may reflect her anxiety and her conflict in the creation of the bridge drawing to represent her transitional identity as a Korean American. The possible anxiety produced creating the bridge drawing seemed to have lessened when she was describing the picture and seeing all of her three drawings next to each other for her to see them all at once.

The participant expressed her thoughts about using the artistic expression as a form of communicating immigrants’ thoughts and perceptions of their ethnic identities. This is in accordance with the fact that art therapy procedures that introduce self-identity perceptions through creating artwork have the “advantage of circumventing the characteristic avoidance by immigrant individuals of self exposure and the direct verbal expression of emotion” (Yedidia, 2005, p.161). The participant referred to the experience of creating the art as a new form of expression and therefore simultaneously experienced curiosity and anxiety. Throughout the data collection session, her descriptions about her artwork indicated new realizations about her self and her ethnic identity, and a deeper self exploration from the emergent process that was revealed through her engagement in the art making process. These new realizations from drawing and reflecting upon her artwork seemed to have led the participant to cognitively reorganize and transform her perceptions and beliefs about her immigration experiences and ethnic identity that
may have been repressed or distorted over time. This uncovering experience may reflect that the participant might have been holding a different view of the situation in order to cope with the obstacles that challenged her during her transition period. Weiser (1994) discusses how we as humans always construct meanings to the stimuli and object relations that we encounter in our surroundings. She posits that “As we discover something new we try to make sense of it; we mentally take it apart ‘deconstructing’ it to see how it makes sense to us. This is a human trait embedded in all of us” (p.225). Perhaps, this is the reason why having three separate drawings to explore each aspect of her ethnic identity was meaningful for her because it allowed her to deconstruct the meaning of being a 1.5 generation Korean American. This deconstruction of meaning involved in her ethnic identity seemed to have aided the process of self insight by enabling her to encounter the dissonance between two simultaneously held conflicting cultural values visually. Her significant statement, “it was good sort of explaining to myself again and what I thought of each place and what I thought of myself in each place”, seems to reflect this point.

Yalom (2000) stated the relationship between image, thought, and language as follows, which speaks to the significance of visual representation as a symbolic communicative tool for one’s thoughts:

There is a barrier between image and language. Mind thinks in images but, to communicate with another, must transform image into thought and then thought into language. That march, from image to thought to language, is treacherous. Casualties occur: the rich, fleecy texture of image, its extraordinary plasticity and flexibility, its private nostalgic emotional hues – all are lost when image is crammed into language. (p.193)

Kolm (1967) also remarks that by going through the symbolic process of relearning the values, norms and behavior patterns, the immigrant reorganizes his total personality:

For the immigrant, the learning of the symbols and their meanings and values in the new
sociocultural environment will usually mean a relearning by him of roles or structural units already learned once before in his ‘old’ culture. This relearning will be most effective if occurring through ‘symbolic communication’ rather than through ‘trial and error’, imitation, conditioning or any other individually experienced processes. (p.110)

Therefore, even if the participant did not explicitly verbalize in words what was evident in her drawings or what she has realized, the image of her drawings may be more powerful in her mind than words, and the new realizations about her self and her ethnic identity may convey its full meaning in her unconscious visual-thought process without the process of verbally asserting her experience. Moreover, the way how individuals choose to talk about their identities may not necessarily correlate or represent an objective portrayal of what they are (Kang & Lo, 2004).

**Significance in the Artwork and Concluding Remarks**

The participant was given a wide range of art materials and two sizes of white drawing paper to choose from. For all of the three drawings in this study, the participant chose the larger 12”x18” white drawing paper and mainly used oil pastels and a pencil. She used most of the allotted time for all three of the drawings and it appeared as if she was engaged in the art making process especially when she was describing her artwork during the open ended responsive interview. She seemed to become animated in telling her story about her drawings at certain points and pointed at her drawings frequently as she was explaining her images in detail. The participant seemed to use a lot of back and forth physical movements as she was comparing her first two tree drawings (Figure 1, 2) and also when she was explaining the transition about her bridge (Figure 3). She explained that she was referring to her family and relatives more than usual when talking about her experiences living the U.S. and about her ethnic identity because she had just visited them the week prior to participating in this study. It seemed like the participant felt the need to explain every motive of her word or/and action to justify her reasoning. She seemed to be
constantly monitoring her verbalizations as she was describing and reflecting her experiences. Her new realizations as she was reflecting upon the artwork were also noticed in her verbalizations.

Throughout the open ended responsive interview, she described her experience within the framework of the tree metaphor and oscillated between the first person pronoun “I” and “the tree” when elaborating her experiences depicted in the artwork. When explaining the second drawing (Figure 2), she appeared to be automatically comparing the first and the second drawing back and forth making comparisons of the American and Korean culture. Viewing the first and second drawing, the first drawing (Figure 1) seems to be less organized in terms of object orientation, the use of color and the use of space compared to the second drawing (Figure 2) where it looks more organized and well planned. For all of her drawings, the participant filled in the background of her artwork toward the end or at last. The participant’s verbalizations through reflecting upon the three drawings simultaneously seem to reflect her revelations or insights that came from creating and discussing the artwork.

Although it was not reflected as one of the composite essential structures in the data analysis, a journey from fearfulness and tentativeness to a sense of confidence and adventure seems to reflect the essential structures of immigration and formation of ethnic identity representing adaptability and compensation involved in the cultural transition. This theme seems to be present from the overall verbal expression of the participant when she reflected upon her three drawings about her ethnic identity.

