ROOTS AND ROUTES: A REIMAGING OF CHINESE IMMIGRANT ADOLESCENTS' IDENTITY CONSTRUCTIONS IN TORONTO

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DEDICATION

I dedicate this thesis to my son, Benjamin.

Like the birth of my son in a snowy winter day,

the completion of this thesis is another milestone

in my life in Canada.

In memory of

my tears and my joys in the past seven years.

Abstract

I explore the complex relationships between the two metaphors of "roots" and "routes" in the process of identity constructions through an inquiry of Chinese immigrants' reflections and reflexive thinking about their immigration life experiences. I adopt a social constructivist, social cultural frame work to examine the discourses, claims, counterclaims, and voices of five Chinese immigrant adolescents in Toronto. By presenting how these five Chinese immigrant adolescents represent, reposition, and reconstruct themselves in the Toronto urban context, I map out the "routes" they take to be who they perceive they are and are not. I examine the roles their cultural "roots" played in these processes of identity construction. This study reveals that these five Chinese immigrant adolescents' identity constructions are relational, contextual and ambivalent processes in which the discourses of race, nationality and culture are constantly emerging, altered, and renewed. These "routes" and their cultural "roots" are mutually intertwined in these processes of identity construction.

Résumé

J'étudie les rapports complexes entre les deux métaphores homonymes « *roots* » (racines) et « *routes* » (voies, routes) dans le processus de construction d'identité en analysant les réflexions et les pensées d'immigrants chinois sur leur expérience de vie. J'adopte un cadre socio-constructiviste, socio-culturel pour examiner les discours, les affirmations et contre-affirmations et les voix de cinq adolescents immigrés chinois de Toronto. En montrant comment ces adolescents se représentent, se repositionnent et se reconstruisent dans le contexte urbain de Toronto, je trace les « routes » qu'ils empruntent pour être qui ils se perçoivent être et ne pas être. J'examine les rôles que leurs « racines » culturelles ont joués dans ces processus de construction d'identité. Cette étude révèle que les constructions d'identité de ces cinq adolescents immigrés chinois sont des processus relationnels, contextuels et ambivalents dans lesquels les discours de race, de nationalité et de culture sont constamment évoqués, modifiés et renouvelés. Ces « routes » et leurs « racines » culturelles sont mutuellement entrelacées dans ces processus de construction d'identité.

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Chapter 1

Introduction

> Our identities, overdetermined by history, place, and sociality, are lived and imagined through the discourses or knowledge we employ to make sense of who we are, who we are not and who we can become. (Britzman & Deborah, 1994)

The issues of identity are always complex to immigrants as they need to construct or reconstruct their identity in a "new" country with what they have encountered, experienced, gained or, even lost during their transitions in a new place and society. Racial, ethnical, and cultural identity are crucial aspects of the overall framework of individual and collective identity construction. For a special visible and legally defined minority population in Canada, such as Chinese immigrants, cultural, ethnical, and racial identities are manifested in very conscious ways, which I explore in this thesis.

With the influx of immigrants from mainland China into Canada in the past decade (Citizenship and Immigration Canada, 2006), there is also a parallel growth in the number of immigrant adolescents from mainland China in Canada. Immigration, as a process of spatial movement (Basch et al. 1994), is not simply a border-crossing experience; it is a strategically interruptive process in which the boundaries and borders of place and identity are both decentring (Davidson 2008). That means, the changing of place for immigrants in terms of borders crossings and living-boundaries changing has interrupted the maintaining of their original identity in home country. Immigrants need to negotiate a feeling of belonging based on their perceptions and memories of their social situations (Davidson, 2008). Therefore, the issues of identity constructions or reconstructions are

emerging under certain particular social, cultural and historical contexts for Chinese immigrant adolescents in Canada.

Not Only Roots, But Also Routes

As a group of people migrating from one country to another and settling down in a new environment, Chinese immigrant adolescents bring along their cultures and memories of their 'home' country to this 'new' country. When they seek to reproduce (Bourdieu, 1984) their social values, cultures and customs in Canada, the process of reproduction is often governed by what they remember and the selection of what they want to remember and reproduce for their 'new' country (Eng, 2008). Chinese immigrants have to face the differences in cultures, customs, and social/family/individual values in this new society and try to work a way to embrace the new social norms to maintain their own identities in Canada. Therefore, their identities are no longer fixed and rooted in these traditional categories of nations, class, language, and ethnicity; rather, they are "a constructed and open-ended process" in the process of border-crossing (Yon, 1995, p.483). Similarly, Moore (1995) suggests that a focus quite different from the concept of rooted identity may be more effective and appropriate to understand who we are, both in the past and the present, no matter our nationality

> …we need to talk not about roots but about routes: trajectories, paths, interactions, links. The root itself is not a bad, false or wrong story. It is, rather, a narrowly true narrative in the midst of a broader and more tangled truth, or richer story… The metaphor for human culture should be more the mangrove than the tree. (p.21)

The term "roots" is usually defined by essentialists as one's birth place, ancestral village, and the sources from which one derives his/her personality. In this study, however, I define this common definition of "roots" in a more specific

sense for my participants, namely, the Chinese identities that are constructed around race, ethnicity, nation, cultures and language etc that tied these five Chinese adolescents in my research closely to their homeland. I consider Chinese immigrant adolescents' conceptions, perceptions, representations and negotiations of their social situations in the process of immigration as the "routes" they take from which they construct their new identities in Canada.

From this perspective I examine the concept of identity as a process of multiple constructing; explore the tension produced by the essentialist notion of identity implied in 'roots' and the significance of "routes" in thinking of identity constructions; and consider societal and educational implications in the negotiations of identity and difference for immigrant youth.

Research Questions and Themes

I aim to examine the relationships between the Chinese identity (roots) and the process of self identification by immigrant adolescents in their constructions of identity in Canada. In these complex contexts, I aim to explore in depth the inner worlds of a group of immigrants, namely, recent Chinese immigrant adolescents who have settled in Canada, with a focus on their understandings, perceptions and constructions of their identities in Canada. My goals are to understand how they conceptualize the roles of their ethnic, linguistic, and cultural "roots" played in their identity construction processes (routes) and how they consciously negotiate their ethnical and cultural identities and new national label in Canada. My research questions are:

1. How do these five Chinese adolescent immigrants conceive the roles of their Chinese identities (roots) in the negotiation of their new identities in

Canadian contexts?

2. How do these five adolescents consciously negotiate their ethnic/cultural and new national identities in understanding themselves, their lives in Canada?
3. What types of new, hybrid identities and self -representations emerge in the processes of crossing and becoming?
4. In this process of navigating cultural differences and discontinuities, what forces shape their personal and social-cultural identities and sense of belonging and self?

My exploration focuses on the varied roles that Chinese roots played in five Chinese immigrant adolescents' identity constructions in Canada. The participants range in age from 15 years old to 19 years old. I present an argument for the importance of considering the roles of Chinese identities (roots) and adolescents' self perceptions and representations as critical aspects of conceptualizing the process of their identity constructions in Canada as a Diaspora for Chinese immigrant adolescents. I use the term Diaspora as a concept that "has associations with human displacement and today encompasses both forced and voluntary migrations (Yon, 2003)". In this study, Toronto is referred to as a Diaspora place where the five Chinese immigrant adolescents constructed their new identities.

To frame this argument, I focus on four relevant themes for understanding the roles of Chinese roots in immigrant adolescents' negotiations and constructions of identities in their multicultural worlds. The four themes are: (1)

sense of belonging, Diaspora and roots; (2) advantage or disadvantage of having a Chinese background; (3) Recognition, misrecognition; and (4) Hybrid Identity. The four themes are mainly derived from the brainstorming questions that I prepared to ask my participants during interviews. These interview questions are also very much formed from my self-reflection on identity as Chinese immigrants and immigration experiences in Canada.

Sense of belonging, Diaspora and roots

In Chinese traditional culture*, yeluoguigen* is one of the most cherished values. *Yeluoguigen* originally means falling leaves settle on their roots; the metaphorical meaning of this term is usually used to describe a person residing elsewhere finally returns to his ancestral home, where he feels he belongs. Being brought up in mainland China where I felt my "roots", the question of sense of belonging has challenged me at every single day in my immigration life in Canada. How do Chinese immigrants residing in Canada perceive their "roots"? Where do they belong to? The Diaspora place? Or their home country? Each Chinese immigrant has to face the issue of a sense of belonging in their Diaspora life.

Advantage or disadvantage of having a Chinese background

How do Chinese immigrant adolescents perceive the roles of cultural "roots" played in their immigration life? With Chinese "roots", is it an advantage or disadvantage for them to negotiate and construct a new identity in Canada?

Recognition, misrecognition

Inspired by Charles Taylor's (1994) insightful arguments on how our identity is shaped in *The Politics of Recognition,* I decide to use the term of "recognition" as the third theme. Charles Taylor argues that identity is partly

shaped by both recognition and misrecognition of others. The misrecognition or nonrecognition of others can be a source of oppression or distortion for the individual or a group of people. For Chinese immigrant adolescents, how do they perceive recognition or misrecognition of others in their life in Canada? And how do they react to the recognition and misrecognition of others?

Hybrid identity

I aim to reveal how Chinese immigrant adolescents represent themselves with a new, hybrid identity in Canada. I also attempt to explore the emerging forces or reasons that shaped their personal and social-cultural identities and sense of belonging and self within this new context.

Theoretical Foundation and Implications

I frame my study on the assumption that Chinese immigrant adolescents contextualize and construct their new identities in Canada through their conversations and negotiations with others as well as position themselves in particular socialcultural, historical spaces (Bakhtin, 1990; Hall, 2003; James, 1999; Soja, 1996; Taylor, 1994). This assumption suggests that,

> Identity is not as transparent or unproblematic as we think. Perhaps, instead of thinking of identity as an already accomplished fact, which the new cultural practices then represent, we should think of, instead, of identity as a "production," which is never complete, always in process, and always constituted within, not outside, representation. (Stuart Hall, p. 222)

Stuart Hall also further discusses the two ways of thinking about identity. One refers to the "oneness" with a shared culture, history, ancestry and some other commonly shared codes; the other way recognizes the transience of "one identity", "one experience" due to the ruptures and

discontinuities caused by the "continuous play of history, culture and power (p. 225)". In the second sense, identity is a matter of 'becoming' as well as of 'being' (p. 225). Identity constructions for these Chinese adolescents therefore, is "a process of negotiation between sites of agency and locally and globally perceived, conceived, or lived spaces of possibilities for belonging and establishing cultural dialogues (Maguire, 2005, p. 1426)".

This exploratory, qualitative study explores the identity constructions of the five Chinese immigrant adolescents in Canada by focusing on the interrelationship of two metaphoric terms: *roots*-Chinese ethnic, cultural, and linguistic identities and *routes*- Chinese immigrant adolescents' self perceptions, conceptions, positioning and representations of their lived experiences. I aim to articulate the role Chinese identities (roots) play in the process of identity construction (routes) for these Chinese immigrant adolescents; I also seek to find out what new hybrid identity emerges and how immigrant adolescents consciously negotiate and position themselves between different identities/cultures in the process of identity construction. Chinese immigrant adolescents' lived experiences in Canada can alert us to the contextual and relational nature of identities. It can also provide insights into the various players and events that contribute to their process of becoming as well being and their negotiation of identities within situational and historical constrains and contexts (Hall, 2003; James 1999; Spence 1999; Yon, 1995).

I hope my inquiry can offer an opportunity for my participants to reflect on their on-going negotiation/construction process of identity as immigrants in

Canada and conceptualize the meaning of these negotiations/constructions to their future life development in a Canadian multicultural society. By providing portraits of the identification process by Chinese immigrant adolescents in Canada, I also hope my inquiry can have some implications on current identity politics among minority youth. Issues of race, ethnicity, culture, and minority considered and discussed in this study are at the core of the discourses in identity politics which has many dimensions as a wide range of political activities and theorizing founded in the shared experiences of injustice of members of certain social groups. This work may also be important for educators in the search for models and images which reflect immigrant youth's identities and how they perceive and represent them.

Background and Contexts to the Study

The Chinese in Canada

Chinese have a long history of migration (Chan 1999; Skeldon 1996; Wang 1991). Chinese immigration to Canada began in the late 1850s, with settlement overwhelmingly concentrated in British Columbia. There, the first Chinese Canadians - numbering a few thousand at most - worked either in mining or domestic service as cooks and cleaners. The largest arrival of Chinese immigrants (until the late 20th century) occurred during the 1880s when some 17,000 Chinese labourers were brought in to work on constructing the Canadian Pacific Railway from central Canada to the Pacific Ocean. When the Canadian Pacific Railway was completed in 1885, the federal government moved swiftly to restrict Chinese immigration. From 1923 to 1947, it was the period called the Era of Exclusion in Canadian history. Through much of Canada's history then, the Chinese were

singled out as unworthy and unwanted Canadians. When a 'race-blind', universal point system was adopted in 1967 to assess all prospective immigrants to Canada a large numbers of Chinese persons were able to enter Canada. However, the adoption of objective entry criteria based on education, skills and occupation was prompted by Canada's own needs. By the final third of the 20th century Canada's economy faced labor shortages and a shrinking stream of migrants from traditional source countries in Europe. Canadian domestic economic interests plus its desire to retain strong relations with non-European states and economies all required opening its doors to global migration (Siemiatycki et al., 2001). The Chinese have been quasi-enslaved as coolie laborers; they have been sojourners in foreign lands, voluntary exiles eager for repatriation; and they have adopted the life and languages of the countries in which they have settled (Heilbron, 1998). Heilborn's statement can also be considered as a longitudinal review of an ethnic group immigration experience in Canada. I elaborate on this brief introductory history in Chapter 2.

The location of study

Although I describe the general background of Chinese immigrant adolescents from mainland China, my emphasis is on the Chinese immigrant adolescents living in the great Toronto area (GTA). Toronto, with a population of 2.48 million people (5 million in the GTA - Greater Toronto Area) is regarded as one of the most multicultural cities in the world. Over 100,000 new immigrants arrive in Toronto each Year. Among them are a significant number of immigrants from mainland China, many of whom are adolescents. So, there is an increasing need to learn about their experiences of immigration and their attitudes and

perceptions of their lived experiences in Toronto. Toronto is the site of location where I developed my social networks with Chinese communities foremost in Canada. Hence, when making decision on the location of my study, I chose Toronto for its accessibility to me in a sense of existing and convenient social networks with Chinese communities as a researcher.

Reflecting on my own life experience

As an immigrant from mainland China, I landed in Canada five years ago. Immediately after my arrival in Toronto, I was recruited by a local social worker to the Host program in Toronto. The Host program is one of a package of Citizenship and Immigration Canada (CIC)-funded settlement programs designed to assist newcomers to integrate into Canadian life. The Host program helps immigrants overcome the stress of moving to a new country by matching them with volunteers familiar with Canadian ways. Later, I became a part-time intake worker (a social worker working for new immigrants recruiting and intaking) for the Host program. For this reason, I had opportunity to meet Chinese immigrants including adolescents. One of my working sites was at Toronto Central Technical School (C.T.S.) where I also worked as volunteer interpreter for the department of English as Second Language. From time to time, I was asked by school workers and classroom teachers who can not speak Mandarin to talk with individual students from mainland China on their personal issues related to school life. It was during the conversations with these students that I first paid attention to the confusion and uncertainty revealed by Chinese immigrant adolescents in their attitudes towards their new identities in Canada.

Before my immigration, I worked as an educational consultant for a preparatory program co-operated by Qingdao University and Seneca College of Applied Art and Technology in mainland China for three years. My clients were youth students who had completed their high school education in China and would begin their new life as visa students in Canada soon (as long as they could complete the one year preparatory program in China successfully.) Those youth students were very optimistic and full of expectations about their future in Canada though they did not even speak English well then. When I later met Chinese immigrant adolescents in Toronto Central Technical School (C.T.S)., I could not help but compare these two groups of people and question the reasons for their two contrasting attitudes and responses towards their new life in Canada though the two groups of people are not from the exactly same background. All these life experiences initially shaped this narrative study of Chinese immigrant adolescents on their constructions of identity in Canada.

My own life experiences in finding who am I in Canada are additional reasons motivating my inquiry. I had always positioned myself as Chinese in my first three years in Canada. Not until that day when I received my Canadian citizenship certificate from the citizenship lawyer in city hall, I realized I was in an embarrassing situation: I am, legitimately speaking, a Canadian now, but I do not feel a blood relationship with Canada though I like this country very much. How should I call myself from now on? A Chinese-Canadian? Does this term fully represent my identities in Canada?

I believe my life experiences as well as career backgrounds play a special role in the data I collected through loosely instructed and in-depth interviews with

my participants in this narrative study. My life experiences can enhance my understanding of Chinese immigrant adolescents' life experiences and their identity constructions in Canada and as a consequence, influence the constructions of a good dialogical relationship between the researcher and the participants during our conversations. Hence, my role in this study is also a listener and co-narrator.

Summary

In this chapter, I introduced my study on Chinese immigrant youth's identity constructions in Toronto, Canada. I presented the research questions and themes, explained the two interrelated conceptual terms *Roots* and *Routes* in which I frame this study. I discussed briefly my rationale and identify the potential contribution of my study. I also introduced the background, which I elaborate on in Chapter 3. In the next chapter, I review the existing literature on (Chinese) immigrant youth identity construction and the theories that frame my study.

Chapter 2

Theoretical Framework and Literature Review

Theoretical Framework

Identity, Race & Ethnicity

One's place in the world is not merely a matter of locational coordinates, nor just a demographic statistic, nor simply a piece of property. It may also be taken, in Krieger's suggestion, as a trope for fashioning identity (Goldberg, 1993, p.186). Identity is not an isolated conception to individuals. Race, ethnic, and language identities intersect with social class, gender, sexuality, dis/ability, age, and other demographic characteristics to form the complex, multiple, dynamic, and contingent identity that we all have (James, 2001). Hall (2003) argues the complexity of identity by emphasizing identity as a constructed and ongoing process in which the individual positions and represents himself/herself. For Hall (2003), identity does not originate from a fixed 'root' and proceed in a straight, unbroken line. It is closely linked to positionality - positionality with a regard to where social subjects are located, positionality with a regard to challenging monolithic notions of racial categories and ethnicities, positionality with a regard to where discourses of race, history and culture are placed and how identities are positioned and repositioned.

Holland (2001) defines identity as a concept that "figuratively combines the intimate or personal world with the collective space of cultural forms and social relations" (p.5). Yon (2000) too argues that the nature of identity is both a category and a process. People know who he/she is in terms of nation, class, gender & ethnicity and they make these identifications during a "continuous and

incomplete" process (p. 13). Yon (1995) points to the conceptual difficulties inherent in the study of identity:

> Much of the tension… comes from what I crudely describe as two Inter-related uses and meanings of the concepts. On the one hand there is a meaning that recognizes the highly contextual, relational, contingent and dynamic nature of identity…On the other hand this position is often set in tension by a more essentialist understanding, that is, beliefs in an identity that is fixed and rooted in the various imagined "natural" categories, such as the often cited race, gender, class, "community". (p.483)

Referring to racial identity, Michael Apple (1993) offers the following definition

> Race is a set of fully social relations. Much the same needs to be said about identity. It is not a stable, permanent, untied center that gives consistent meaning to our lives. It too is socially and historically constructed, and subject to political tensions and contradictions. (p.Vii)

Race is a social construct and a discursive category rather than merely a natural and obvious classification of individuals. Race can be many things depending on different contexts. Yon (2000) maintains that, when different races were connected to different cultures and regions of the world, discourses of races are not just related to races themselves; they actually are attached to geography and culture. Race as a discursive category has broad and subjective understandings by different people. Yon further argues that "When it comes to thinking about race, it is difficult to pin down stable and singular meanings or distinguish materiality from interpretation. In its everyday operations, race draws upon and draws together a variety of discourses affixed to human bodies" (Yon, 2000. p.11). There is a literature on critical race theory that is not

within the purview of this thesis to examine albeit it is very interesting and raises complex issues about concepts and categories.

The same argument can be made for ethnicity, "a term that is often linked with race and often used in place of race (James, 2001, p.3). However they are used, both terms relate to individuals' positioning with regard to social, cultural, and political location within our society. Thus, race, ethnicity, and, correspondingly, language are part of the subjective ways in which we and others make sense of who we are, the place from which we speak, our encounter with others, the relationships we establish, and the experience we have (James, 2001).

Sense of Belonging, Recognition & Power

Identities are relational and inherently political and consequently address issues relating to power inequities, representations and their effects on migrants' understanding of home and attendant feelings of belonging (Davidson, 2008). The term *belonging* in dictionary is defined as the state of being accepted and comfortable in a space or group (Encarta World English Dictionary, 2000). Thus, individuals' identifications and positioning within a racial, ethnic or language group can be understood as locating a sense of belonging to a certain group of people, and/or place. Immigrants as a specific group of people encounter uncertainties in locating their sense of belonging during their adjustment process in their new 'homes'. Immigration as a spatial movement ruptures the boundaries and borders of places and identity for immigrants. Davidson (2008) argues that migration is powerfully evocative of the ambiguities and contradictions of beginnings and ends, the fixity and efflorescence of cultural identities, and sense of belonging and dislocation. As a result, locally defined contexts produce a

range of strategic choices and attendant pragmatic frameworks by which subject-actors-immigrants make sense of the world around them as well as their fit in that locally defined world (Chun, 1996). Taking the five Chinese immigrant adolescents in this study as an example, geographic displacement results in a cultural relocation and discontinuity, new language adaptation and nationality changes; therefore, immigrants must start a journey of finding their sense of belonging by first getting to know the new world around them. But, does knowing where they are make it possible to know who they are in the new social space? Henri Lefebvre theorizes social space as the lived experience of space that emerges as a result of the dialectical relation between spatial practice and representations of spaces; we humans both create the world around us, and are also heavily shaped by it, and thus we are then created by the world around us. He writes, "social space is not a thing among other things, nor a product among other products: rather, it subsumes things produced and encompasses their interrelationships in their coexistence and simultaneity—their (relative) order and/or (relative) disorder" (p.73). Hence, these five Chinese immigrant children, "who are, paradoxically, already within the space, must either recognize themselves or lose themselves in order to accede to this space, a space which they have both to enjoy and modify "(p. 35).

If one locates these processes of crossing and becoming within an understanding of human interconnectivity, which crucially involves transversal cultural, spatial, and social networks, adolescent immigrants' identity constructions could be also conceived as a process of building "dialogical relations with others" (Taylor, 1994, p.34). In *The Politics of Recognition,*

Charles Taylor argues powerfully that one's discovering of his own identity is a result of negotiation through a both overt and internal dialogue with others, instead of merely working it out in isolation. He writes that,

> Our identity is partly shaped by recognition or its absence, often by misrecognition of others, and so a person or group can suffer real damage, real distortion, if the people or society around them mirror back to them a confining or demeaning or contemptible picture of themselves." (1994, p.25)

Bakhtin's (1990) talks about the interrelationship between "authoritative discourse and internally persuasive discourse" within the process of what he called "individual's ideological becoming (p. 342)". Individual's ideological consciousness is usually determined by the struggle and dialogical interrelationship of these two discourses: the "authoritative word (religious, political**,** moral; the word of the father, of adults and of teachers,) that do not know internal persuasiveness (Bakhtin, 1990, p. 342)." Bourdieu (2000) ties together the most central of his concepts, habitus and conflict through these two types of discourses:

> I developed the concept of 'habitus' to incorporate the objective structures of society and the subjective role of agents within it. The habitus is a set of dispositions, reflexes and forms of behavior people acquire through acting in society. It reflects the different positions people have in society, for example, whether they are brought up in a middle-class environment or in a working-class suburb. It is part of how society produces itself. But there is also change. Conflict is built into society. People can find that their expectations and ways of living are suddenly out of step with the new social position they find themselves in... Then the question of social agency and political intervention becomes very important. (p. 19)

Hall (2003) reminds us that cultural identity is a "matter of 'becoming' as well as 'being'. It belongs to future as much as to the past. It is not something

which already exists, transcending place, time, history and culture. Cultural identities come from somewhere, have histories"(p. 236). In this sense, it is in the play of history, culture, and power where immigrants derive understandings of 'who they are' and 'what is possible', However there still exists "the question of whose culture is being studied is a pressing one, as is the issue of where the instruments which will make that study possible are going to come from"(Gilroy, 1993, p.187).

Globalization, Diaspora & Hybridity

Despite the traditional definition of the internationalization of capitalism and the rapid circulation and flow of information, commodities, and visual images around the world, globalization has also enabled the dynamic changes in terms of culture and identity for individuals. In referring to how the youth in a Toronto high school are at the same time partner in global cultures, Yon (2000) argues how individuals see their place in the world at the intersection of the global.

> Social place is constructed out of social processes that occur elsewhere, so that as Massey suggested, the place to which we belong might best be thought of as a part and moment in the global network of social relations and understandings. Under this conditions, associations with multiple places and transnational identities are commonplace, and individuals in Toronto may well feel closer to family and friends in Latin America, Africa, Asia, or Europe than they do to the neighbors in the apartment above or those next door. The question of loyalty and belonging to the nation-state, in this case Canada may appear to be at stake under these new conditions. (p.16)

In my study of the five immigrant adolescents in Toronto, I also find similar remarks from my participants on their immigration experiences in the era of globalization which echo with Yon's arguments.

To understand cultural identities of Chinese immigrant adolescents in Canada, I find that the concepts of diaspora and hybridity are relevant to the self positions and self conceptions by these Chinese immigrant adolescents. The original meaning of 'Diaspora', according to Yon (2000, p. 16), refers to "the dispersal of a people from a homeland and the multiple journeys that form collective memories and the desire for return to the place of origin, imaginary or real". Yon (1999,) also states that contemporary understanding of diasporic means "being at home in the place where one lives while still living with the memories and shared histories of the place from which one or one's ancestors have come" (p. 17) .

In exploring the conception of difference which "persist in and alongside continuity", Hall (2003) rethinks the positioning and repositioning of Caribbean cultural identity in relation to three 'presences': Presence Africanie, Presence European, and Presence Americaine. He argues,

> The diaspora experience …is defined, not by essence or purity, but by the recognition of a necessary heterogeneity and diversity; by a conception of "identity" which lives with and through, not despite, difference; but hybridity (p. 244)." "Diaspora identities are those which are constantly producing and reproducing themselves anew, through transformation and difference. (p.244)

Immigrant's diasporic identities are significantly related to his/her own social experiences, both in his/her home land and the host country.

Despite its origins in biology and botany, hybridity are now reclaimed in work on Diaspora by authors such as Paul Gilroy (1993), Stuart Hall (1995) and

Homi Bhabha (1994). For instance, Gilroy finds it helpful in the field of cultural production, where he notes that' the musical component of hip hop are a hybrid form nurtured by the social relations of the South Bronx where Jamaican sound system culture was transplanted during the 1970s' (Gilroy, 1993, p.33). Hall suggests hybridity is transforming British life (Hall, 1995, p.18), while Bhabha uses hybridity as an "in-between" term, referring to a "third space", and to "ambivalence" in the context of "cultural interface" (Bhanha, 1994). All these authors seem to suggest that hybridity appears as a convenient category, describing cultural mixture where the diasporized meets the host in the scene of migration. Under the framework of Soja's concept of third space, Maguire (2005) in her study of trilingual children's multiple cultural worlds insightfully argues that, hybrid identities may reflect plural language affiliations and cultural allegiances that in turn reflect individuals' attempt to acknowledge and reconcile the past with their present new cultural environments, social spaces and different linguistic ecologies. I too found the notion of hybridity is very helpful---as a heuristic frame for understanding or questioning the identity constructions of Chinese immigrant adolescents in the processes of border crossing, being and becoming in the era of globalization.

Literature Review

Immigration Experience

Immigration experience of individual Chinese can be a struggling process of social adaption in the host country. Migration for adults can be a strenuous experience with survival struggles, emotional pain, adaptation to the new

environment, and acculturation stress; however, the experience may be even more stressful for adolescents who have the added pressure of accomplishing significant development tasks such as peer pressure, the tribulations of teen years, the academic concerns (Jung, 1996). Adolescent immigrants are confronted with problems related to self-concept, identity formation, generation conflicts with parents, sexual role formation, and separation and individuation (Golberg, 1980; Huang &Ying, 1989; Lee, 1989). Migration stress may exacerbate normal adolescents' developmental struggles (Goldberg, 1980; Aronowitz, 1984). For instance, newcomer children may develop behavioral, emotional or social problems from the life changes associated with cultural transition; or even interrupt the course of development (Lee, 1982). Additionally, adaptation stress may be too great for these youths' newly developed adaptive coping abilities, and thus they may become vulnerable to cultural transition trauma (Shon & Ja 1982). Due to the shift in cultural values and behaviors during cultural relocation, adolescent immigrants may seem to be more prone to the identity confusion and stressful than adult immigrants.

Recent research study shows that the experiences of immigrant youth and families in schools and society have been conceptualized primarily as conflicts between immigrant cultures and dominant culture in North America and illustrates the ways that culture and identity are constructed within the double movement of discourse and representation between the immigrant youth and the dominant society (Ngo, 2008). Discourse in this study is defined as the spoken and written language and images used in popular and academic arenas. This study reveals that immigrant youth's identity formation is a process of social

construction and negotiation with others in local contexts. Yon (2000) employs the term of 'elusive culture' to discuss how race and identity are negotiated among the culturally and racially diverse students of a Toronto high school and suggest the fluidity in different ways cultural processes work in schools and the sets of relationship through which culture, race, and identity are constructed. Both studies recognize that struggles among multiple conceptualizations of talk within a community (school) and even within individuals. Focusing on defining activity organizes individuals, institutions and their interrelations, Woolard (1998, p.3) writes that "representations, whether explicit or implicit, that construe the intersection of language and human beings in a social world are what we mean language ideology." This language ideology as a field of inquiry enables researchers to link linguistic form and use to human beings' identity constructions in different dimensions and social contexts such as schooling the nation-state, child socialization (Woolard, 1998).

Some Issues faced by Immigrant Adolescents in Canada

Reviews of the literature on immigrant adolescents highlighted many variables such as language fluency, age, gender, degree of identification with the host culture, and the amount of social interaction within the new environment (Berry, Kim, Minde, 1987; Church, 1982; Furnham & Bochner, 1986). In Canada, in addition to facing the highly intensive development issues related to growth and independence, immigrant adolescents are also starting a new socialization process (Seat, 1997). With a focus on the participation in a variety of personal transitions by adolescent youth, Seat points out that for new comer youth, migration breaks down the socialization process, including the specific thoughts,

norms, and rules for behavior that were accepted and valued within their original cultures. Seat argues that, during their process of settlement, adaptation, and integration, newcomer youth must cope with many new demands: they must meet new academic challenges, deal with new expectations from parents and teachers, gain acceptance into new peer groups, and develop new kinds of social competence. Throughout this process, they are also obliged to negotiate the difference between the cultures of their countries of origin and their new home. As immigrant adolescents go through the process of settlement, adaptation, and integration, one can expect to see a transition in their cultural orientation or ethnic identity. Cultural orientation is the degree to which a person is oriented or connected to the members and the values of her or his original ethnic or cultural group and to the members of other groups with which they have contact (Phinley, Lochner, & Murphy, 1990). Similarly, Burk (1991) proposes that one derives the meaning of her or his identity from traits shared with one class of people in a given society; thus, the identity that one constructs represents a set of internalized meanings that one attributes to the self in a certain social position or role. According to Burk, the identity process is a continuously operating and self-adjusting feedback loop that adjusts behaviors to reduce discrepancies and achieve congruence between the identity portrayed or given by the environment and the identity with its own set of meanings constructed by the person. Maguire and Graves (2001) discuss that journal writings by three multilingual children at schools, as a way of making sense of who they are and who how they are sensed by others in their social worlds, intersect with their identity construction. Maguire and Graves too argue that multilingual children as social beings construct and

negotiate their identities over time in their daily interactions with others in specific social contexts (Maguire & Graves, 2001).