The use of tree and bridge metaphors in this study appears to address the topics that resemble the second individuation process of reworking identity related issues in adolescence which can be summarized by Erikson’s quotes listed below:

To complete the search for an identity and adolescent must find an answer to the
question “Who am I?”. He must also establish some orientation toward the future and come to terms with the questions “Where am I going?” and “Who am I to become?”.

(Muuss, 1982, p.71)

These series of drawings seem to reflect both the transition between childhood and adulthood and the additional struggle for self-identification and social integration forming her ethnic identity: The tree metaphor in this study seems to represent the “Who am I?” question in the U.S and in Korea; the bridge metaphor seems to assess the “Where am I going?” question in terms of the participant’s reflection upon her transitional identity as a Korean American; and the combination of all three drawings seem to inclusively ask the participant the question of “Who am I to become with two aspects of my identity?”.

Upon the completion of the data analysis and reviewing the findings of this study, the co-investigator wonders whether this topic of ethnic identity is more pronounced and even more emphasized in relation to the immigrants in the U.S. because there is no simple definition that would be all-encompassing to represent the American identity. The national identity of being an American, perhaps, inevitably alludes to the distinction of different ethnic identities since most Americans were once immigrants to the country themselves. From a different outlook, Jacoby (2004) states that “it would emphasize what we all have in common: that what it means to be American is essentially to arrive as a newcomer – to start over and make a new life” (p.313). Perhaps, this common factor that Jacoby (2004) points out is the sense of comfort that the participant in this study has expressed when she stated that it is a struggle and overwhelming in the beginning but once she becomes to be part of that environment, she is fine. In comparison, although she feels comfortable initially in Korea, once she tries to fit into the Korean culture she is faced with acknowledgement of being different from others and within herself. This may be due to Korean society yet being a homogeneous country compared to the U.S. One wonders.
whether there is a need for individuals to identify themselves in hyphenated identities in an attempt to define the American national identity in more concrete terms, especially in the beginning phases of the immigration and adaptation process. It might be interesting to look at the immigrants’ perspectives on the abstract term “what it means to be an American?” in future studies. Below is a quote from Min and Kim’s study (2000) reflecting a 1.5 Korean American’s experience in the U.S. that seems to highlight this question:

I call America home not because it is a perfect place, but because there is enough space and freedom here for me to define my own version of America – a Korean America, an Asian America. Although many people may still regard me as a stranger, and may continue to do so, my very presence is helping to reconceptualize what it means to be an American. I am contesting the narrowly defined notion that only white Americans are Americans, and striving to establish a new national identity that includes all those who have come and will yet come to its shores, regardless of race and skin color. In doing so, I feel that I and others like myself exemplify the true spirit of what America stands for. (p.68)

Clinical Applications

*Use of Artistic Expression as an Engagement Tool*

The findings from this study could be applied as a way of providing a means for culturally diverse clients to tell their stories at the beginning of therapy session to get to know the clients and their cultural backgrounds in a less intrusive way. As it was expressed by the participant in this study, it might be hard for the clients to express their thoughts and beliefs about certain ethnic groups to a therapist that they see for the first time. The literature suggests that discussing the topic of identity especially about discrimination, prejudice, or oppression makes Asian American clients uncomfortable initially (Lee & Mock, 2005). However, the use of visual representation provides the clients with an alternative form of non verbal expression which may allow them to express their feelings about their ethnic identities by describing their images in the
drawings in front of them. The tangible aspect of visual representations enables the individuals to communicate their thoughts through an object which seems to lessen their anxiety about voicing their experiences. The use of the drawings would also allow the therapists to develop rapport with clients by remaining open to hear clients’ own cultural understanding about their subjective worlds that they are operating in.

*Art Therapy Assessment/ Visual Interview*

The series of two tree drawings and one bridge drawing could be utilized for assessment and visual interview purposes in both short and long term therapy treatments. Baker (1999) stated that “learning about the cultural influence on clients’ lives helps interweave their psychological experiences with their social ones within their multicultural contexts…Adding the acculturation dimension to the assessment process is crucial when working with immigrants or relocators” (Baker, 1999, p.965-966). This series of three drawings may reflect the acculturation degree of clients and provide basic information about the clients’ perception about themselves, their relationship with their own ethnic groups and host culture, revealing psychosocial difficulties that they might be struggling with. This assessment tool may provide both clients and therapists about the degree of cross-cultural influence and pre- and post-migration experiences.

The three drawing procedures could be utilized to distinguish between immigrant clients’ personal problems versus cultural problems due to migration. Since “clients often perceive their stress, when torn between two different cultures, as personal rather than cross-cultural problem” (Baker, 1999, p.966), the visual representations through tree and bridge metaphors may allow the therapist “to discriminate between inner conflicts or weaknesses in personality or family structure and those that are primarily situational and culture generated” (Kim & Ryu, 2005, p.360). Since the same objective experience can be viewed differently by
individuals depending upon their underlying personality structure and their personal experience, this series of drawings may be useful in assessing the internal and external interaction of their migration experience.

*Art Therapy Treatment Approaches*

It is recommended that these art processes be utilized in both group and family sessions. In group sessions, the three drawing processes may aid immigrant individuals to share their thoughts and feelings about migration experiences and this may allow for empathy and a sense of shared experience among the group members. Also discussing about their artwork to talk about their experiences and dilemmas that might be associated with their ethnic identities might be less threatening and less anxiety provoking for these individuals. As noted by the participant in this study, new realizations about self and one’s ethnic identity emerged when reflecting upon one’s drawings. This may be more effective within the context of the group where it may aid the individuals to objectively assess their thoughts and beliefs and allow for cognitive reorganizations of their experiences through their visual reflections in the artwork. In addition, the group can transferentially replicate the intrapsychic family feeling if the actual family is not available.