Immigrant and refugee youth experience major differences in their social environments inside and outside their families. This has been documented in recent multicultural literature (Atkison, Morten, & Sue, 1993; Rowe, Benett, & Atkinson, 1994; Wong, 1999). Family Service Association of Toronto also verified this in their daily work with newcomer youth (Seat, 2003). In a study of factors affecting the settlement and adaptation process of Canadian adolescent newcomers, Seat finds that as these youth live through the stages of settlement, including various degrees of involvement with both the culture of origin and the mainstream culture, the process of identity construction is complex and multidimensional. As well, the obligation to adapt to both their parents' traditional cultural values and Canadian society's norms makes the process confusing and ambiguous. It might be even more acute if the parents of these youth are preoccupied with their own issues and problems during settlement and their children in turn have more limited communication with them and do not view them as positive role models. All these factors can make identity construction stressful and indeed painful for immigrant adolescents, who try to see themselves as part of a mainstream culture, but struggle with the conflict between how they identify themselves and how others identify them.

Although much research has been done on the factors that influence immigrants' adaptation, acculturation and well-being in host countries, few inquiries paid attention to adolescents' self-conceptions and self-presentations on

their immigration experiences, especially the roles of their ethnic, linguistic and cultural roots in the process of identity constructions.

Some Issues of Identity in an Age of Globalization and Diaspora

Hybrid identity in a globalizing world

In a speech on globalization and the future of Canada, Taylor claims that globalization's impacts are not only reflected in the penetration of the market everywhere into different aspects of our life within our societies, but also in the development of "world media spaces" and "the tremendous increase in international migration and the consequent diversification of the populations in many countries" (Taylor, 1998, pp 331-44). As many studies now confirm, given the affordable air travel, cheap phone cards and easy access of the internet, as well as the proliferation of channels of remittances, the development of 'media space' due to globalization has significantly enhanced immigrants' mobility and interconnectedness with their country of origin (Ong, 1999; Portes et al. 1999; Smith, 2003; Vertovec, 2003). Many immigrants today build social fields that cross geographic, cultural and political borders (Bourdieu &Wacquant, 1996), maintain multiple involvements in both home and host societies where they are engaged in patterned, multifaceted, multilocal processes that include economic, sociocultural and political practices and discourses (Ip, 2008).

Identification to diverse cultures may be independent of each other, as increasing identification with one culture does not necessarily induce decreasing identification with another. For example, Chinese immigrants can identify themselves with their new nationality in the host country while still living at home with their Chinese cultural habits in traditional Chinese holidays as well as in their

daily life. Papastergiadis (2000, p.3) mentions "the twin processes of globalization and migration" in his book. He outlines a new development which moves from the assimilation and integration of migrants into the host society of the nation state towards something more complex in the metropolitan societies of today. Thus, in the era of globalization, the negotiation for new identity at the site of immigration may not be a mere rupture between 'home' and 'host', where assimilation, acculturation, integration or incorporation of immigrants into the adopted country are at the center of attention (Ip, 2008). Hybridity has been a key part of a new 'model' of representing the process of cultural interface in the context of globalization.

In her book of *On Not Speaking Chinese: Living between Asia and the West*, Ang (2001) engages with the urgent questions of identity in an age of globalization and Diaspora by drawing attention on her own particular experiences with living in transition between Asia and the West. As an ethnic Chinese, Indonesian-born and European-educated academic who now lives and works in Australia, she writes: "identity (is) a double-edged sword: many people obviously need identity (or think they do), but identity can just as well as be a strait-jacket. 'Who I am' or 'Who we are' is never a matter of free choice"(p.vii). She remarks,

> There can never be a perfect fit between fixed identity label and hybrid personal experience; indeed, while the rhetoric of identity politics generally emphasizes the liberating force of embracing a collective identity, especially if that identity was previously repressed or oppressed, that very identity is also the name of a potential prison-house. It is very hard to imagine and appreciate the complicated entanglement of our togetherness-in-difference from within the prison-house of identity. (p.11)

Grappling with the meaning of citizenship in capitalistic societies, Ong (1999) coins a term "flexible citizenship" for recent Chinese immigrants to refer to the "cultural logics of capitalist accumulation, travel, and displacement that induce subject to respond fluidly and opportunistically to changing political-economic conditions" (p.6). Despite its meaning in the cultural logics of Chinese immigrants citizenship, the term 'flexible citizenship' is also revealing an existing fact that Chinese immigrants' hybrid experiences in both home countries and host countries have significant impacts on their identity constructions in the era of globalization.

Some researchers have conducted studies on immigrated issues with a focus on hybrid identity in North America. However, by drawing attention to Chinese immigrant adolescents in terms of identity constructions in Canada, it is difficult to find related data from existing research studies for the questions that emerge from the review of current literatures on hybrid identity. That is, what forces are emerging to shape immigrant adolescents' hybrid identities when their ethnic/cultural roots encounter Canadian culture in their negotiations with others? How and why?

Deconstructing diaspora

> I feel that my roots are in these traditions and customs that our ancestors brought from China. China is not my country, but it is my origin (Tan Chong Koon, 2003).

Roots, cultural identity, and sense of belonging are closely connected in immigrants' diaspora life. Diaspora is never an isolated or absolute "place" for

immigrants; rather, it is a "space" that constructs immigrants and is constructed by immigrants.

Diaspora, as a concept that "has associations with human displacement and today encompasses both forced and voluntary migrations" (Yon, 2003, p.16), is defined and marked by discontinuity, disruption, and difference. Yon remarks that "contemporary understanding of diasporic means being at home in the place where one lives while still living with the memories and shared histories of the place from which one or one's ancestors have come" (Yon, 2003, p.17). To better understand 'Diaspora', we may need to look at the distinction between diaspora and diaspora space made by Avtar Brah(1997). In Brah's definition, diaspora describes everyday life experiences of diasporic people as a result of movement and displacement. While diaspora space refers to the location where identities are proclaimed, constructed, contested and positioned by diasporic people.

> Diaspora space is the point at which boundaries of inclusion and exclusion, of belonging and otherness, of "us" and "them" are contested…. It includes the entanglement, the interviewing of the genealogies of dispersion with those of "staying put." The diaspora space is the site where the native is as much a diasporian as the diasporian is a native. (p.209)

In this sense, for the five Chinese immigrant adolescents in this study, Toronto is the place to which they belong; though belonging may also be about relationships with other places. Therefore, negotiating identity in the Diaspora seems to raise a number of contradictions - a desperate need to determine who we are and where we belong. It also involves reviewing what has been left or taken away in order to determine where to find it and how to get it back.

James Clifford (1992) believes that, "diasporic identifications reach beyond ethnic status within the composite, liberal state", imparting a "sense of being a 'people' with historical roots and destinies outside the time/space of the host nation"(p.225). Ien Ang (2001) also has a discussion on diasporic identity in her book. She argues for the need to recognize the double-edgedness of diasporic identity: "It can be the site of both support and oppression, emancipation and confinement"(p.12). Referring to Chinese diasporic identity, she argues,

> The Chinese diaspora, especially, has by virtue of its sheer critical mass, global range and mythical might evinced an enormous power to operate as a magnet for anyone who can somehow be identified as 'Chinese' – no matter how remote the ancestral links. (p.12)
>
> …as 'China' and 'Chinese' are increasingly becoming signs for global political and economic power in the early twenty-first century, there is no necessary political righteousness in Chinese diasporic identity, the long-standing Chinese tradition of feeling victimized and traumatized notwithstanding. (p.12)
>
> …it is well known that so-called overseas Chinese entrepreneurs Card-carrying members of the Chinese diapsora – are the key operators behind the region's economic growth, which is reflected in their relative wealth and affluence but also in the tradition of suspicion which historically has grown against them since colonial times. (p.12)

In this context, Ang concludes that Chinese diasporic identity is never a simple issue: "it is both an expression of political marginalization in the postcolonial nation-state and an indication of (real and imagined) economic privilege" (p.12). When it comes to China's roles in today's global contexts, especially during global recession, I quote from a recent public speech by the U.S. Treasury Secretary Timothy (Reuters, 2009), "(is)…in the principal cooperative arrangements that help shape the

international system, a role that is commensurate with China's importance in the global economy". For today's Chinese immigrants/overseas Chinese, the home country is indeed playing a significant role in their diasporic identity formation.

Aihua Ong (1999) also mentions Chinese immigrants' "economic privilege" when she coins the term "flexible citizenship" in her recent book *Flexible citizenship: The cultural logics of transnationality*. Unlike Ang's diaspotic identity served as a historical, political and economical expression for immigrants living in diasporic areas, "flexible citizenship" is considered as a strategy, rather than a mere political identity for overseas Chinese in different dimensions, namely education, nation-state, and global market. When self-supporting/surviving is not the primary concern for Chinese immigrants in the USA, they are confident in pursuing better opportunities for individual flourishing in global markets with the knowledge acquired from higher learning in prestigious American universities and corporations and organizations in the USA. In this process, Chinese immigrants use their flexible citizenship strategies to seek potential business or career opportunities with their intelligence, knowledge, and social networks built in both the USA and China. Also, Ong argues that "in commonsensical view of ethnic succession, recent arrivals from non-western countries are expected to enter at the bottom of the socioeconomic ladder and wait their proper turn to reach middle-class status"(Ong, 1999, p.100). However, Ong (1999) states that it is not easy for Asian immigrants to convert their economic capital into social capital

because the symbolic racial hierarchies are already established in the North American places of residence.

> …by defending themselves as Asian American, an ethno-racial category, rather than as American citizens with universal political claims as member of the nation, Asian Americans continue to be trapped by an American ideology that limits the moral claims to social legitimacy by nonwhites." (p.180)

Ong's discussion on "flexible citizenship" raises some questions about the tensions between their cultural/ethnic identity and 'new' identity in host countries for overseas Chinese. That is, are overseas Chinese in western countries loyal citizens or disloyal sojourners? Is there a possibility for Chinese immigrants to do both: that is, assert a universal right to citizenship and have a conceptual space for cultural/ethnic identity? Does flexible citizenship hinder or propel the construction of ethnic identity for overseas Chinese in host countries?

When it comes to Chinese immigrant adolescents in Canadian contexts, similar issues should be investigated as well. By drawing attention to the inner worlds of Chinese immigrant adolescents, I ask these questions: How do Chinese immigrant adolescents position themselves in Canada? and why? How do Chinese adolescent immigrants understand the interrelationship between their Chinese cultural/ethnic identities and new identities in Canada? What forces do they think propel or constrain the development of their new identity or identities in Canada? Is it an advantage or disadvantage to construct or reconstruct their new identities in Canada with Chinese cultural/ethnic identities? The very few studies that have been conducted on the issues of immigrant's well-being and

identity construction/reconstruction in Canada with respect to Chinese children and youth have an overriding focus on factors such as, family economic situation, language proficiency level, geographic location, and school performance. There is a neglect in focusing on aspects of youth's subjective well-being, such as their self-perception, self conception and self-position of their immigration experience in Canada.

In current ethnic youth studies in North America, researchers tend to take into account North America as the whole context regardless of the differences in social environments, immigrant policies and immigrant sources between Canada and America. In addition, the literature suggests that country of origin and duration of stay in host country may affect the process of acculturation (Jung, 1996). Since Asians are often homogeneously grouped regardless of their places of birth, as if all Asians from diverse ethnic backgrounds, foreign born or Canadian-born, shared the same characteristics of immigration experiences, it is necessary and imperative to conduct a study focusing on Asian foreign-born adolescents from a specific Asian country on their understanding and conceptions of self in the process of identity constructions at the site of immigration.

I attempt to examine the relationship between the Chinese identity (roots) and the process of self identification by immigrant adolescents in their constructions of identity in Canada. In these complex contexts, my inquiry aims to explore in depth the inner worlds of a special group of immigrants- recent Chinese immigrant adolescents who have settled in Canada on their understandings, perceptions and constructions of their identities in Canada. I want to understand how they conceptualized and perceived the roles of their

ethnic, linguistic, and cultural roots played in the process of identity construction (route) and how they consciously negotiate their ethnic/cultural and new national identities in understanding themselves, their lives and how they represent themselves in Canada.

Summary

In this chapter, I reviewed several types of literatures on immigration experience, issues faced by immigrant children and youth, and some specific identity issues in the era of globalization and the place of diaspora. I aimed to reveal the lack of current research studies on immigrants' self perceptions, conceptions, and representations of their immigration experiences, with respect to Chinese immigrant adolescents in Canada. I also elaborated on my theoretical framework for my research study in three major themes: Identity, Race & Ethnicity; Sense of Belonging, Recognition & Power; Globalization, Diaspora & Hybridity. In the next chapter, I discuss the methodology I employed and the methods I used to conduct the study.

Chapter 3

Methodology and Methods

I begin with some excerpts from the transcriptions of my recorded interviews.

Questions by researcher: What do you call yourself actively in Canada? Does it depend on the context or venue?

Susan: Um, I'm still new to this country. I always call myself 'Chinese' in Canada 'cause I feel, um I'm nothing changed. I'm still hanging out with my Chinese friends, eating Chinese food, speaking Chinese language in most of the time, even with my classmates in school… yes, a lot of Chinese people out of there. Um, I also celebrate Chinese holidays with my (Chinese) friends. I don't think I'm going to call myself as "Canadian" even when I have my citizenship in the future. Um, because it's only the place I live changed, not me!

Grace: well, I always say I'm a Canadian. First, I have my Canadian citizenship now; and I speak fluent English; All my friends are from local culture; Most of all, I think my thinking is in Canadian style. Um, it is so different with those of new immigrant students from China.

Eric: (after long time thinking) Um, I have to say, um I'm a Chinese-Canadian now. Um, to be honest, nobody asked me this type of questions. So, I had never thought about this. I have to think it, um, carefully. I'm a Canadian, but inside…um… I'm a still a Chinese. So um, Chinese-Canadian is better for me here. But um, I think. If, if um, I go back China, to visit my grandparents um, I will still be a Chinese then.

These responses about immigration experiences emerged from my interviews with participants based on their self reports of their life experiences in Canada. The range of responses reflects their diverse life stories in Canada as immigrants that made them aware of and understand how their identities were constructed in this country. Their responses also triggered further questions in me to ask my participants about their experiences in order to explore their inner world and the deep reasons for their self positioning and self representations in Canada.

In this chapter, I begin by introducing my research methodology, including the interpretative paradigm, strategy, and methods of inquiry. I describe my

background and roles as a researcher. Then I provide detailed and contextual information about my five participants. I explain my data collection process and provide a rationale for my methods. .