Utilization of these drawing procedures in a family session may allow the family of different generations to realize the situation and struggles as parents of first generation of immigrants or as children of 1.5 or second generation of immigrants who are negotiating two different cultural values. “Acculturation problems created second-order problems for individuals and families, problems that they never met before” (Baker, 1999, p.966) and the process of creating artwork may provide a tool for them to share their experiences with each other, mediating and facilitating their understanding of each other and the cultural influence on their lives. This may further reduce intergenerational conflict within immigrant families. Moreover, the groupings of trees in the participant’s tree drawings in this study might have represented her
family. Therefore, in using this drawing procedure, the therapist might want to ask the clients if
the other trees represent anyone he/she might know. In this way, the therapist may use the tree
drawings to obtain more information about the client’s family dynamics.

Art Media and Sequence Considerations

Different media such as 3-dimensional art materials may be used to represent the tree
and bridge metaphors enabling the expression of inner realities of the individuals in a multi-
dimensional manner. The actual physical making of the tree and bridge may allow for a greater
degree of free association. The art therapist can facilitate the process by providing a progressive
timeline on a piece of mural paper to explore the progression of the individual’s tree across
cultural transitions and different time periods similar to a diagram of genogram. This process may
aid the individuals with secondary process symbolization allowing them to visualize and
synthesize cognitive and emotional aspects of self from past, present and future.

The order or the sequence of the art procedures in this study could be altered according
to the individual and context of treatment/therapy. In this study, the order of the drawings was
presented from tree metaphor in the U.S., tree metaphor in Korea, and the bridge drawing. This
sequence of art making directives could be altered accordingly depending on the individual’s
developmental and functioning level at the time of distribution. Perhaps, these drawing
procedures could be presented in the order of tree metaphor in the U.S., the bridge drawing, and
tree metaphor in Korea to visually bridge the two tree drawings together within the process of
creating the artwork.

Art Therapy with Asian Americans

The expression of thoughts and feelings about one’s ethnic identity and culture through
artistic expression can be a useful tool for Asian Americans, especially Korean Americans. Yeh
and Huang (1996) found that the use of projective techniques in drawings was “particularly
relevant for research with Asian Americans, where concern over shame, embarrassment, and emotional expressiveness may inhibit their willingness and ability to articulate their experiences” (p.653). Therefore, projective self expression through art making may be helpful in uncovering various factors involved in ethnic identity development. Moreover, according to the literature, Korean Americans are more controlled and selective about expressing negative feelings and they seldom seek professional help outside of their immediate families (Kim & Ryu, 2005). Thus, the creative process of art making could be proposed as an alternative way of mental health treatment to traditional verbal therapies. Since the drawing procedures that were presented in this study involved using universal symbols such as a tree and a bridge, it may be successful to convey the meaning across those individuals who are struggling with the English language which may pose a barrier to treatment. The art object can become “a bridge between cultures and languages and a common focal point that provides access to universal qualities of feeling” (McNiff, 1984, p.129).

*Artistic Expression as a Self-reflection Tool*

This series of drawings can be utilized as a self-reflection tool for any individual who is going through a transition in life; other immigrant population and generations, anyone who is undergoing a change in one’s role in life such as switching jobs, marriage, parenthood, divorce, death of loved ones, serious illness, retirement etc. In McNiff’s (1984) study, an authority on acupuncture, Chinese herbal medicine, Tai Chi and I Ching stated that “the highest form of healing is the self directed creative process in which a person, without external manipulations by others or the introduction of materials into the body, activates healing energies through action and contemplation” (p.126). Because these drawing series allow the individual to examine one’s thoughts and feelings at a specific point in time and then bridges the perceived dichotomies together as a closure, the process may aid the individuals to cognitively reorganize one’s conflicts visually. Along the same lines, it could also be applied to adolescents who are undergoing a
developmental transition from childhood to adulthood.

**Self-reflection Tool for Therapists Dealing with Culturally Diverse Clients**

With the increasing demand for multicultural awareness in the mental health field, it is recommended that therapists be aware of multiple cultural layers of their clients, and also explore their own ethnic identities prior treating culturally diverse clients. Wadeson (1998) emphasizes the role of the art therapist in the therapeutic relationship in the following:

..art therapy imposes some special factors in the therapeutic relationship. Added to the relationship between two people (or among many in group therapy), there is each one's relation to the art product. As an expression of self it becomes an extension of the client and must be respected as such. Therefore, the manner in which the art therapist regards it, handles it, puts it away, and recalls it, becomes extremely important. (p.38)

Therefore the series of tree and bridge metaphor drawings could also be utilized as a self-reflection tool for therapists as a way of assessing and reflecting upon their own cultural background and heritage. It would be a useful tool for immigrant therapists in particular to maintain cultural neutrality and professional therapeutic distance when treating individuals from their own native cultures.

**Therapeutic Relationship**

The co-investigator’s presence during the participant’s creation and reflection upon the artwork seems to be crucial and significant. Moreover, this therapeutic presence between the therapist and the client is significant in the context of treating clients who are from diverse cultural backgrounds. Wadeson (1998) discusses the significance of the therapeutic relationship as follows:

…the therapeutic relationship itself becomes a primary curative agent in supplying what the client may never have had – an accepting, non-judgmental, understanding, and loving relationship. The client comes to experience a new way of being cared for. The therapist models a new way of being in relation to another. In this sort of supportive milieu the client becomes sufficiently trusting to try out new ways of being, to try on
new perspective as she might a new set of clothes, to see how they look and whether they fit. In this non threatening atmosphere, the therapy can become a laboratory to try out changes in which the client need not pay the consequences that would be exacted in other contexts. (p.34)

Hence, the therapeutic relationship involved in the art making may further enhance the self reflection process among immigrant individuals and enable them to process their thoughts and feelings through the process of creative art making.

Limitations

The limitations of this study include small sample size, gender of the sample, specific ethnic group of immigrant population, brief time period of the study, the choice of language used during the in-depth responsive interview, and the co-investigator’s knowledge of phenomenological research design.

The study was designed to recruit five 1.5 generation Korean American young adults between the ages of 18-34. However, only one participant was enrolled during the four month recruitment period and this was the main limitation of this study. Although an in depth analysis of this one participant’s data was conducted, the findings obtained from this study may not be generalized to other 1.5 generation Korean American population in general. In relation to the small number of participants, both genders were not represented in the data. There may be gender specific differences that exist in the acculturation pattern and the experience of being a 1.5er and since the only participant was a female, this factor suggests possible limitation to the study.

Since the study was delimited to include the purposive sampling of 1.5 generation Korean American young adults, the sample only included Korean immigrants who were between the ages of 18-34 and who immigrated to the U.S. when they were between five and sixteen years old. Therefore, the findings obtained from this study may not be generalized to a larger population of immigrants but would reflect a part of this larger population about their subjective
Another limitation of this study was the brief time period of the data collection session to explore the phenomenon being investigated. The findings of this study were based on one single session of person-to-person meeting that included three drawing processes and one in depth responsive interview, and one telephone validation interview. Since the topic of ethnic identity itself is a complex and a dynamic concept, the data collected in this study may represent snapshot descriptions of the individual’s lived experience during the time of data collection session. Thus, the study was restricted to a particular point in time and it may have limited the emergence of fluidity of the individual’s construction and experience of ethnic identity and other aspects of life experiences that occur throughout her life. As the stages of one’s cultural identity is not fixed but depends on the individual’s life circumstances and personal esteem (Dokter, 1998; Nesdale & Mak, 2003), the limitations of this study also include the lack of control for all the life events of the participant that may have had some temporary or permanent impact on one’s identity during the recruitment period. For instance, the participant in this study has expressed that she was referring to her family and her relatives more than usual during the interview because she visited them the week prior to participating in this study.

The study was delimited to 1.5 Korean Americans who had a command of the English language and who were comfortable doing an interview in English. Considering the bicultural and bilingual aspects that characterize 1.5 generation Korean Americans, the language restriction imposed in this study might have limited the number of participants being enrolled in the study, and it might have also limited the participant’s modes of expression during the in depth responsive interview.

Lastly, since it was the co-investigator’s first attempt at phenomenological study, her inexperience in the phenomenological research design and her own personal perspective could be
proposed as a limitation to this study.

Implications for Future Research

A much larger sample size would be necessary to obtain a more comprehensive outlook of the phenomenon being studied and to begin to generalize findings to the larger population. It might be interesting to examine the gender specific differences in ethnic self-identification as the current literature suggests a possible connection between the issues of gender and ethnic identity. It was suggested that the experience of acculturation process was qualitatively different between young immigrant males and females (Bhatia & Ram, 2001; Gibson, 2001) and that there is a significant gender difference in the choice of most forms of ethnic self-identification (Rumbaut, 1994). The relationship between gender and ethnic identity was found to be more pronounced in Asian American women who were coming from patriarchal customs (Min & Kim, 1999). Hence, although every individual’s experience is unique and different, it might be of worth noting the difference between males and females in terms of how they represent their experience of ethnic identity through visual representations in the artwork and how they describe their acculturation processes verbally. The series of drawings utilized in this study could be adapted to using the animal metaphor; “Draw yourself and your family as an animal in each place” to explore the relationship and gender role within the family during the cultural transition period. In addition, the tree drawings can also be utilized to discuss family dynamics of the individual and their roles in the household.

As noted earlier, the language restriction in this study may have limited participant’s choice of words and descriptions about the phenomenon. Many of 1.5 generation immigrants adopt a bicultural identity (Min, 1999) and since language is one of the important components that defines one’s ethnic identity (Min, 1999; Phinney, 1990, 1992), it might be appropriate to
investigate how individuals express about their ethnic identity describing their artwork when given the option to use both English and Korean. There are specifics in the Korean language that one cannot convey in the English language and therefore having the option of Korean and English language as the basis for the interviews might lead to a greater depth to the multiple levels of the 1.5 immigrants’ experiences. Moreover, individual’s ethnic language is learned at a very early age within the context of the family and it is considered to be one of the strongest cultural attributes that influence solidarity in an ethnic group. Thus, the individual’s expression in Korean may portray his/her thoughts and feelings about the ethnic group more accurately. It might be also interesting to see if there is a pattern in the way one switches languages to explain about his/her ethnic identity, and when code-switching of Korean and English – alternating between two languages in a single conversation putting English words in a Korean grammatical structure and vice versa – occurs in the conversation.

The present study was based on one single session of examining the participant’s ethnic identity and immigration experiences. It would be beneficial to explore the individual’s progression of ethnic identity development over a longer period of time in order to capture the dynamism involved in the topic of ethnic identity. Perhaps, the tree metaphor could be used as a transitional object across different time periods of the individual’s life, and it would be interesting to see how the individual’s tree image transforms over time and how the environment changes accordingly to represent one’s ethnic identity and the factors influencing one’s identity.