Methodology

In this qualitative inquiry, I aim to understand the identity construction of five Chinese immigrant adolescents in Canada from participants' perspectives through loosely structured, in-depth, one-on-one interviews. I focus on their lived experiences in Canada by listening to their life stories about their immigration experiences. I use a dialogical approach rather than a monological narrative in this inquiry.

Bakhtin (1990) once insightfully notes that, "discourse lives on the boundary between its own context and another, alien context (p.284)" and that verbal discourse is a social phenomenon-social throughout its entire range…(p.259)" In my understanding, a (verbal) discourse relies on the mutual impact of each boundary of related contexts under certain social circumstances. Dialogic practice entails "an interplay between critique and reflexivity, turning both inwards and outwards, replacing 'self-effacement'…with a heightened self-consciousness-not to indulge our narcissism but to look squarely at our own relationship to our research (Bucholtz, 2001, p. 181)." My own life experience as a new immigrant in Canada also plays an important role in the data that I have collected through the interviews with my participants and in my interpretation of this data. I conceptualized the interview as a dialectical event within which understanding of identity construction of people with Chinese cultural backgrounds was co-constructed by the participant and me. The questions asked

and responses given are related to my own experiences, which in turn influence responses constructed by the participants during the interview. For example, before I asked my participants about their self-identifications in Canada, I shared my experience as a new comer to Toronto in these 7 years, my feeling when people asked me if I have a blood relationship with Canada on my citizenship ceremony, and even, my confusion on my own identity as a Chinese-Canadian in Toronto to my participants. Therefore, I made it possible for participants to respond to my questions based on their interpretations of the questions asked and the reflections of their life experiences.

My approach reflects a social constructivist's perspective, which assumes that people derive meaning through interactions with others in the outer world and emphasizes on "human competence to understand action (Polkinghorne, 1988, p.151). This approach also requires a much greater sensitivity to the interpretive processes through which meanings are achieved within the interaction between interviewer and interviewee (Harris, 2003, p.200-232). Therefore, my epistemological stance is that all knowledge is socially constructed and subjective; there is no world that is wholly independent of the 'subject' that knows and experiences the world.

I also take a cultural and critical study approach to this inquiry. Drawing from key theorists such as Giroux, Hall and Taylor and using a cultural study framework which emphasizes pedagogic belief and practices and addresses changing contexts and narratives, I am able to present and problematize the issues by moving the discourses of race, identity and knowing just on the individual and recognizing the centrality of power and culture. My participants shape and are

shaped by their everyday encounters in cultural practices that they and other people engaged in as well as the meanings they created.

I use a personal narrative as a tool of inquiry to understand the identity constructions of immigrant Chinese adolescence in Canada. The focus on 'life story' in this inquiry is a term meaning, people's autobiographical accounts resulting from 'narrative' interviewing by a research scholar. Narrative inquiry is an understanding of "narrative as both phenomena under study and method of study (Clandinin & Connelly, 2000)." The five participants' identity constructions process through their life stories telling as individuals construct their identities and make sense of their lives through narratives (Schuwandt, 1997).

Research Questions

My experience of being a Chinese immigrant in Canada has motivated my inquiry in identity construction process for the five Chinese immigrants in Canada. I explore through face-to-face, in-depth interviews of the internal worlds of a group of adolescent immigrants from mainland China and understand how the factors of race, ethnicity and cultures interplayed in the process of identity constructions to them and how do they realize, understand and position these interplays between their Chinese identities (roots) and their new identities in their immigration lives in Canada. I attempt to investigate on how these five adolescents' experiences in both Canada and China have shaped the meanings of their current positions and representations by asking the four focal questions:

1. How do these five Chinese adolescent immigrants conceptualize the roles of their Chinese identities (roots) in the negotiation of their new identities in Canadian contexts?

2. How do these five adolescents consciously negotiate their ethnic/cultural and new national identities in understanding themselves, their lives in Canada?
3. What types of new, hybrid identities and self -representations emerge in the processes of crossing and becoming?
4. In this process of navigating cultural differences and discontinuities, what forces shape their personal and social-cultural identities?

Background and Researcher's Role

I am a researcher in this study. I aimed to be a listener and a co-narrator and tried to carefully and patiently listen to my participants' life stories. I also shared my own memories and experiences of immigration with them in an attempt to win their trust in me. While listening to my narration, participants often started to recall their own stories.

My own experiences in constructing my identity in Canada as well as my career backgrounds both in mainland China and Canada in immigrant youth education, combined with the geographical, cultural, ethnical, social, and economic situations in which I have been located in the past and the present has shaped the research assumptions and the approaches I chose in this inquiry. My experience of immigration has also enhanced my understanding of Chinese immigrant adolescents' inner world, which has been reflected in the interactions during interviews. The following excerpt is an example:

> Chunjiao: *So, you think you are a Chinese inside. Could you tell me why?*
> Anna: *um, it is just my true feeling. At first, I didn't realize it either. I was young when I first came here. I was quite happy about my*

new school, new friends and new life in Toronto. Until…until three years ago, I visited back China for the first time since I came here. I spent the whole summer with my family relatives and old friends in Beijing. It was a great summer vacation actually, um, except I was not happy with being called "foreigner" or "Canadian" by them. These made me felt like an outsider, like I was not belong to their group anymore. When it was the time to be back my own home in Toronto, I felt like, um, I was leaving my home to somewhere. When I arrived in Pearson airport that night, I felt like something missing in my heart. I didn't know what was it, but, um, I knew it was not here. I can't find it in my Toronto home. And people, um, people here all think I'm a Chinese. I felt so lonely. You know what I'm talking?

Chunjiao: *a feeling of in-between? You found out people thought you were a Canadian in China; while in Canada, people think you are a Chinese because of your cultural background and physical features. No matter how you struggle with your two identities, you are already labeled by others either as a Chinese or as a Canadian, right?*

Anna: *yes, right. I feel like I'm in between of two extremes. Sometimes, I got confused, I don't know which one is the real me. I start to think, maybe, um, neither* of the two identities can fully represent me.

The interplay between participants and me influenced the construction of a good dialogical relationship during interview. They are the knowers of their experiences and their contexts; they are the keepers of the meaning they "choose" to share. It is their voices within their diverse cultural social memories that provide insights into the "routes" and "roots" metaphors.

I collected data by means of one-on-one, face-to-face, audio-recorded, and in depth interviews. I informed my participants about the purpose of this study and my identity. I answered their questions and concerns regarding this study and data collecting process. I obtained written consent from my participants and their parents (See the sample of consent forms in appendix A). All interviews were recorded with a digital voice recorder. With each participant, I had at least a two-

hour long interview; some interviews last three hours long. I did suggest my participants a ten-minute break during interview, but no one took the break during their interview. The interviews took place in participant's home, school or coffee shop as participant's own choice.

All interviews were loosely constructed. I divided each interview into two sessions: for the first session, I introduced myself, my study and my immigration experience to participants and their parent(s), if present. Then, I asked questions about my participants' background, life histories and experiences in Canada and their understanding of cultural identities that they possessed. I usually asked my participants some basic questions about their individual background as a warming-up. For example, I asked them, *"When did you firstly come to Canada?" "What is your first memory about your new school life in Canada?" "What was your first neighbor hood like in Toronto?*" Then I asked my participants further questions about their immigration experiences upon their responses to these warming up questions. In my interviews, I asked questions following the themes I described in the first chapter, which are self-perception of immigration experience, memories and understandings of Chinese roots; self-positioning in Canada; self-conception of hybrid identity.

In considering language as part of cultural identities, I decided to leave the choice of interview language to my participants. I attempted to take this opportunity to observe my participants' language/cultural preference in their daily life. Most participants chose to speak Mandarin during the interview except one participant who claimed she felt much comfortable to speak English with me

though she occasionally switch back to mandarin during interview in order to make her words explicitly.

I transcribed all interviews (See appendix B) from the audio tapes. I did not translate these Chinese (Mandarin) transcripts into English. I did my data analysis directly based on its original Chinese transcripts. Here is an example of Chinese transcripts:

Chunjiao: *在你的学校生活中， 你觉得哪些事情比较有挑战性呢?*
(Is there anything challenging in your school life now?)

Julie: *我现在不觉得有什么十分具有挑战性的事情。嗯， 如果说刚来加拿大的时候，尽快提高语言要算是最有挑战的事情，现在语言已经不成问题. 我...嗯，有时候很想知道那些常常聚在一起白人女孩子到底在谈些什么，就是她们在想些什么？*
(I don't feel anything challenging. Um, improving my English was quite challenging for me when I was new to Canada. for now? no. I ...um, if there is something…challenging, I should say, I really want to know what those white girls talk about, I mean, their thinking.)

Chun Jiao: *那你没有与她们交流过吗？ 你的学校朋友中有白人女孩子吗？*
(Have you ever talked with them? Do you have friends who is white girl?)

Participants and Contexts

Note worthy is that diversity rather than homogeneity has characterized Chinese migration to Canada in recent years, for example, the motivation to immigration, social status in their home countries and educational/professional/language backgrounds. The variety of countries of origin represents the greatest heterogeneity in Canada's Chinese population. Although immigrants from mainland China, Hong Kong, and Tai Wan are all Chinese in ethnicity, their political tendencies, social values and economic

behavior are markedly different. While they all report Chinese as their mother tongue, they use different Chinese Characters (Simplified vs. Traditional), and different dialects (Mandarin, Cantonese and others) in the written and oral communications. These background variations have differentiated them into different segments within the political, cultural and economic realms in Canada.

The GTA (Great Toronto Areas) is home to the largest group of Chinese Canadians. Of the 586,645 Chinese in Canada reporting single ethnic origin at the time of the 1991 census, 222,700 (or 38%) resided in the GTA, and of those residing in the GTA, 80% were immigrants. there are now five "Chinatowns" in the GTA, which are all thriving. Six cities within the region contained more than their fair share of the Chinese. These were Markham (14%), Scarborough (12%), Richmond Hill (10%), Toronto (8%), North York (7%) and East York (6%). In Toronto, there are many Chinese associations: professional, business, and recreational. Those established or charted before the 1990s were mostly organized around immigrants from Hong Kong. For example, the Canadian Federation of Chinese Professionals consists of doctors, dentists, lawyers, engineers, accountants, and architects who were primarily trained in Canada and are currently practising in Toronto. The opening policy in economic reform and the removal of emigration prohibitions in the People's Republic of China over the past two decades has resulted in a surge of newcomers to Canada. Therefore, more recently immigrants from mainland China formed their own Chinese associations of Canada. The diversity of Toronto's Chinese immigrants is also reflected spatially. For example, in the commercial sector, Business in Toronto's Center Chinatown are mostly owned and run by older immigrants from southern China;

whereas business owners in Toronto's East Chinatown are predominantly Chinese from Vietnam. Those owned by immigrants from Hong Kong are mostly located in newer suburban shopping centers. A shopping center in Markham (namely Metro Square) is occupied exclusively by Taiwanese immigrants, providing Taiwanese-style products and catering mainly to Mandarin-speaking Chinese.

I recruited five Chinese immigrant adolescents from mainland China (P.R. China) as the participants in this study. The reason for choosing recent Chinese immigrant adolescents from mainland China (P.R. China) instead of other immigrant adolescents with Chinese origins, for instance, immigrant adolescents from Taiwan, Hong Kong, Macao or other Chinese Diaspora, is that recent Chinese immigrants from mainland China comprise a major part of the Chinese population and visible minority populations in Canada. Immigrant adolescents from mainland China differ significantly from the immigrant adolescents with other Chinese origins in terms of migration mechanisms and demographic characteristics. In addition, lacking the knowledge of immigrants with other Chinese origins on their cultures, customs and languages has hindered me from developing direct and effective social networks with them, especially those newcomers to Canada who can not communicate in English very well. Due to lack of available networks, it is thereby difficult for a researcher to reach immigrant adolescents from other Chinese origins.

My participants in this study are from a more 'homogeneous' group- that is, five foreign born Chinese adolescents recently coming from mainland China at the age of 13 and settling in Toronto. All participants were with their parents, who were categorized as independent immigrants, when they first time landed in

Canada except one landed in Canada alone as a refugee immigrant. (Independent immigrant is categorized by CIC according to immigration applicants' educational and vocational backgrounds and language proficiency in order to distinguish them from immigrants from other categories, such as refugee immigrant and family reunion immigrant). They came from different cities of mainland China from the North to the South. Participants' ages range is from 15-19 years old. The residence years in Canada are from one year to eight years. Table1 provides detailed information about participants' backgrounds.

Table 1:

Name	Age	Sex	Residential years in Canada	Home City (Province)	Citizenship
Anna	15	Female	Five	Shenzhen	Canada
Eric	16	Male	Nine	Beijing	Canada
Grace	17	Female	Five	Guangdong	Canada
Julie	16	Female	Three	Beijing	Canada
Susan	19	Female	Two	Fujian	Chinese

Note: Considering the privacy and confidentiality, I use fictious names for these five participants.

The first potential participant, Sara, I approached is a high school student in Toronto. She came to Canada five years ago with her parents and now living in west Toronto. I firstly met her in an office of Ontario Early Childhood Program (OECP) in my neighbor hood where she was working as a volunteer. As we both speak Mandarin, we had many casual talks about our own life both in China and Canada. When she learned about my research project this time, she confirmed me that she had interests in it but the timing was not vey good for her as she was busy preparing for her final exams and upcoming college application. She contacted her friends to see if they had interest in my research project. , I also sent my research invitation letter and sample questions to all those potential participants

she recommended. Eventually two of her friends, Anna and Grace agreed to participate in this research project.

Anna

Anna came to Toronto at age of ten with her parents from Shenzhen, one of the first open cities for economic reform in South China. Her parents immigrated to Canada as independent immigrants in 2004. Anna is the only child in her family. Currently Anna's family is living in an apartment in Scarborough. She is at her grade 10 now. She has visited back her grandparents in China once. Anna is interested in social science.

Grace

Grace was 12 when she first came to Canada with her parents from Guangdong province in 2003. Grace didn't speak English and she was the only Chinese in her school then. Grace is at her first year in a bachelor program of economic management in her college. Grace is the only child in her family. She has many family relatives and friends in Canada. In 2008, Grace's family moved to their own house in Scarborough.

Julie & Eric

Julie's and Eric's parent are my husband's colleagues in a high-tech company, which has employees from diverse cultural and ethical backgrounds. One day, the colleagues had a casual talk at the lunch table on the issues of identity faced by today's immigrant children from different cultural backgrounds in Canada. My husband took this opportunity to introduce my research project to his colleagues. He was asked if I could provide them more detailed information regarding my research project. Therefore, I sent his colleagues who have Chinese

cultural backgrounds my research invitation letters via emails and answered their inquiry regarding my research project. I also sent my sample questions to the potential participants. After following up, Eric and Julie decided to join in this project.

Julie just finished her primary school when she came to Canada with her mother from Beijing in 2005. Julie's father is still living and working in Beijing as a successful businessman. So, Julie lives in Toronto with her mother alone in an apartment. But she visits her dad in China every year. Julie was in a private primary school in Beijing. Now she is at her grade 10 in a public school. Julie has a special interest in literature and philosophy.

Eric is the only male participant in this study. He is also like other participants came to Canada with his family in 2000. He came from Beijing at only 7. Eric's family has no relatives in Canada as well. He is the only child in his family. He has visited back China once in 2004. He wants to be an engineer in the future.

Susan

Susan is a special participant in this study. I recruited her through my former co-worker in culturalLink (an immigrant settlement service center), who was also working at Susan's school as a school settlement worker then. After knowing of the topic of my study, my former co-worker suggested that I contact Susan to see if it was possible to have Susan as my participant in this study as she believed that Susan was going to bring me some very exciting data for this study with her special immigration backgrounds and life experience in Canada. So I approached her by phone and emails. After reading my research invitation letter and sample

questions, Susan showed great interest in my research project. She was the first one who agreed to be my participant in this research study.