Based on the findings of this study, future research could be conducted with other minority immigrant population such as pan-Asian, African American, or Latin American groups. It also appears worthy of researching into the ethnic identities of individuals who are exposed to more than one culture and who are experiencing cultural transitions such as individuals who are internationally adopted, children of individuals who are constantly in transition due to the
inherent nature of their parents’ occupation, individuals who are relocated or re-migrate to their
country of origin, refugee population, biracial individuals, and different generation of immigrants
other than 1.5 generation. Since all these individuals may need to negotiate within themselves
between two or more cultural settings, the phenomenon depicted in this study may not be
confined to just 1.5 generation Korean American immigrants. For example, Ramakrishnan (2004)
investigated “2.5 generation” in the U.S. which is defined as children with one U.S. born parent
and one foreign-born parent of the same ethnic group. These individuals readily experience
biculturalism at home and it would be interesting to compare their ethnic identity formation and
development to those individuals who are classified as 1.5 and second generation who are the
children of two foreign-born parents.

Similarly, “parachute kids” and individuals who are relocated or re-migrate to their
country of origin are another area of possible future studies. “Parachute kids” are defined as
children who come to the U.S. by themselves without their family who later may take the lead in
migration (Orellana, Thorne, Chee, & Lam, 2001, p.572). “These kids are pressured to do well
enough in U.S. schools to justify their parents’ financial sacrifice; and helping out with household
labor, and restraining the expression of their emotions in order to lessen the burden their presence
posed to other relatives” (Orellana et al., 2001, p.583). This group of parachute kids hold an
awkward position feeling caught between two nations, educational systems, and ways of growing
up. Orellana et al. (2001) and Lee (2006) discuss how these children feel stuck in between
because they lack the language skills and discipline compared to their native Korean peers and
also experience difficulty learning English and have stresses of “fitting in” in the U.S. Taking into
consideration that many of these parachute kids end up staying and obtaining permanent
residency in the U.S., it seems to be pertinent to study the implication of the ethnic identity
formation and development of this group. Moreover, “reacculturation to the original culture upon
relocation back home creates stressful psychological and social relationships” (Baker, 1999, p.965) and it may be appropriate to examine ethnic identities among Korean individuals who return back to Korea upon completion of their studies as well. Since, multiculturalism is becoming a global phenomenon at present, it seems appropriate to investigate the nature of hybrid ethnic identities or multiple aspects of ethnic identities to gain a deeper understanding of how one adapts to and within this global community.

In addition, it might be interesting to investigate if there is any unconscious guilt or shame involved in 1.5 generation of Korean Americans since the issue of respect and the principle of hierarchy based on the Confucian system are at the heart of Korean individuals and its culture. Since 1.5 generation individuals have to negotiate between the two cultural value systems inside versus outside of home, it would be interesting to study if there is any guilt or shame involved in their Korean American identity and whether this plays a role in the confusion and ambivalence in having the in-between identity. Moreover, it might be important to study whether the ambivalence or maintaining no specific connection to either side of the Korean American identity functions as a defense mechanism against making a commitment. One wonders whether there is an unconscious guilt evolving around having to make a commitment to one country because it translates into giving up or betraying the immigrant individual’s native country.

Lastly, further study is needed on the topic of immigrant therapists and their countertransferences toward their clients from their own countries of origin. The immigrant therapist may hold special assets in treating his clients with a greater objectivity from his own experiences (Akhtar, 1999). However, Yedidia (2005) suggested in her study that immigrant therapists’ unresolved identity problems arising from their own immigration experiences had an impact on the treatment of their adolescent clients who were from their own countries of origin. It would be helpful to research into how art therapy can be a useful tool to help these immigrant
therapists to recognize their own identity conflicts so that they could contain the problems of their clients.

At present there seems to be a lot of ethnographic studies based on in depth personal interviews about understanding the processes of ethnic formation among adolescents and adults, especially second generation immigrants in general. However, because these studies mainly focused on single ethnic groups or age groups based on different definitions and measures of ethnic identity, it is hard to make generalizations and comparisons across studies. It seems to be pertinent to study a larger group of the same population using the three drawings presented in this study to obtain a more comprehensive and a holistic view of the 1.5 generation Korean American experience. Thus, it would be beneficial to have a meta-analysis of these different ethnographic studies to obtain a more conclusive and coherent findings.
CHAPTER VI : SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS

The purpose of this study was to explore the lived experience of ethnic identity formation and its psychological implications among 1.5 generation Korean American young adults through the process of creating and reflecting upon one’s artwork. The primary research questions for the study were: How is the formation and development of ethnic identity recounted and expressed by 1.5-generation Korean American immigrants through the artistic expression? What are these psychological experiences, as expressed through the art and interview process?

The study was conducted at the Drexel University Hahnemann Center City campus and included one healthy female adult participant. The study was initially designed for five participants but only one participant met the inclusion criteria; individual who is between 18-34 years of age and immigrated to the U.S. between the ages of five and sixteen. The participant was recruited using flyers that had been posted at three campuses at Drexel University (West Philadelphia, Center City Hahnemann, Queen Lane) and Korean community centers in North Philadelphia area. If the individual met the inclusion criteria, a time was scheduled to review informed consent and collect the data. The data collection session involved three art making processes that included two tree metaphors and one bridge metaphor, and an open ended responsive interview. The validation interview was conducted over the phone.

Following the data collection session the artistic and verbal data collected from this one participant was analyzed using phenomenological research method as described by Moustakas (1994). The following steps were taken for data analysis: a) epoche; b) phenomenological reduction; c) textural descriptions; d) imaginative variation; and e) synthesis of meanings and essences (Moustakas, 1994). The data was analyzed by using a total of five data sets. The first three data analyses explored the participant’s verbal statements associated with the images created through the three drawings. Another set of data explored the participant’s verbal statements about
her experience in creating the artwork. The last set of data explored the essence of the participant’s experience that combined the previous four sets of data analyses.

Several essential structures have been identified through the analyses of the artistic and verbal data. The essential structures emerged from the data included the participant’s experience of: self differentiation from the environment; wish for comfort and feelings of connection to other immigrants; bi-cultural identification and awareness; alienation and fear of not belonging in any one identity; ongoing transition of self ethnic identity; individual hardship and a wish for validation of one’s struggles; and artistic expression as a means to exploring ethnic identity.

The essential quality of the experience was found to be that the art making process in this study provided opportunities for new realizations and self exploration of one’s immigration experiences and ethnic identity through the use of the tree and the bridge metaphors. The use of the three drawing procedures presented in this study can be used as an initial assessment tool in the clinical setting by providing both immigrant clients and clinicians about the degree of cross-cultural influence and pre- and post-migration experiences. It provides a framework from within which clinicians can discuss the interaction between the individual’s intrapsychic life with the external life circumstances, and how the individual has learned to adapt to those life changes. In a group or family session, this series of drawings can be used as a tool to share experiences and to facilitate understanding of each other about the processes of acculturation among culturally displaced individuals. The combination of both the artwork and verbal associations to the artwork during the process of creating three metaphorical drawings can aid the individuals with secondary process symbolization, allowing them to visualize and synthesize cognitive and emotional aspects of self from past, present and future. A much larger sample size would be necessary to obtain a more comprehensive outlook of the phenomenon being studied and to begin to generalize findings to the larger population.
List of References


Appendix A
Volunteers Needed To Participate In An Art Therapy Research Study:  
An Exploration of the Immigration Experience and Ethnic Identity of  
1.5-generation Korean American Young Adults  
through Art Making Experience

This research study is being conducted for the purpose of obtaining deeper understanding  
of the subjective immigration experiences and ethnic identities of 1.5-generation Korean  
American college students and young adults through the artistic process.  
This study is being conducted by an Art Therapy graduate student as partial fulfillment of  
a master’s degree at Drexel University Center City Hahnemann Campus, Philadelphia.

To be eligible for this study, you must be:

- **1.5 generation Korean American** (ie. individual was Korean-born or foreign-born  
  and arrived in the U.S. between the ages of 5 and 16).
- Between the ages of **18** to **34**.
- A permanent resident or a citizen of the U.S.
- Currently residing in the U.S.
- Able to read, comprehend, and speak English.

You **cannot** participate in this study if you are currently a student, faculty member or staff  
in the Hahnemann Creative Arts in Therapy Program.

This research study will take approximately 3 hours and 15 minutes or less and will  
involve a creation of three drawings and an interview about the individual’s experience of  
making images to communicate about their ethnic identity. Individuals recruited for this  
study will be given a stipend of $20.00. The recruitment is on a first come, first serve  
basis.

For additional information or if you meet the above criteria and want to volunteer for this study, **please contact Lisa Baik at 215-917-2455**.  
This research is being conducted by a member of Drexel University.
Appendix B

Telephone Screening Interview

Hello. Thank you for calling. I am conducting a research study in partial fulfillment for the Master of Arts degree at Drexel University. I am looking to explore the immigration experiences and ethnic identity of 1.5 generation Korean American young adults. You will be participating in the creation of two drawings and a verbal interview. This study will take approximately 3 hours and 15 minutes, and it will take place at Drexel University Center City Hahnemann Campus. Your participation would be greatly appreciated. May I ask you a few questions to confirm the inclusion criteria for this study?

- Are you 1.5-generation Korean American (Korean- or foreign-born and arrived to the U.S. between the ages of 5 and 16)?
  Yes No
- Are you a permanent resident or a citizen of the U.S.?
  Yes No
- Are you currently residing in the U.S.?
  Yes No
- Are you between the ages of 18 and 34?
  Yes No
- Do you speak English or Korean or both?
  English Korean Both
- Are you currently a student, faculty member or staff in the Hahnemann Creative Arts in Therapy Program?
  Yes No

* It seems like you meet all the inclusion criteria for this study. Would you be interested in participating in this research study?

YES: Let’s set up a time, date, location for our first meeting. On our first meeting I will go over the consent form and we will proceed with the study (make an appointment). Lastly, do you know any individual that you know who may be interested in participating in this study?

NO: All right. Then, do you know any individual that you know who may be interested in participating in this study?

* I am sorry but it seems like you do not meet the inclusion criteria for this study and therefore you are ineligible to participate in the study. Can you suggest any individual you know who may meet the inclusion criteria and may be interested in participating in this study?

-Thank you for your time and for having an interest in this study.-

Appendix C
Interview Guide (Open Ended Responsive Interview)

This interview guide is the instrument used to conduct an open ended, responsive interview. In order to structure the interview and assure that the data being gathered directly relates to the research question of the research study, objectives have been created for the interview. The objectives are designed to be compatible with the research question. The objectives remain consistent and act as boundaries for the interview while the questions will change based upon the responses of the subject. Under each objective, examples of open ended questions that may be asked during the interview are listed which may contribute to the understanding of the given objectives and also the purpose of the research as a whole. These questions are only examples that will guide the participant to explore the experience in depth, and subsequent questions will be determined by the participant’s responses to those questions. Therefore, the questions that might be asked during the interview may include, but are not limited to the ones listed below:

Objective 1: To understand the experience of creating a tree as a metaphor for the psychological self as depicted in the artwork.

- Can you tell a story about the picture you have created?
- How would you describe the tree? What kind of tree is it?
- Where did the tree come from?
  - Probe:
    - Where does the tree grow?
    - If you were to assign an emotion to the tree, what emotion would it be?
    - What will happen to the tree in the future?
Are there any special qualities or uniqueness about the trees that you have created? What are they?