Compared to the other participants, Susan has a different immigrant background in Canada. All her family members, her parents and her elder brother, are living in Fujian, China. She came to Canada alone as a refugee in 2008. Before she came to Toronto, she first lived in Halifax for about one year as a language school student. In order to have a better chance to find a part-time job to survive herself, she decided to move from Halifax to a big city- Toronto. Susan was a high school graduate in China. She is attending an English program provided by a local high school in Toronto downtown area. In order to support herself in Canada, she started working part time in a Chinese restaurant in the down town area. Now, she has started to send money (part of her salary) back to her family in China.

For all participants, and their parents except Susan's, I introduced myself, my research project, and my immigration experience in Canada at the beginning of interview to make them feel comfortable and involved in the conversation during our interview. I also provided all participants consent form (and parent consent form for Anna who was 15) for participation in research prior to data collection.

As I originally planned on conducting one-on-one interviews among Chinese immigrant adolescents with diverse backgrounds in Canada (Toronto area), I attempted to select my participants by selecting characteristics such as sex, age, residential years in Canada and immigrant status when she /he arrived in Canada.

Data Collection Process

I began my data collection process in Toronto from mid-October 2008 to March 2009. I utilized my social network to recruit participants for this study. First, I disseminated the information about my research study to my friends and previous colleagues via emails or by phone and requested them to further disseminate the information. I advertised that I was looking for adolescent immigrants who originally came from mainland China and are now living in Toronto area. In the meantime, I also contacted some institutions' administrators such as schools' vice principles, community centers' supervisors and libraries staff, in attempt to access a group that might be willing to participate in my research project. I didn't have any particular personal contacts with them at that time.

I also volunteered for about one year in a local primary school when I conducted my data collecting process in Toronto. So I had opportunity to meet immigrant children and their parents in different activities organized by this school. With the permission of school's vice principle, I sent out the information sheets about my research study to potential participants or their parents.

I also used the internet as a means to find potential participants. I surfed for websites that might attract immigrants in Canada with Chinese backgrounds. I posted messages on these websites about my study and myself. Here is an example of my post in both English and Chinese on an immigrant forum of www.51.ca, a very popular website to Chinese community in Canada.

Immigrant Adolescents from Mainland China wanted for study

A graduate student in the Department of Integrated Study in Education at McGill University is seeking immigrant adolescents from mainland China (age 13 or above) to participate in a study. This study, supervised by Dr. Mary Maguire, is designed to investigate Chinese immigrant adolescents' negotiations and constructions of new identities in Canada (Toronto). Participants will be interviewed by researcher and the interview will be an hour in length. If interested, please contact Ms. Liu at (647) 637 0632 or Chunjiao.liu@mail.mcgill.ca. Thanks!

麦吉尔大学 (Department of Integrated Study in Education) 硕士研究生
寻找来自中国大陆移民青少年参与其研究项目
此研究项目由 Mary Maguire 博士指导，目的在于调查中国大陆移民青少年在加拿大多元文化社会中的身份调和与构建过程。此研究需要寻找 13-21 岁间来自中国大陆移民青少年进行访谈对话； 访谈时间大概在 1 小时左右。如果您有兴趣，请与刘女士联系:647 637 0632；Chunjiao.liu@mail.mcgill.ca 谢谢！

For all the one-on-one interviews, I asked my participants' preference on the languages they wanted to use, and locations for the interviews.

Table 2 provides detailed information about their choices for data collection.

Table 2:

Participants	Interview Language	Interview Location	Duration of Interview
Anna	Mandarin	Anna's home	2.5 hours
Eric	Mandarin	Coffee shop	2 hours
Grace	English and Mandarin	Grace's home	1.5 hours
Julie	Mandarin	Julie's home	2.5 hours
Susan	Mandarin	School library	3.5 hours

Summary

In this chapter, I presented the methodology and the methods that frame my inquiry and research questions. I elaborated on my background and role as a researcher in the study. I also provided the reasons I chose the five participants for this study and relevant information about them. I described my data collecting process in Toronto for this study. In the next chapter, I present my data and my analysis.

Chapter 4
Data and Data Analysis

In this chapter, I present the data I collected through the interviews with my five participants in relation to the research questions. I first introduce participants' self identifications in Canada. By focusing on the reasons of their self-identifications, I work on the emerging themes during our interviews. I also examine participants' views of recognition and/or misrecognition, the roles of their Chinese cultural roots in their identification process, and hybrid identities. The participants are exposed to various meanings associated with their cultural, ethnic and national labels by reflecting on their immigration experiences. The data was first collected and transcripted in Mandarin and that all quotes are presented in English for reader's ease.

Self-identifications in Canada

How do the five participants identify themselves in Canada? What made their self-identifications? Is it possible to know who they are by knowing where they are? By asking questions of "*What do you call yourself actively in Canada? Does it depend on the context or venue?* " to participants, I encourage my participants to rediscover the "whereness" and "whoness". These questions lead to concepts of space and place and how participants conceptualize them in relation to nationality, ethnicity and identity.

Eric

Eric admits that it is the first time he thinks about how to identify himself in Canada, though he have been living in this country for about nine years. He does

not want to simply identify himself as Canadian or Chinese due to the complexity of his connection to the two countries as he explains:

> *I was just a grade one student when I came to Canada. I had not really Studied anything about China from school before I came here. So, I'm not very familiar about Chinese history and cultures. But, but, I do feel a strong connection with China. Because, because of my parents. They came from China. They are very familiar with China and, um, its cultures. We always talk with each other in Mandarin. Um, my grandparents and other family relatives are still in China now; we are very close. It's very natural to consider myself as a Chinese, um, just like them. It doesn't make sense to me to identify myself as a Canadian to them. Well, Canada, Canada is a place, um, I am living. Um, I am very enjoying my life here. It is so multicultural, um, everyone seems different with others on some things, like um, language, skin color, or culture. But it is so normal, right? Because, because that is the feature, um, a multicultural society. I am just one of those Canadians, um, but with a Chinese background.*

Eric identifies himself as a Chinese-Canadian with a consideration of different contexts. He tells people he is a Canadian, but inside he feels that he is a Chinese. He positions himself as Chinese when he faces people who have Chinese cultural background. Eric also tells me that he is trying to balance between his two identities in terms of his emotional connections to each of them.

Anna

Anna says that there is a change in her self-identification process. At beginning, she felt herself as a complete Chinese. With learning and accepting more local cultures in her daily life, she realizes she has become more Canadian. But psychologically Anna still identifies herself as Chinese as she comments here:

> *80% of the wholeness [of me] is like a Canadian now. But, the rest part of me is made of what I experienced, remembered and cherished in my life. There is nobody by no means could erase them off from my life. So, for the 20% left on me, I will say I'm a Chinese, though I know I'm not the same person as four years ago.*

Grace

Grace identifies herself as a Canadian with her citizenship, personal values and language proficiency. She thinks it is the "thinking style" that distinguishes her from "traditional Chinese immigrant students. She does not want to be identified as a Chinese newcomer; she feels more comfortable to be identified as a Canadian with Chinese background.

Julie

Julie says she is much more comfortable to be identified as a person with "global views" than being labeled with a nationality. She did not apply for Canadian citizenship because she has not yet made her decision on becoming a Canadian citizen. For her, it is not very necessary to be or not to be a Canadian, because she thinks a national label can not fully represent a human being's identities in the era of globalization. Julie believes that everyone has his/her own cultures and should be respected by others. But she says she does not want to be stereotyped by her cultures by others, though sometimes she is easily labeled by others because of "physical difference" and/or "cultural difference".

Susan

Susan identifies herself as a Chinese in Canada. Being new to Canada is one reason for her self identification.

> *Um, I'm still new to this country. I always call myself Chinese in Canada 'cause, um, I feel, um I'm nothing changed, I'm still hanging out with my Chinese friends, like, eating Chinese food, speaking Chinese in most of the time, even with my classmates in school. I still sign on documents in Chinese. I celebrate Chinese holidays with my (Chinese) friends. So, you see, I'm still like in China except I have made some new (Chinese) friends, um, at a new place. I don't feel it is my country. I won't call myself a Canadian. Even, even I have my citizenship, and um, I can speak fluent English in the future.*

How these adolescents identify themselves seems to have changed over time and been influenced by how they perceive the place where they came from and the place where they are living now. For example, Anna says that she is now very different from herself when firstly landed in Canada. Right now, she says she does not experience big difference with her local peers in school in terms of language proficiency and school performance. However, she thinks she is still a Chinese inside because of a strong cultural association with China, which in her opinion, is a result of her past life experience and memories. Similarly, Eric also mentions the influence of his Chinese "root" on his self identification as a Chinese. He consciously identifies himself according to contexts (places). While Grace seems to identify herself according to the knowing of herself and others at where she is living, instead of according to her cultural "root". These examples of how Anna, Eric and Grace identify themselves suggest that there are certain meanings and reasons for participants' decisions about associating or not associating with certain national labels such as Canadian and Chinese.

From participants' identifications, and reasons for identification, several themes emerge. The next section looks at the reasons the participants give for their self identifications.

Emerging themes: Reasons for Identifications

The themes that emerge from the various conversations with these five participants are varied, sometimes contradictory, and complex. The youths' identity claims, particularly with respect to a national label, move in different directions. They show an awareness of the stereotypes and representations to

Chinese in Canada throughout conversations and they all refuse to be seen as the passive objects of imaged cultural identities. In this study, I have identified four themes to underline the reasons for the participants' self identifications. They are: 1) knowing and not knowing; 2) connections to people and place; 3) language and customs; 4) and values.

Knowing/Not Knowing

Grace is confident to identify herself as a Canadian because she got to know "things" about Canada.

> *Um, I realized I was the only Chinese student in my school on my first school day in Canada. I didn't speak English very well then and I didn't know anybody in that school. Improving my English was my priority. Um, if I don't speak like a Canadian, um, what's the point I came here? Also, thinking styles are different. If you don't understand the system, um, the talking, they way they are, you won't be inside. Um, as you come to Toronto, you have to be in Toronto way. I have been in Toronto for about six years, I can speak fluent English. I have many friends from local culture. I know how they will do when things happen. Um, I don't think I have any difference with local people now. I mean, my language, my understanding of local cultures, my citizenship, my socializing style, um everything is same except my Chinese face. But for me, I don't care. Um, nobody care. I'm just a Canadian.*

With knowing about "things" related to where she is living, Grace shows her understandings of local cultures and welcoming to the national labels on her identity. She is very motivated to integrate into the new country in terms of adjusting herself in communication skills and thinking style.

When Susan keeps mentioning she is new to this country in her self identification, she is actually speaking about her lack of knowing about this country. Susan is a student of the Department of English as the Second Language at her school this year. All her classmates are non-English speaker and the

majority of her class has Chinese background. So, Susan is getting used to speaking Chinese with her classmates even in class. She said, *"I really want to meet a local student, I mean, a student who can speak real English to me.* However, Susan says that she has no time and network to make friends with local people. She does not even have time to talk much with her ESL teachers. When she finishes her ESL class at school, Susan needs to walk back to her small apartment nearby and sleep until her night shift in a Chinese restaurant in Chinatown. In order to support herself in Canada, she has to work very hard inside the kitchen of the restaurant. She appreciates her job opportunity very much, though she has no opportunities to meet and know local people there either. She says she is going to invite all her friends here to celebrate Chinese New Year in her apartment.

On the one hand, Susan feels very isolated in Canada without the support of family and friends and a disconnection with local people and cultures. The disconnection of local people and cultures results from a disconnection with the place where Susan is living in. In not knowing much about this country and its cultures, Susan is reluctant to accept the national label of Canadian for her identity. However, on the other hand, she has never been so willing in associating with her Chinese cultural backgrounds. Her knowing about her own cultural ethnical background has an impact on how she positions herself in Canada now. Comments from Anna also demonstrate that the act of knowing constitutes one's identity. Anna reveals her identity's transforming with knowing about Canada much better: *"With knowing more about this country and its cultures, I start to realize that I'm changed. It's like, um, I'm in between Chinese and Canadian".*

Knowing and/or not knowing is not simply an issue of capability for participants, rather, it means a connection or disconnection to people, place, and cultural knowledge for participants. Most participants' comments reveal a lack of knowledge about Canada at the beginning of their immigration life, which they came to realize through the difficulties in associating with local people. Comments from participants demonstrate that the act of knowing is what constitutes one's identity, though it may result in opposite claims of identities. For example, it is the knowing of the knowledge about Canada that made Grace confident to claim her Canadian identity; while for Anna, it is also the knowing about Canadian cultures and values made her realized that the growing gap between the two cultural extremes coexisting on her and therefore reminded her Chinese identity.

Connection to place and people

On what basis do participants make these identifications with their cultural and ethnical background? They all stress in certain way their relationship to places where they have been and people who they knew in their identifications. The connection to place and people generates an association to certain cultures or values which is eventually presented in their identifications.

As a newcomer to Canada, Susan talks about her connections to China.

> *sometimes I feel very lonely in Canada, especially in Chinese holidays. I miss my parents and my brother. I always think about the time we spent together in China before I came here. They know my life is not easy here, but they don't know how hard it is 'cause they have never been here. I understand that. I talk to them everyday on the phone…and they told me, um, don't cry, be strong…um, I have tried to make some friends in Chinatown, just like me, you know…we all from Fujian, we are working at the same restaurant in Chinatown, we help each other, we cook Chinese food together in Chinese holidays, um, that made me feel better...*

Susan's connections to China and Chinese community in Toronto has not only made her realize her "Chineseness" but also made her believing that it is necessary and worthwhile to maintain her "Chineseness" in her future life in Canada. Because she thinks that she is different from those Canadian born Chinese. Her "Chinesness" has a special meaning to her as China is a place where she was brought up and where her families live in. She has been labeled as Chinese by her eighteen years life experience in China. So, no matter where she goes, she is still a Chinese because of the existing of her "Chineseness" and her strong connections to China.

Anna recalls her experience of visiting her family relatives in China for the first time since she immigrated to Canada with her parents.

> *It was like um, being home, I mean, in China, I don't feel I'm a visitor at all. I'm just like anyone among local people on street…my face, my fluent mandarin…and I feel very comfortable of being in local culture. I know my connection to China has never broken, though I have been away from there for a couple of years. I know I become more Canadian but inside I'm still Chinese.*

Anna identifies herself as Chinese partially because she thinks she has a strong connection with China in terms of social networks both in China and Canada. Anna's best friends in Canada are from Chinese community. Anna explains that she does not select friends from certain ethnic groups on purpose. At school, she can get along with many friends who have different cultural background. However she realizes that it is easier to have echoes when talking with friends who have Chinese background in her life experience. She thinks that it might be the reason of "being connected to same cultural background."

Though Eric was only seven years old when he came to Canada with his parents, he does not lose his connection to China. All his family relatives are living in China. He has a close relationship with them. His parents played a significant role in maintaining his connection with China and Chinese culture. By learning from his parents, Eric can speak fluent Mandarin and read Chinese books. In his mind, all the connections to China and its culture remind him that "Chinese" has been one layer of his identities in Canada.

Language and cultural customs

One's connection to place and people can be interpreted as a way of clinging to his cultural heritage, in specific, language and cultural customs. The significant role of language and cultural customs played in one's sense of cultural identify is obvious in participants' accounts. Anna says that it is the cultural traditions and customs formed through Chinese thousands year history made her feeling so different being a Chinese among other ethnic group people in Canada. One example she gives is celebrating Chinese traditional festivals with her families in Canada. She thinks Chinese traditional festivals have more cultural and historical meanings than simply holidays themselves. Though Julie, grace and Eric were very young when they immigrated to Canada, they still acquire some knowledge on Chinese traditional cultures and customs from their own readings and their families. Julie started reading some Chinese traditional philosophy books on her own at very young age. When she came to Canada Julie even has a chance to compare the philosophy ideas between Chinese philosophers and western philosophers on her own. Customs and language are practiced by family members as a way to remind them constantly where they come from.

Eric, Susan, Julie and Anna are skilled in speaking and reading Mandarin. Mandarin is the communication language for all participants at home. They consciously speak with people who have Chinese cultural background in Mandarin. Among these five participants in this study, Grace is the only one chooses speaking English with me for the interviews. Though she says she is getting used to speak English everyday, I noticed that she spoke Mandarin with her mom who accompanied her throughout interview. Also, when she realized she can not explain explicitly on certain issues, she chose to switch back to Mandarin. Unlike other participants who position themselves as Chinese or Chinese Canadian, Grace identifies herself as a Canadian. Language proficiency is one of the reasons in Grace's opinion to claim her cultural identity in Canada (Interestingly, similar reason has been used to identify themselves as Chinese by other participants).

What is underneath the claims of cultural identity in Canada for participants? Why they make distinction about whether they want Chineseness or Canadianness to be part of their identity in Canada? The answers to the above questions may reflect participants' valuations on China and Canada and their people, which the fourth theme-values, is emerging in this study.

Values

In talking about the most challenging things in Canada, Julie says, in stead of language barrier, being aware of "what local students are thinking" is the thing she still needs working on. Being an immigrant student, Julie feels the she has different thinking style with local students. The difference in thinking actually reflects a distinction in personal values. Julie's interests in knowing about others

at school not only reveal a distinction in values between a Chinese immigrant student and local Canadian students, but also reveal her intentions to understand of local culture and values. The challenge in knowing of local peer's values for Julie is also functioned as a motivation for her to perceive of her own values.

> *I know I'm different with them. I'm hanging out more often with Chinese Students at school, um, because of the interest. Yes, a common interests on things. We have some common interest so we have common topics. But I don't reject local students being my friends, um, I will play with them as long as I can learn things from them. I don't want to be stereotyped. Any culture has its good values and bad values. I don't think it's necessary to reject a culture only because there are some bad values in it[…] or a judgment by others. So, I won't reject my Chinese culture identity only because my local friends think it's not cool. Like um, I ordered Chinese food when I eating out with my local friends. I don't mind how they think about Chinese food (or me). I will keep it as long as I think it is good no matter where it came from. Um, I like people in Canada have courtesy to each other in public areas. But in China, it's quite often to see um, people pushing each other when they try to get on a bus or train. Everyone thinks he has a priority than others. People are rushing from one thing to the next and um, one location to another location. Everyone seems has a goal related to money. I don't like that at all.*

Similarly, Anne stresses the difference in values in talking about her communication with local students. Anne says being moderate as Chinese traditional culture highly valued has made her have difficulty expressing herself effectively and explicitly. After several embarrassing experiences, she thinks it is better to be straight forward or even aggressive sometimes when dealing with local people in order to acquire their attentions. Julie, Anne, Susan and Eric all stress that they have more Chinese friends than local friends in their life because of the common values in their Chinese cultural background.

Recognition/Misrecognition

It is through the interactions with others in their life that participants form their identifications. In this dialogical process, participants come to know who they are by their perceptions of others and others' perceptions of them. These perceptions are inevitably connected to different understandings of their Chinese cultural roots. In this section, I discuss how participants interpret these perceptions in various ways.

Grace

Because Grace immigrated to Canada at a young age, she does not have the "cultural knowledge of China", which she mentioned often throughout the interview. Therefore, making people aware of her personal values and thinking styles allows her to let people know that she is not the "typical" Chinese immigrant student in her school. In her accounts, Chinese immigrant students recently from mainland China in her school are spoiled, rude and dependent. They speak dirty language (in Chinese) and smoke in classroom, most of all, "Mandarin doesn't want to change, um, accepting new things either." The negative images of Chinese students recently from mainland China in Grace's school made her unwilling to be identified as one of them or a "newcomer". Because Grace believes that being a newcomer also means she has differences with local students. Compare to these Chinese students, students from Hong Kong and Taiwan or Chinese born in Canada have "similar personal values and behaviors" to local students. Therefore, after the first two years in Canada, Grace started to select her friends from certain groups, such as Chinese born in Canada, or Chinese students from Hong Kong or Taiwan, in her school on purpose. It is

the recognition of difference with local students and their cultures/values motivate Grace to actively diminish the existing gap in order to fit into the local.

Unlike other participants making connections to their Chinese cultural background at the beginning of conversations with me, Grace firstly stresses that she shares the same values with local students, in specific, independent spirits, good communication manners, and positive attitudes. She consciously compares herself to other Chinese immigrant students in terms of her language proficiency, social networks, and personal values when trying to explain why she positions herself as Canadian. Without considering the public and historic positioning of Chinese as an ethnic group in Canada, Grace even positions herself as a member of majority group in Canada. She thinks she has only skin color as her Chinese identity. Grace does not believe it is her physical features that make others realize who she is because "no one really cares about it". She does not care about it either. In stead, she thinks how she thinks and how she does things make others recognize who she is.

> *If you don't understand the system, um, the talking, the way they are, um, the language, how can you be one of them? You are in Toronto, you have to be in Toronto way. Right?*

Her account also sheds light on the fact that recognition or misrecognition by others is necessary for a person to know who he/she is. Grace is told by her local friends that her oral English has a "Chinese accent." She is not comfortable with her "Chineseness" recognized by her local friends at this point because she wants to become a "local people".

Grace tells me that she does not feel she has been misrecognized or misunderstood because of her Chinese identity though she tells me that she was

hit by a black student with his book on her first school day when she walked back home from school (She tells me that she was the only Chinese student in her school then). Grace says it happened to her only because he believed that she cannot report him to the principle with her poor English.

Anna

Anna recalls that she could feel that local students thought she was different when she first started her grade five in a local school in Scarborough. That school is close to Chinese community; so many Chinese students go to that school. She says she could find her own group, in which they speak the same language, even as a newcomer. Though Anna does not talk much about her feeling being a new student in her first school, she says that she was lucky to know some friends also from mainland China. The support from her own cultural background has made it easier for Anna starting a negotiation of who she is in Canada.

Though Anna feels very supportive and comfortable to be with "mandarin speaking friends," she was also mistreated by others because of speaking Mandarin in public. Anna was rudely asked by a black student to stop talking with her Chinese friends in Mandarin in the hallway when she was a newcomer. "If it happened today, I know how to fight it back." But then, Anna did not. She says that she realized it was her "Chineseness" that was disliked by others instead of her language. "People only have similarities can be together as a group." But Anna does not want to give up her "Chineseness" in order to be accepted by others at school. She says she need let others know who she is by being herself.

> *It's not helpful to think about how we were educated to treat others in China. Here, you have to be aggressive, so others won't look down at you. To those who challenged you, you have to fight them back, so, they might*

know who you really are, I mean, not based on their judgements at all. You know what the most satisfied thing is for me in school, it's my English, I can get higher scores than those local students. huh…

Anna's strategies of coping with conflicts are "being aggressive" and "fight it back" to let others knowing who she is. She also realizes that embracing others' cultures is also a good way to develop herself in Canada.

[…] traditionally, there are some rules, or, or expectations for girls, in Chinese culture, you know, girls are not encouraged to, to talk or behave like boys; and, and it's considered as a good manner for being moderate, or, or modest, in stead of, um, telling others about your true feeling. So, others just take your words as what you want to say, but, you know, um, sometimes, it's not the message you want to send[…]Chinese are not straight forward in communication, they have higher expectations to friends, um, local people won't do that to friends, local people, um, are not hesitate to ask for what they want, um, even tell a white lies.

Anna stresses that being a Chinese, it is a responsibility to maintain Chinese own cultures in Canada. She hopes that local school could allow Chinese days off to celebrate Chinese holidays, such as Spring Festival, though she later says it is unrealistic to "fully embrace all others' cultures in a multicultural society" because "Canadian culture is very narrow".

In talking about the challenges in her immigration life, Anna thinks that, in stead of conventionally considered factors, such as language barriers or school pressures, it is the way of self- position in Canada.

You have to think you are a "host", um, you can't always position yourself as a foreigner, or um, an immigrant. If you keep thinking this, you will never get a chance to fit in. Yeah, you are different, but, you can't always say that, I mean, um, you can't compare the past and the present. The history, um, memories about the past, um, I know, it's precious, but, you have to put them away, er, when you move forward.

Anna also clearly pinpoints her understanding of immigration process. She thinks that it is not necessary to give up something you have for being accepted by

others; and it is not necessary either to concern for losing what you have in immigration process because no one can grab them off unless you decide to give them up.

Julie

Julie says she does not feel she has been misrecognized or misunderstood by others because of her Chinese cultural background. However, Julie thinks she is not included by local people because of her "physical features". She describes how she feels about the racialization in a school setting.

> *They [white students] are very polite, um, could be willing to help, um, um, if you ask for it. No one will reject you. They are being nice to you, because, um, you asked them. But, um, actually they think you are different, you know, skin colors are different. So, they assume you have different backgrounds, and um, they don't show interest to know things about you, white students keeping together. For me, Chinese friends are dominant in my social relations at school. But I don't reject others' cultures, um, I'm not with them only because I'm not interested in what they are interested in.*

These seemingly contradictory sentiments in Julie's conversations suggest a desire to distinguish race and culture in the identification process. If a shared interest exists, Julie could engage in others' cultures in spite of the difference of race and ethnicity.

In talking about her challenges in her immigration experience, Julie says it is the understanding of local cultures rather than the learning of language skills. Julie's friends are mainly from Chinese community. She feels it is easier to be understood by friends with Chinese cultural background. For similar reason, she thinks it is also understandable for those white girls in her school not willing to include people with different physical features. Because "people with different physical features often means they are rooted in different cultures and values."

Eric

Like Julie, Eric also says he does not feel any misrecognition or misunderstanding by others in Canada. However, he notices that there are some cultural differences in communication between him and local students. He says he has no problem in communication with local students on "general topics", though sometimes he feels confused on how to react on some specific cultural related topics. Eric thinks that his uncertainty on cultural metaphors in communication with local students reminds himself he is not a complete Canadian yet.

Eric says he has a feeling of being in between of two cultures in Canada: one is the local culture surrounded; the other is his root culture. He tried to find the balance between the two of them. Throughout nine years immigration experience in Canada, he was working hard to be accepted by local people and maintain his Chinese cultural identities with family's support. He feels comfortable of being who he is now. As he mentions he just do things follow his second nature. Therefore, Eric thinks he has found out his "balance" and "comfort zone' in his current life, though he can not explicitly identify what it is in words. Eric's account also sheds light on the fact that it is an on-going process with negotiations of multiple players that construct him in his life.

Susan

Susan says sometimes she feels isolated in Canada. Susan recognizes that it is the lack of understanding of local cultures makes people being "an outsider in a social environment." So, Susan is eager to improve her language skills so she could have direct communications with local people and therefore enhance her

understanding of local cultures. Susan does not like the feeling of being an outsider in this country. She believes that the situation will eventually improved with her personal efforts. For Susan, being an immigrant in Canada means a complete new process in her life. In this process, she has decided to "put away" her Chinese cultural roots, focusing on integration into Canada.

Susan identifies herself as a Chinese with a Canadian label. Susan thinks "social environment" plays a significant role in one's development and transforming. Although Susan realizes she has changed herself on behavior and manners in order to follow Canadian norms, she believes that her "Chineseness" is still dominant in her identity.

> *[…] you know, probably I may eventually forget something about China, um, um, even if I really want to remember them, like, I, sometimes unconsciously, imitate local people's ways of doing things, um, I may get used to these norms later, um, but, but I think, I won't change my roots. Um, I'm still a Chinese girl, I'm still value many things from my own culture. Like um, when the day of Chinese Lunar New year comes, I want to celebrate it, um, even if I rarely mention it with others. um, because I just want to keep it.*

Meanings & Roles

What meanings do participants negotiate in the process of identification with their Chinese cultural roots? How do participants perceive of the roles of their Chinese cultural roots played in the negotiation process? In this section, I describe participants' perceptions of the meanings and roles of their Chinese roots in their identity construction process. And I also present the reasons of which they resist or accept these meanings.

Grace

Grace thinks she belongs to Canada. It comes naturally to be what she is now. As to her "Chineseness", Grace shows contradictory responses to her negotiations of identities in Canada throughout the interview. On the one hand, she is not happy about the fact of her "Chineseness" hindering her to become a "real Canadian". For example, Grace says she has been told by others that her English has a Chinese accent. For Grace, it is her imperfect English that makes local people around her recognize she is not yet a "real Canadian." Her Chineseness at this point really bothers her. She says she hope she was born in Canada, so today she would not have her Chinese accent when she speaks in English.

> *I want to be local, um, because I live in Canada. I don't want to be a newcomer. If I am Canadian, I can go to the top of the society. You can get what you think, Um, if you keep thinking you are a newcomer, you loose your enthusiasm.*

On the other hand, Grace thinks that it is her "Chineseness" that somehow makes her feeling more confident in Canada. She says she is very proud of being a member of Chinese community in Canada. Because China has become a leading country in today's globe in terms of its strong economic strength.

> *U.S. won't be the leading force forever; China will become greater and greater, though I don't know how long it will take [to be the leader]. And um, the local community changed, local people changed. Um, Chinese has been part of their community, especially new generation. That's why I don't see any difference with them [local people].*

Grace makes reference to the advantageous position that being a Chinese placed her in economic terms. Grace is studying Business Management in a local college. She says being able to speak Mandarin is an advantage when looking to

be hired as China has become more and more important as a growing economic power in the global economy.

On the other hand, Grace seems hesitating to be identified as a Chinese because of some cultures and values she unfavoured. She says her parents have told her that Chinese people are usually not good team players due to the lack of cooperation spirits, which is highly valued in local culture. Grace complains that Chinese are group people, not opening up and very conservative. She also complains that some traditional Chinese values have limited her opportunities to learn some most important life lessons in this new country, which make her being behind of local peers.

> *My parents always warn me, "you can't do this…or that." But, you know what? my friends probably already did those things at eight years old. You know, this is the culture here. But I'm still not allowed at 17 years old. They are typical Chinese parents. I'm really tired of that overprotection. I have argued with them many times. I just want them knowing one thing, um, that is, if I don't learn how to stand up on my own, um after falling down, how could I know how to protect myself without them in the future. I don't want people think I'm a dependent people at this age. I want my parents give me freedom, um, let me be the same person as others here. Because, um, this is Canada, not China. We have to be in the Canadian way.*

Eric

In talking about the advantageous position of being Chinese in a global age, Eric also confirms that being able to speak Mandarin and English is definitely an advantage for him to find an ideal job. Eric does not talk much about the role of his Chinese roots played in his identification process.

Anna

In talking about her sense of belonging, Anna starts with how she feels about "home" first. She stresses that home is not where the house is. Home is

where families and friends are, where people like you are and where people speaking the same language are. In Anna's heart, China is still where her home is now. Canada is a very peaceful place for Anna; but the tranquility somehow makes Anna feeling not belonging here. She says she can not help missing those busy and warm evenings in Shenzhen when she looking out the dark street from her apartment window each time.

Anna's reflections on her identities are mainly focusing on two major parts: "Chineseness" and "Canadianness". The interrelated two parts have played a role in her self positioning in Canada. She tries to pinpoint her feeling of being Canadian and being Chinese when facing cultural conflicts.