What is the relationship between the tree and the environment around it?

Probe:

- How long has the tree grown in this place?

- It appears as if the tree is not planted anywhere, can you describe what the experience of not being rooted might be like?

How would you describe the similarities/differences between the two trees that you have created in the first and second art tasks?

**Objective II:** To understand the experience of creating a bridge as a metaphor for representing the cultural transition and their ethnic identities in relation to their community.

- How would you describe the bridge? What kind of bridge is it?

  Probe:

  - Where is the bridge?

  - Where does the bridge come from and where does it go?

  - What is the environment like around the bridge?

  - Where are you on the bridge?

- Where are you coming from and where are you headed towards?

**Objective III:** To identify the aspects of the creative process of art making that were most meaningful in discussing one’s ethnic identity. What was the experience of using the metaphor for the individual to describe one’s ethnic identity?
What was your experience creating the artwork?

probe:

- What were your thoughts/emotions as you engaged in the art making?
- How did you experience the directive?
- What did you find out about yourself while you engaged in the process of art making?

Can you describe your before and after experiences on your thoughts and/or feelings in regards to your ethnic identity?

What was it like for you to explore your ethnic identity by creating the artwork?

Can you describe anything that you might have learned or discovered about yourself throughout this experience in relation to your ethnic identity?

How do you think this process can be used as an intervention tool to those people who may be struggling with their ethnic identities?

What was most meaningful and least meaningful about this experience?

Appendix D
Subject’s Initials _____
Consent to Take Part
In a Research Study

1. **Subject Name:** ____________________________

2. **Title of Research:** The Experience of Immigration and Ethnic Identity as Revealed through Art Making Experience: A Phenomenological Study of 1.5-Generation Korean American Immigrants

3. **Investigator’s Name:** Nancy Gerber, Ph.D, ATR-BC, LPC, Principal Investigator
   Yeonji Lisa Baik, Co-Investigator

4. **Research Entity:** Drexel University

5. **Consenting for the Research Study:** This is a long and an important document. If you sign it, you will be authorizing Drexel University and its researchers to perform research studies on you. You should take your time and carefully read it. You can also take a copy of this consent form to discuss it with your family member, attorney, or anyone else you would like before you sign it. Do not sign it unless you are comfortable in participating in this study.

6. **Purpose of Research:**
   You are being asked to participate in a research study. The purpose of this study is to explore how individuals who define themselves as 1.5-generation Korean American describe their immigration experiences and identity living in the U.S. The description of the immigration experiences will be accomplished by using an art making process and an interview. This study is being conducted as partial fulfillment of a requirement for the completion of a master’s degree in art therapy. You have been asked to participate in this study because you meet the inclusion criteria, which is that you must be 1.5-generation Korean American (i.e., you are Korean-born or foreign-born and arrived to the U.S. between the ages of five and sixteen) between the ages of 18 and 34 currently residing in the U.S. as a permanent resident or a citizen. You must be able to understand and follow directions for the study. You cannot participate in this study if you are a first or a second generation Korean American (i.e., individuals who immigrated to the U.S. after the age of seventeen or between the ages of zero and four) or if you are currently a student, faculty member or staff in the Hahnemann Creative Arts in Therapy Program. Five participants will be recruited for this study.

7. **PROCEDURES AND DURATION:**
   You understand that, as a result of participating in this study, you will experience the following:

   Subject’s Initials _______
You will meet with the co-investigator on two separate occasions. One of the meetings will be in person and one of the meetings will be conducted over the telephone. The total duration of these two meetings will be approximately 3 hours and 15 minutes. The first meeting will take place in Drexel University Center City Hahnemann Campus and the second meeting will take place over the telephone.

The first meeting will last approximately 2 hours and 45 minutes. During this meeting:

a) You will meet with the co-investigator in a conference room at Drexel University’s Hahnemann Campus. During this meeting the purpose of the study will be explained to you.

b) Informed Consent (25 minutes): The co-investigator will review the consent form with you and you will be asked if you comprehend the purposes, procedures, risks and benefits of the study. If you do and wish to participate, you will be asked to sign the consent form. Approximately 25 minutes will be allotted to complete the informed consent forms.

c) Demographic Questionnaire (5 minutes): After you sign the informed consent form, you will be asked about the following background information: age when immigrated, most comfortable language, marital status, highest level of education, occupation, religion, and the self-ethnic identification. All of this personal information will be kept strictly confidential. This will take approximately 5 minutes.

d) Epochrome (5 minutes): You will be given a 5 minute intermission during which time the co-investigator will engage in a process of epochrome in a different room. Epochrome is a process in phenomenological research for the co-investigator to set aside any preconceived ideas and presuppositions about the phenomenon.

The next part of the data collection will be audio taped.

e) Art Making (60 minutes): You will be asked to make three pieces of artwork. The first art task will instruct you to represent yourself as a tree in the U.S. The second art task will instruct you to represent yourself as a tree in Korea. The third art task will instruct you to draw a bridge drawing indicating which direction you are going. You will be given 20 minutes to complete each task and a 10-minute break will be provided after these three art making processes.

f) Interview (60 minutes): After the three art making processes are completed and the 10 minute break is over, the co-investigator will ask you about your experiences in creating the artwork. You will be asked to describe the pictures you created and to respond to some questions about these images. You will also be asked about your experiences regarding immigration and adjusting to a new country. This interview will last approximately 60 minutes. The audiotape will be turned off after the interview is completed.

Subject’s Initials

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- **Validation Interview (30 minutes):** The second meeting, called a validation interview, will be conducted by telephone and it will occur approximately one month following the first meeting. The purpose of this meeting is to review the data that was gathered and analyzed by the co-investigator during the previous meeting. An opportunity for additional debriefing will also be made available at this time. This telephone validation session will last approximately 30 minutes.