> *Being a Chinese, I think I could understand the feeling of, um, being hurt, um, the cultural conflicts between the East and the West, um, at a sensitive moment, you know, politically. Like, sometimes, um, I think the mainstream makes their judgments on China and Chinese, um, sometimes with their bias… they are kind of, um, misleading the public. No one talks about those issues at school, um, because of the risk. You know, too political. I don't feel comfortable about that. I only talked with my Chinese friends about these political issues. [Pause] But if, if I start to think from another side, um, being a Canadian, you know, I learnt Canada's history, cultures and values at school; I feel like I could also understand why they made those judgments, um, people have different concerns and values; Canadians value democracy and freedom more. […] um, I learned being open for different voices; I make my own judgments, based on truth, um, or how I feel about it.[…]*

The desire to see things in different views helped Anna to make sense of her social relations and her new identifications in Toronto. Anna says she is not sure whether there is a balance between her "Chineseness" and her "Canadianness" and what the criteria are to judge the balance point, if there is one. Anna says probably she could find the answers in her future life in Canada.

Julie

Julie positions herself as a "global" people with Chinese cultural roots. She says she does not want to be stereotyped by others simply because of her cultures. Julie does not want to alter herself in order fit into Canadian culture, either.

> *Because, um, no matter where it [good values] comes from, I will keep it as Long as it is good stuff. Like, um, I won't stop eating Chinese food because, because white students eat their "normal" Canadian food for lunch at school. Or, celebrating Chinese New Year, or enjoying the symbol of the year. I can tell most "white" people actually have no big difference with us. I won't reject their cultures either. I just be myself here, um, later I may live in other countries (cultures). So, I will experience more things in different cultures, um, I won't reject what made of me. That's how I grow up. Why need to change intentionally?*

However, she stresses it is very important to know how to communicate with local people. Because "knowing how to speak English doesn't mean you have learned how to communicate with them." Julie thinks that the priority is to learn to act local for immigrant students.

Julie also says she does not want to be identified by any national labels. In her opinion, any single national label is insufficient to represent a person. It should be what a person has experienced in his life to decide who he is. People are more flexible in a global age in terms of geographic mobilizations. Immigration is just one type of people's mobilization; being somewhere does not mean you are fully belonging to that place. It is something else, like the culture you valued, the memory you cherished make you feel who you are. Julie claims that being exposed to different cultures has provided an opportunity for her to deal with different people. She believes that eventually all her life experience will become the advantages in terms of social capitals in her future development.

Susan

She admits that before she immigrated to Canada, she rarely thought about her "roots". In her account, "roots" has several subgroups, including one's birth place, race, personal values and etc and no one can deny his roots. Therefore, in a free country like Canada, it is vey possible to maintain one's roots as long as he wants to. She stresses that the switching of national labels is not necessary to be followed with a change in one's cultural roots.

Susan initially claims that it is two different processes that maintain one's "roots" identity and negotiate one's new identity in a new country. In her opinion, Chinese cultural roots do not play a role in her integrating into Canadian society.

> *It is really, um, all up to yourself, I mean, your language, you skills, your capability, nothing else. If you are not good at these, then, um, you won't fit in. No one really care where you come from. Um, I never thought about whether it is an advantage or disadvantage. Because, I know, no matter what, Canadian culture will, um, dominant my future life, um, Yeah, won't be Chinese cultures.*

Susan thinks it is not necessary to find a balance between her Chineseness and her Canadianness in her future life. In talking about the cultural difference between China and Canada, Susan realizes that it is the awareness of her own cultural roots makes her recognizing the existence of a cultural gap with local people. Therefore, she also realizes that she has consequently taken her strategies to cope with the cultural gap.

> *I love my Chinese cultural roots. But, I think, I don't need always remind others I'm a Chinese. I don't want people think I'm always a newcomer to this country. So, I need to put them away in order to integrate into this society faster. My Chinese cultural roots still exists. So, um, for me, it is not like, um, an issue, that um, I have to choose one from the two. I won't lose my cultural roots. I think I can keep them. um, it's um, individual's responsibility, not the society, or public education's [responsibility]. Because, um, I didn't get much support [from them] to maintain my cultural*

roots. Also, it seems impossible to achieve the goal, I mean, to help ethnic minority groups in Canada, maintaining their cultural identities.

Talking About Hybrid Identity

When asked about all the five participants agree that their identities are hybrid. In the complex and contradictory discourses that structured their conversations, students' decisions about what is appropriate and, in contrast, deviant behaviors, shape their attitudes towards race, culture and roots in their identification process. In this section, I reflect on some words that I frequently heard in the conversation with participants, namely "normal Canadian", "peer pressure", and "different cultures", to illustrate the features of their hybrid identities and analyze the emerging themes of reasons for shaping their hybrid identities.

"Normal Canadian"

Except Grace, all participants are not hesitated to reveal their differences with "normal Canadians," though they all have difficulty to explicitly explain what their cultures are all about. They might be able to point out that Canadians "eat normal food like burgers or steak" and they have "shared interests" in popular cultures, like hockey. In talking about their own behavior norms, most participants decide to "stick on" their own cultural habits in their daily life. Anna talks about popular youth cultures she identified at school, such as boys' saggy jeans, girls' sexy dressing, and often smoking outside the school during breaks. Anna says she has "no problem" with other cultures as long as these cultures not bothering her. Anna tells me that she noticed many of her friends have started

dating someone when came to high school. She says she has been marginalized by her friends for not embracing this popular youth culture.

> *Ok, sometimes, I need set up study schedules with my girl friends, for group assignments. And then, I was told that they can not make it out, because they need hang out with their boyfriends. Or, sometimes, I told my friends I have to be back home before eight o'clock when they were heading for a karaoke bar. I know, they thought I was different, or, um, weird. But, um, that's what my parents taught me. It's not good for a girl to stay outside very late. I don't feel secure, too. That's my bottom line. I don't want to follow them. We have different behavior norms. I just want to follow my own [norms]. So, I decide not being with them anymore.*

Anna's behavior norms which formed around her Chinese root cultures have influenced her to make sense of her new identifications and social behaviors in Toronto.

For Susan, being a "normal Canadian" means she can speak fluent English, knowing local cultures and "having a white collar career." In her accounts, people with "a white collar career" namely, "an office clerk", has a better economic and social status than a refugee immigrant doing a labor job in Chinatown. She believes that it is her Chinese root cultures remind herself a difference in terms of cultures and language with local others and from which a desire to change arise. Susan addresses that her Chinese roots has motivated her embracing local cultures in her life in order to pursuing her Canadian dream, being a "normal Canadian."

"Peer Pressures"

For these five participants, they feel peer pressures from two sources: local students and immigrant students with the same cultural backgrounds. As reflections of their culturally in-between experience in Canada, these peer

pressures also influence these five participants' on how to perceive of their identities.

Anna, for example, talks about the pressure she felt from her Chinese friends at school. She says her Chinese friends were very supportive when she firstly came to her school. They gave her tips on how to settle down in her new school. Anna says it was the same cultural backgrounds encouraged her to find her sense of belonging in a new school. However, Anna noticed that an invisible gap is growing between them due to the different attitudes towards embracing local cultures.

> *It's like, we were walking together on a road, um, we started almost at the same point. I was very enjoying the roadside scenery. But my friend somehow slowed down. I notice that some friends refuse to expand their social networks, um, they only play with Chinese students. So, they don't speak much English at school. They are marginalized by those English speakers at school. I have no problem with those local students, speaking English, um, but when I looked at my friend who sitting alone in classroom, I felt so sad for her. I don't know who is the one having a problem. Why? Because, um, she can't walk out from her own world? Or, or I have walked too far from where we were? I really don't want my friends think I'm changed. Should I stop and wait for her? Maybe I should just keep walking on "my way."*

Anna shows her hesitance in deciding on how to design her relationship with her Chinese friends in the process of making sense of who she is at school. She talks the pressure she felt from people who has the same cultural roots. For Anna, it is an issue of "route", rather than an issue of "roots."

Through her observations, Julie thinks that gender has a role in constructions of social relations for immigrant students. She says she does not feel pressures from local students because of her gender. However, she notices male immigrant students are more likely to be teased by local students. She explains that people

has conventional lower expectations on female. So, even an immigrant girl can not speak perfect English or have a poor performance, she will not feel the pressures from her classmates at most chances. But, an immigrant boy is different. People around him could tease him on his cultural backgrounds if he can not do things in a "smart way." So, it is even harder for male immigrant youth to fit into the local cultures.

"Different cultures"

Inevitably, participants all mention the influences of different cultures in their identification process. Anna thinks that it is the different cultures she experienced in Canada that opened the window for her to a totally different world in her life. She says she has learned to be an objective and open-minded person to different cultures. But she later talks about how she was bothered by a black student on his deviant behaviors. Eric says that immigration has changed his life track. For being in Canada, a multicultural society, he starts to realize and reflect on his own root cultures. Julie thinks each culture has good values; people should show respect to others' cultures and race; and her life experience with different cultures will be an asset in terms of social capitals for her future development in a global age, though she admits that she has not made a "white" friend at school. Grace comments that Chinese cultures are too conservative, and individual centered. However, Grace's mom thinks she is still a Chinese girl inside though Grace claims that she has Canadian cultures on her. Susan believes that it is the local cultures and language that block her as barriers to be an insider of this society.

A number of contradictory sentiments appear to be at work in these perceptions, claims, and counterclaims stand out. One is the desire to distinguish race and culture in participants' identification process. For example, Julie says she has different interests with those white girls at school; if they had shared interests, she would have be with them. Grace also claims that only people have the same thinking style, or shared interests can be together as a group. According to participants' accounts, the desire to distinguish culture and race seems making it possible for participants to engage in "shared cultural interest" as they claimed and eventually transcend race and ethnicity in their identification process. But, there must be a precondition for this: the culture and cultural practice are not racialized.

Susan asserts that she will find her happiness in Canada once she becomes a "real Canadian", which in her accounts, could be achieved through her personal striving. Grace aims "the top of the society" and believes that she could have her "Canadian style life," namely, graduating from a top university, possessing an admiring career as one of the social elites in this society, without any difference with local others except the shin color. All these "normal cultures" identified in discourses suggest that there is also a desire to assert identities as unencumbered sets of cultural attributes. But this is also difficult. Social relations are formed around cultures, as participants already claimed. Identities also formed around cultures. Either of them is fixed. Because of the shifting essence of social relations and identities, the tensions between different cultures and races will never cease.

Summary

In this chapter, I discussed how the five participants position themselves with national labels or not. The concepts of race and ethnicity are rarely used by participants in their self-identifications. Participants identified themselves in ambivalent ways. Based on their discourses structured conversations, I worked with the emerging themes by focusing on of the reasons for their self-identifications. Participants reflected on their knowing or not knowing about cultures, their connections to people and places, the languages and customs as well as the values when talking about the racial ethnical and national labels.

I also discussed participants' self perceptions, conceptions of their immigration life experiences in Canada. The participants talked about their experiences of recognition or misrecognition, their perceptions of the roles of their Chinese cultural roots in their identification process, and their understandings of their hybrid identities. In my analysis, participants' experiences reveal that how immigrant youth with Chinese cultural roots position themselves in Canada is influenced closely by their root cultures. Chinese cultural roots are considered as capitals in the routes of making sense of who they are. Their negotiation of new identities in Canada is an on-going, relational, contextual and shifting process.

Chapter 5

Overview and Implications of Research

In this chapter, I reflect on what the data suggests about identity. I present an overview of the impacts of memory, spaces and places, and positioning on the process of identity constructions for participants. I also reflect on the implications of this study for policy makers, educators, and immigrants. Last, I provide some suggestions on future research directions.

My study of these five participants is a journey of discovery through discourses of race, culture, knowledge, memory, and community. In this journey, I understand the contexts and sites of identity negotiation- who they are, who they are not and who they can become – the tensions between "roots" and "routes". In this section, I start with an outline of the impacts of memory, spaces and places, and positioning on participants' identity constructions.

Memory

> …memories are not merely retrospective; it is prospective as well. Memory provides a perspective for interpreting our experience in the present and for foreseeing those that lie ahead (Fentress and Wickham, 1992).

When participants responded to the question, "What do you remember?" It is so affirming to see and feel that they making connections to different people and places at different life moments in their memories. This inquiry becomes a story about memories for participants – how they came to be who they are. As Anna says, "*I think Chinese shouldn't forget our Chinese cultures in Canada, because that's why we are we*." As Susan says, "*I could probably not maintain all my Chinese customs in my future life in Canada, but I'm sure I will still be a Chinese because of, um, what I am taught by my parents, what I was educated in*

Chinese public education, and what I remember about China." Cultural identity, which involves a "re-telling of the past" and a provision of "resources of resistance", is not unfamiliar in participants' discourses (Fentress and Wickham, 1992). This "re-telling" and rearticulating give some considerations to the concept of social memory as an expression of collective experience.

> …the way memories of the past are generated and understood by given social groups is a direct guide to how they understand their position in the present; that one can, in fact, barely separate social memory from an analysis of the social at all, and that, conversely, any analysis of social identity and consciousness could become, if the researcher wished, an analysis of perceptions of the past (Fentress and Wickham, 1992, p.162).

When participants reveal how they negotiate their identities in different contexts and sites in their stories of memories, these memories are actions, as a type of behavior; as well as representations, as "a network of ideas" (Fentress and Wickham, 1992, p. x). Working consciously with these concepts as I question these five participants how to re-tell the past, how to provide the relevant resources in the context of Canadian schools and society, with their racial and ethnic backgrounds, I turn to what Pinar reminds me that "identity formation is constructed and expressed through representation, i.e., the construction of difference and negotiated in the public sphere (Pinar, 1993)." What then make one Canadian or Chinese or Chinese-Canadian? How and when do they become who they are? These questions lead me to the notions of "space" and "place" and how they are conceptualized in relation to race and ethnicity.

Spaces and Places

When talking about their cultural identities, participants all consciously use space metaphors to address themselves. As Eric says, "*when I go back China, I will be a Chinese; here I'm a Canadian."* Susan says, "*when I stay here longer, say um, 10 or 20 years later, I may become more like a Canadian, because I should have embraced more local cultures by then."* Grace says, "*at the beginning [of my immigration life in Canada], I was a complete Chinese. Now, I would say I'm a Canadian*." Anna says "*I feel I still belong to China*." And Julie tries to use a bigger notion of place, "globe" to identify herself, when being asked her identity. These special metaphors used by participants suggest that their identities are closely related to space and time; in specific, participants' identity is constructed and expressed in terms of positioning in a specific space at a specific moment. For these five participants, geographic locations are imagined as spaces due to immigration. But, ethnical and racial differences also offer them spaces to negotiate identities. So, spaces can be both geographical and social.

Acknowledged in participants' discourses, cultural identity, in terms of shared historical commodities and experiences need to be reconstructed and redefined in the spaces occurred in movements, displacements, and relocations. The way in which participants' social spaces are defined, maintained, experienced, reproduced and transformed, has tremendous influence on their social relations. Knowing where they are is not necessary to know who they are for participants. A single discursive "route" will be problematic to approaching and understanding the issue of identity. "Routes" with a multiple focuses on culture, race, ethnicity and nationality might be a better notion in understanding of identity. As

immigrants with differences in race, ethnicity, and culture in Canada, participants are living and struggling with in and against categories to negotiate a hybrid diasporic identity.