8. **RISKS AND DISCOMFORTS/CONSTRAINTS:**
   You may experience some minimal anxiety as a result of creating artwork and discussing the topic being investigated. Artistic talent is not needed, nor is it being evaluated in any way. Materials and instruction will be made available to you to ensure that this process is as comfortable as possible for you. If at any point you are uncomfortable with the artwork or the interview, you may choose to skip tasks or questions. You may choose to withdraw from the study at any time. In the unlikely event that you become inconsolably anxious you will be referred to the Student Counseling Center at 215-762-7625 at the Center City Campus or 215-895-1415 at the West Philadelphia Campus.

9. **UNFORESEEN RISKS:**
   Participation in this study may involve unforeseen risks. If unforeseen risks arise, they will be reported to the Office of Research Compliance.

10. **BENEFITS:**
   There may be no direct benefits from participating in this study.

11. **ALTERNATIVE PROCEDURES:**
   The alternative is not to participate in this study.

12. **REASONS FOR REMOVAL FROM STUDY:**
   You understand that you may be required to stop the study prior to its completion for the following reasons:
   a) If all or part of the study is discontinued for any reason by the researcher, or university authorities.
   b) If you are a student, and participation in the study is adversely affecting your academic performance.
   c) If you fail to adhere to requirements for participation established by the co-investigator.

13. **VOLUNTARY PARTICIPATION:**
   Participation in this study is voluntary, and you may refuse to participate or decide to withdraw from the study at any time. There will be no negative consequences if you decide not to participate or to stop.

Subject’s Initials______

Page 4 of 5
14. **STIPEND/REIMBURSEMENT:**
You understand that you will be given a stipend of $20.00 for participating in this study. You will need to complete all three art processes and two interviews to collect the $20.00. The stipend will be pro-rated if for any reason you are unable to complete the entire research project. If you complete one of the three art processes and not the interviews you will be given $4.00. If you complete two of the three art processes and not the interviews you will be given $8.00. If you complete all three of the art processes but not the interviews you will receive $12.00. If you complete all three art processes and the one interview you will be given $16.00. A copy of the study results will be sent to you at no cost if you wish.

15. **RESPONSIBILITY FOR COST:**
The co-investigator will provide any materials used during this study. You are not responsible for any costs related to the study.

16. **IN CASE OF INJURY:**
If you have any questions or believe that you have been injured in any way by being in this research study, you should contact Dr. Nancy Gerber at telephone (215) 762-6928. However, neither the investigator nor Drexel University will make payment for injury, illness, or other loss resulting from your being in this research project. If you are injured by this research activity, medical care including hospitalization is available, but may result in costs to you or your insurance company because the University does not agree to pay for such costs. If you are injured or have an adverse reaction, you should contact the Office of Research Compliance at (215) 762-3453.

17. **CONFIDENTIALITY:**
In any publication or presentation of research results, your identity will be kept confidential, but there is a possibility that records that identify you may be inspected by authorized individuals such as the institutional review boards (IRBs) or employees conducting peer review activities. You consent to such inspections and to the copying of excerpts of my records, if required by any of these representatives. Audiotape recordings will be transcribed by the co-investigator and then destroyed by erasing, cutting, and discarding the tape at the conclusion of the study. Until that time, the audio recordings will be stored in a locked, secure cabinet in the office of Hahnemann Creative Arts in Therapy program. Any reference to you will be accomplished through the use of a subject identification number. This list on which this number is identified with your name will be stored in the locked secure office space with the audio tape recordings and destroyed at the completion of the study in order to assure confidentiality. The brief demographic information forms will also be shredded at the completion of the study. The artwork that you produce during the research will also be stored in a locked cabinet in the office of Hahnemann Creative Arts in Therapy program. The artwork will be photographed or photocopied and included in the final thesis, however no references to your identity will be made and the artwork will be shredded and destroyed by the researcher at the conclusion of the study, unless you request to have it returned to you.

Subject’s Initials_____

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18. OTHER CONSIDERATIONS:
   If new information becomes known that will affect you or might change your
decision to be in this study, you will be informed by the investigator. If you have any
questions at any time about this study or your rights as a research subject, you may
contact the Office of Research Compliance at (215) 762-3453.

19. CONSENT:
   - I have been informed of the reasons for this study.
   - I have had the study explained to me.
   - I have had all of my questions answered.
   - I have carefully read this consent form, have initialed each page, and
     have received a signed copy.
   - I give consent voluntarily.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Subject or Legally Authorized Representative</th>
<th>Date</th>
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<th>Investigator or Individual Obtaining this Consent</th>
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List of Individuals Authorized to Obtain Consent:

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<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Title</th>
<th>Day Phone #</th>
<th>24 Hour Phone #</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Nancy Gerber, PhD</td>
<td>Principal Investigator</td>
<td>(215) 762-6928</td>
<td>(215) 762-6928</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Yeonji Lisa Baik</td>
<td>Co-Investigator</td>
<td>(215) 917-2455</td>
<td>(215) 917-2455</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Appendix E

Demographic and Background Information
1. Gender: Male Female

2. Age: ____________

3. Age when immigrated: ________________

4. Most comfortable language: Korean / English / Korean and English

5. Marital status: Single / Married / Separated / Divorced

6. Highest level of education completed: ____________________________

7. Occupation: Student / Working full-time / Working part-time / Unemployed

8. Religion: ____________________________

9. Self-ethnic Identification (circle the appropriate):

   American / Korean / Korean-American / American-Korean / Other / Not Sure