Positioning

Although Chinese cultural identity, as "cultural roots", is acknowledged in participants' narratives, participants' identities are not formed from a fixed location and proceed in a straight, unbroken line, according to their accounts. Participants tell about how they position themselves in Canada through "differences" in their narratives. Two contradictory sentiments appear to be at work in participants' perceptions and claims to which I draw attention. One is the desire to contextualize the roles of their Chinese "cultural roots" in their identification processes. In the context of globalization, Chinese cultures are considered as "desirable and powerful" positions in terms of its advantages as social capitals, by participants in their identifications; at the same time, their "more powerful" ethnicity and cultures are not always "desirable" as it can be labeled as the "oppressor", i.e. being isolated by dominant cultures, or being considered as an outsider by dominant group people. Therefore, the contradictory readings of Chinese "cultural roots" have caused seemingly contradictory attitudes in positioning themselves. They are proud to explain their current positioning with a consideration of their Chinese "cultural roots", however, nearly always refuse to be categorized simply because of their "cultural root" or race. They think that their identities are conditional, contextual and conjunctional with multiple dimensions and layers.

There is also a desire to assert that it is possible to transcend racial differences by engaging in shared cultural interests, which under the norms of dominant discourses in society, though all participants assert that differences in race can lead to differences in culture and value. Participants believe that they could be "the same Canadian" as others - the dominant group people in society, if they can embrace local cultures and norms in their life, while still maintaining their Chinese cultural essences. However, Apple reminds us (1993) that,

> Race is a set of fully social relations (Omi & Winant, 1986). Much of the same needs to be said about identity. It is not necessarily a stable, permanent, united center that gives consistent meaning to our lives. It too is socially and historically onstructed, and subject to political tensions and contradictions (p.vii).

Race and culture, the shifting subjects as constructed social relations, influence significantly on participants' positionings. Like ethnicity and nationality, race and culture are other convenient names given for the boundaries of positions for participants. As the tensions between race and culture never cease, the positionings are never a stable, fixed process. Participants' identities are closely linked to positionings - positionings with regard to where social subjects are located, positionings with regard to challenging monolithic notions of racial categories and ethnicities, positioning with regard to where discourses of race, history and culture are placed and how identity are positioned and repositioned.

Some stories shared by participants draw my special attentions to understanding of their positionings. For example, in talking about her unpleasant experience in school (she was being asked not speaking Mandarin with her Chinese friends in school hallway by a black boy), Anna says that that she learned to get tough to those who do not respect her. And Grace recalls how a black

student tried to hit her with his books at her first school day. Julie shares her feeling on the superiority of dominant "Whiteness" in her school. Julie also reveals that male immigrant students are more likely to be teased by peers at school in her observations. However, it is very interesting to notice that all participants replied "no" when being asked if they think they have experienced any racism in Canada. Julie, Anna and Grace all address that it is understandable to see people with different cultural backgrounds have different responses. Even to that black boy who tried to hit her as the only Chinese student in school on purpose, Grace now believes it was only because that he was sure that she could not report to the principle with her poor English then. In my further inquiry on the ways they choose to position themselves, I notice that participants have adequate knowledge on the topic of cultural identity, from Julie's understanding on the notion of "whiteness" and the history of "home schooling for indigenous children" and Grace's resistance to be grouped as "visible minority" in our conversations. Participants consciously cope with these "cultural responses" with their personal developed different strategies in their positionings. These "cultural responses", in participants' accounts, are happened as "incidents" in their daily life, which are not "as serious as" the racisms are taught in their civic classes. In their narratives, participants reveal that how they decide which "routes" should be considered, presented, and employed to challenge, resist and reject the rationalized normality of cultural stereotypes, or even, racism in these "places", for example, schools and communities.

Implications for Policymakers

Adolescence, a challenging period in the identity formation process for most individuals, is often compounded by settlement difficulties that immigrants generally encounter. As immigrant youth negotiate with the new society and cultures in Canada, they are confronted with a number of tensions in different spheres, namely school, family, friends and peers, and the labor market. Moreover, children and youth are seen as members of families, which are nested in communities with their own institutions, which in turn are part of a larger society. In examining the findings of this study, there is a consensus among the youth that they and their families want to be seen not only as parts of an immigrant community, but also as part of the larger society to which they had immigrated. They are not alienated from their own cultural group, nor are they rejected to blend in with the larger group of Canadian-born peers. A desire to succeed in the process of selective integration is articulated clearly by the youth themselves in this study. The five participants in this study experience challenges in identifying and articulating how they wish to be in their future life in the cultural tradition of China, and also of Canada, with a mixture of values selected by them. Therefore, I believe immigrant youth's freedom in the process of selective integration, without the demeaning pressure of external prejudice or what they see as pressures of parental expectations is an essential element of the policy recommendations from this study. And this can be reflected in the policy making of immigrant supporting programs in communities, as well as educational programs in schools.

The information gathered by researcher in this study is useful in identifying issues, needs, and problems confronted by immigrant youth from mainland China. The information will help policy makers to evaluate the benefits of the programs they design, and strengthen their services for immigrant youth and their families. This will also assist government officials and service providers in creating and enhancing programs and facilities to meet the settlement need of Chinese immigrant youth, a predominant ethnic group in Canada.

Implications for Educators

School is a site for addressing, negotiating, and fashioning identity. Education process also contributes to the social process of making sense of who they are for immigrant students. Although exclusionary and differentiate treatments at the hands of teachers are not mentioned by participants, they do express an awareness of not relying on school education to maintain their cultural "roots". Anna says, "*It really depends on my teachers' interests on specific ethnic cultures. My teacher may happen to say something about the origin of that [ethnic] holiday in classroom on that day, if she has interests.*" Julie says, "*Nobody wants to take the risk to talk those ethnic issues in classroom, except those already printed on textbooks*." In participants' accounts in this study, the reality is that it is solely individual and family's responsibility to maintain their cultural "roots" in Canada.

Immigrant students' schooling experiences suggest a reflective thinking on our multicultural education. What are the principles of multicultural education which rely on a discourse of cultural understanding and cultural competence that

have the transformational capabilities to actively interrupt the dominant discourses of race and racist cultures? The school and their teachers need to know their students' experience, including their educational traditions, migration, and educational experiences. A line of communication between school and parents/students need to be open in order to help immigrant children and youth's identity transformation and construction in a difficult time and continuing growth in Canada. This will also help to induce a respectful inclusive attitude among immigrant students and Canadian-born peers to each others in their daily life.

The curriculum also needs to receive a special attention beyond the issues of language instruction and ESL contents. Curriculum can be more inclusive by taking into account of an inclusion of different cultural heritages in its designs. Canadian-born students can learn more about the world beyond Canada, so that they will understand that the global diversity is the source of their local community's diversity. Therefore, they will learn to appreciate and respect immigrant students' cultural diversity.

Implications for Immigrants

This study suggests that Chinese immigrant adolescents maintain close connections to their ethnic, racial, cultural and national labels in their identification processes in Toronto. These connections vary in participants' discourses. Participants express their perceptions of the multiple labels on them. In their narratives, Chinese "cultural roots", plays a significant role in deciding which "routes" they take to negotiate who they are and who they are not in Toronto. Depending on different contexts, Chinese "cultural roots" are functioned as "motivations" to integrate into society, desirable power in terms of

"social competence" for individual in global time, 'behavior norms" when facing unfavored behaviors from peers, or an "outsider label", for participants in their accounts. Their negotiations of identity are relational, contextual and ambivalent processes in which the discourses of race, nationality and culture are constantly developed, altered, renewed. These "routes" and cultural "roots" are mutually intertwined in Chinese immigrant adolescents' identity construction processes in Toronto.

Chinese immigrant adolescents in this study express a sense of belonging in a more flexible way. The idea of an absolute national identity and "culture in favor of a set of experiences that connect them" (Yon, 2000) can be seen transcend on them. All participants think that globalization has opened up more ways of belonging for them; therefore they would rather to leverage them, in stead of being limited by them.

This study also reveals that cultural stereotypes and racisms have become normalized for immigrant youth in the arena of social life. Peer pressure from dominant group, as one of the representations of these normalized cultural stereotypes and racisms, has impact on how immigrant students position themselves in their social life. Another type of peer pressure is from their own ethnic cultural backgrounds, which makes immigrant adolescents feeling guilty for their disloyalty to their cultural "roots" and therefore reluctant to integrate into local society.

Implications for Future Research

In the process of conducting this research, a notion of "immigrant drive" (James, 2000) came to my mind constantly. James identifies "immigrant drive" or "minority determination" as possible factors in the educational and occupational success of the children of foreign-born parents in Canada, factors that helped to overcome their parents' deficits with regard to finances and social and cultural capitals. I find similar discourses from my participants' parents during interviews. Parents believe that educational success will result in occupational success, which means a successful transforming from an "outsider" to an "insider" for foreign immigrants. Education is the institution that enables them to integrate successfully into the Canadian mainstream, which is their parents' dream for them.

My current study only focuses on one segment of the participants' immigration life. Their identity negotiations and constructions in Canada is an ongoing, contextual and shifting process. So, further in-depth research is necessary to study on the impact of educational success or occupational success on Chinese immigrant youth's identity constructions in Canada from participants' perspectives. What is the interrelationship between the social/cultural capitals transferred from their Chinese "roots" and the social/cultural capitals transferred from their education/occupation success in Canada in their self positionings. Specifically, researchers should draw attention to the discourses given by Chinese immigrant youth or young adults. A narrative study on the life stories of Chinese immigrant youth or young adults can help to understand how they perceive their

educational success and/or occupational success in their negotiations of a new identity in Canada.

This study examines the cultural impacts on identity -“roots”, and the contextual nature of identity as a process of movement -“routes”. The diaspora people in this study being as something – Canadian, Chinese, and Chinese Canadian – are constantly changed into something else (a changing same) as the self is understood in relation to others (positioning) and becomes involved in social actions. An awareness of this process, an understanding of the diaspora experience -“roots” and “routes”- has motivated participants and myself to rethink cultural representations, current school cultural education and social inclusion.

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Research Consent Form
McGill University

Title of research: Roots and Routes: A Reimage of Chinese immigrant adolescents' identity construction in Canada (Toronto)

Researcher: Chunjiao Liu Master candidate, Integrated Studies in Education
Supervisor: Dr. Mary Maguire Tel: 514 398 2183
Contact information: 647 637 0632 ; email: chunjiao.liu@mail.mcgill.ca

Purpose of the research: to explore of the identity constructions of Chinese immigrant adolescents in Canada. In particular, this study aims to articulate the role of Chinese identities (roots) that played in the process of identity construction (route) for Chinese immigrant adolescents; it also seek to find out what new hybrid identity emerges and how immigrant adolescents consciously negotiate and position themselves between different identities/cultures in the process of identity construction.

What is involved in participating: I want you tell me your own lived experience of immigration in Canada during our individual interviews. The time and location of the interview will be at your own convenience.

Your signature below serves to signify you agree to participate in this study.

Your participation is entirely voluntary and you can choose to decline to answer my question or even to withdraw at any point from the project. I will record and/or tape our conversations during interviews. Our conversations will be transcribed for my research data analyzing and coding. Your name will not appear on research data as well as research findings. My pledge to confidentiality also means that no other person (except my supervisor) and organization will have access to the interview materials and that they will be coded and stored in such as ways as to make it impossible to identity them directly with any individual (e.g. they will be organized by number rather than by name). Also, my research data will be kept separately from your consent form(s).

If you have any questions or concerns about your/your child's rights or welfare as a participant in this study, please contact the McGill Research Ethics Officer at 514-398-6831.

I have read the above information and I agree to participate in this study
Yes □ NO □
I agree to be tape-recorded
Yes □ NO □
I agree the tape may be used as described above
Yes □ NO □
I also request for the results of this research project.
Yes □ NO □
Name (Print):_____Signature: _____
Researcher's signature: _____
Date:_____

Parent Consent Form

Title of research: Roots and Routes: A Reimage of Chinese immigrant adolescents' identity construction in Canada (Toronto)

Researcher: Chunjiao Liu Master candidate, Integrated Studies in Education
Supervisor: Dr. Mary Maguire Tel: 514 398 2183
Contact information: 647 637 0632 ; email: chunjiao.liu@mail.mcgill.ca

Purpose of the research: to explore of the identity constructions of Chinese immigrant adolescents in Canada. In particular, this study aims to articulate the role of Chinese identities (roots) that played in the process of identity construction (route) for Chinese immigrant adolescents; it also seek to find out what new hybrid identity emerges and how immigrant adolescents consciously negotiate and position themselves between different identities/cultures in the process of identity construction.

What is involved in participating: I want your child tell me his/her own lived experience of immigration in Canada during our individual interviews. The time and location of the interview will be at your own convenience.

Your signature below serves to signify you allow your child to participate in this study.

Your child's participation is entirely voluntary and that if you decide, you can choose to withdraw your child at any point from the project. I will record and/or tape the conversations during interviews with your child. The conversations will be transcribed for my research data analyzing and coding. Your child's name will not appear on research data as well as research findings. My pledge to confidentiality also means that no other person (except my supervisor) and organization will have access to the interview materials and that they will be coded and stored in such as ways as to make it impossible to identity them directly with any individual (e.g. they will be organized by number rather than by name). Also, my research data will be kept separately from you and your child's consent form(s).

If you have any questions or concerns about your/your child's rights or welfare as a participant in this study, please contact the McGill Research Ethics Officer at 514-398-6831'

I have read the above information and I give consent to allow my child to participate in this research project.	Yes □	NO □
I give consent to allow my child to be taped	Yes □	NO □
I agree the tape may be used as described above	Yes □	NO □
I also request for the results of this research project.	Yes □	NO □

Name (Print):_____Signature: _____
Researcher's signature: _____
Date:_____

Sample of Transcript

Chun Jiao: 你好！ 安娜。 请给我讲讲你移民时的背景好吗？

Anna: 好的。我跟我父母一块来加拿大的。是2004年。 那时候我比较小， 嗯，只有9岁。 我们家是从深圳来的。我爸爸妈妈是技术移民。

Chun Jiao: 你还记得来加拿大后的第一印象是什么吗？

Anna: 记得到。 因为很深刻。也是因为与来之前想象中的加拿大反差太大了，呵呵。。。我们是从深圳来的，在深圳有很多的高楼大厦，是很典型的现代大都市。我以为国外应该比深圳更繁华，毕竟，发达国家嘛。可是我记得我看到很旧的街道，和街道两旁的楼群也是又矮，又旧。说实话，很失望的, 那时候。

Chun Jiao: 那你对加拿大的印象现在有没有改变呢？依然失望吗？

Anna: 没有啊，现在因为对加拿大有了解，而且也熟悉这边的生活方式，觉得也很好啊。

Chun Jiao: 那么你认为是什么改变了你对加拿大的认识呢？可以给我举个例子吗？

Anna: 我就觉得是在一点一点地了解关于加拿大的文化啊，语言啊，还有价值观啊，还有就是与人交流啊，等等吧。 就像我从一个完全的陌生人，逐渐变得熟悉起来， 我想大部分是学校的教育吧，毕竟我爸爸妈妈也是新移民。

Chun Jiao: 那么给我讲讲你的学校经历吧？你在学校里的朋友都有哪些文化背景呢？

Anna: 在我现在的学校里面，我朋友有各种不同文化背景，有亚裔，也有其他族裔的。亚裔的朋友也有从大陆来的，也有从香港和台湾来的。我现在不限定我自己朋友的文化背景，所以。。

Chun Jiao: 你的意思是说，以前你结交朋友并不是这样的，对吗？

Anna: 对，在我最初刚来加拿大的时候，我的英文还不能讲的很好， 而且我对新学校什么都不熟悉，一开始我认识的朋友都是从大陆来的，我跟她们在一起，都讲中文，嗯，她们帮我很多忙，所以我的学校适应就轻松多了。后来慢地社交圈子扩大了，我开始认识从香港，台湾来的朋友，也能用英文交 流了。