CHINESE TRANSNATIONAL ADOLESCENTS' RESPONSES TO
MULTICULTURAL CHILDREN'S LITERATURE IN CULTURE CIRCLES

by

YuWen Chen

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DEFENSE COMMITTEE AND FINAL READING APPROVALS

of the dissertation submitted by

YuWen Chen

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The following individuals read and discussed the dissertation submitted by student YuWen Chen, and they evaluated the student's presentation and response to questions during the final oral examination. They found that the student passed the final oral examination.

Stan Steiner, Ph.D.	Chair, Supervisory Committee
---------------------	------------------------------

Eun Hye Son, Ph.D.	Co-Chair, Supervisory Committee
--------------------	---------------------------------

Diane Boothe, Ph.D.	Member, Supervisory Committee
---------------------	-------------------------------

Gail Shuck, Ph.D.	Member, Supervisory Committee
-------------------	-------------------------------

The final reading approval of the dissertation was granted by Stan Steiner, Ph.D., Chair of the Supervisory Committee and Eun Hye Son, Co-Chair of the Supervisory Committee. The dissertation was approved by the Graduate College

DEDICATION

This dissertation is dedicated to the following:

To the active and courageous Chinese transnational adolescents of the culture circles in this study. Thank you for being willing to share your stories and responses in the culture circle. The culture circle we built together enlightens me to continue to assist others in the journey of seeking their identities. Also, thank you to the Taiwanese and Chinese community members in Boise. Because of your generosity of sharing your immigrant stories, I can make this research project happen.

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matter that I am the second born girl in my family. The dilemma of having two names is no longer an issue for me. Am I YuWen or Maggie? Certainly, I am both YuWen AND Maggie!

ABSTRACT

The purpose of this study is to examine how Chinese transnational adolescents (CTAs) negotiate their identity based on their cultural knowledge and experiences through book discussion in Freirean “culture circle” (Freire, 2000, p. 120). This study is an interpretivist qualitative study of community-based action research (Glesne, 2010). The participants were seven American-born Chinese, two current Chinese and Taiwanese, and one Chinese adopted adolescent. Within the culture circles, CTAs responded to seven selected multicultural children’s literature which represents Chinese immigrants’ stories in the United States. The topics of the books included (1) who am I, (2) relationships with extended family I, (3) relationships with extended family II, (4) Chinese immigrants’ histories in the U.S., (5) holiday celebrations in the U.S., and (6) dream pursuits. This study was followed by the interweaving of Rosenblatt’s reader response theory (Rosenblatt, 2005), Holland’s psychoanalytic response- Defense, Expect, Fantasy, Transformation (DEFT) model (Holland, 1975), and Bleich’s literacy community formation (Bleich, 1986) in the culture circle setting. A variety of literacy activities (i.e., literary responses, group discussion, graphic organizers, and videos, etc.) were also incorporated in order to enrich interactive dialogues and investigate how CTAs (re)construct their identity through a critical lens. The culture circle meeting took place for two hours on Saturday afternoons over the course of six weeks. Data sources included video records of culture circles, participants’ literary response journals, artifacts, and

researcher's notes. The data analysis proceeded with transcription, pattern coding, and triangulation.

The data showed that two primary stages occurred over the six weeks of the culture circles. The first stage was an invitation, that is, CTAs and I made our life experience connections. The CTAs were involved in conversation through generative themes including shared communal experiences, building knowledge together, recognizing living in bi-cultural contexts, juxtaposing and negotiating Chinese immigrants' history and stories of the literature, and reconnecting cultural heritage and roots. The second stage was the process of identity (re)construction: critical inquiries and responses to the texts, examination of social perception and parents' expectations, and identity negotiation. In the continuous process of the culture circle meetings, CTAs formed their unique literacy community around these two stages in the culture circle over six weeks.

The findings showed that the collective identities that the CTAs formed as Chinese American+, Taiwanese American, and Chinese resulted from their collective responses to the books and mutual feedback with their bi-cultural life experiences and cultural values. CTAs gained a deeper understanding of and appreciation for their intercultural fellows. Also, they spoke up for themselves and detached from the social stigma of the Asian model minority stereotype. Regarding CTAs' personal stance (inner identity), the recurring data demonstrate that CTAs became more aware of their ontological existence and critically thought about the environment and context that they were situated in. They came to understand that as long as they continued to explore their identities, they will find who they are in different aspects of life. To conclude, this study may be of importance in explaining the inter-cultural group of Chinese transnational

students' identities, as well as in providing school teachers and the community with a better understanding of how Chinese transnational students' beliefs and perspectives of living in a bi-cultural context (Chinese family and American society) affect their ever-changing identities and relationships with themselves and others.

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CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION

In the social jungle of human existence, there is no feeling of being alive without a sense of identity.

- Erik Erikson

Positioning

Family shapes one's early identity. Identity, however, is not necessarily correlated to one's destiny when education motivates an individual to reshape their persona.

Looking back at my past, I realize how deeply my family influenced me. I grew up as a middle child of three in a family who owned a hair salon in Taiwan. My parents wanted their second-born child to be a boy and as a result, they were disappointed in me because I was a girl. This unmet expectation made me feel unacceptable.

Chinese and Taiwanese traditional families believe that only sons can continue the family line. Further, they predict a daughter is like water; she never comes back when she gets married. This inferiority conflict played a big part in shaping my personality. I became a people-pleaser because I wanted to be accepted by others. In addition, this behavior created a confusion about who I was as a person. The conflicted self-image was not resolved as I grew up, but intensified as I became an international student in the United States.

The first day I was on an American campus, my professor asked me what my name was, and I proudly responded, "My name is Maggie." My professor looked confused and continued, "Is Maggie a Chinese name or is Maggie equivalent to your Chinese name?" I

replied, “It is my American name. It’s not related to my Chinese name.” My professor said, “Tell me your Chinese name.” At that moment, I realized that wherever I went, I could not change the blood heritage of my Chen family. Even after leaving my family about 6,790 miles away, I am still Taiwanese and a second child of three from the Chen family. I am still ‘YuWen’ no matter whether I feel ‘unaccepted’ or not. Discarding my real name does not mean I have resolved my identity crisis. I questioned, “Who am I? Am I Maggie or YuWen? Can I be both?”

When I attended a Multicultural Children’s Literature course in the department of Literacy, Language, and Culture at Boise State University, I started to discover who I am through my bi-cultural living experiences in both Taiwan and the United States. In the class, the professor presented different genres of children’s books in the classroom and provided students with independent reading time. I picked up a picture book, *The Name Jar*, written by Yangsook Choi. This story is about a Korean immigrant girl who tried to abandon her Korean name (Unhei). She wanted to assimilate into the dominant culture of the United States by selecting an American name. Naturally, I felt connected to Unhei while I was reading this book. I realized that I am not the only person who has searched for self-identity in a new land. My personal connection to the book allowed me to find a sense of belonging and realize that other people are vulnerable like me. After reading the book and attending a children’s literature class, I screwed up my courage to write and ask my parents how they felt when they had a second child and why they gave me my name—YuWen. It was the first time my father shared his thoughts with me. My mother typed my father’s words.

We cannot decide which girl or boy we wanted to have. Lao tien yei (God) already arranges it for us. Lao tien yei (God) sent you to us. It's fate. The first day you came to the world challenged your mom and me. It was on April Fool's Day in 1988. You were born in our family car. You were so tiny and looked like a small mouse. Later, your mom and I looked up a Chinese dictionary. We came out three names for you and brought them to a Chinese master. The Chinese master told us the name of YuWen matches your life. "Yu" (郁) means fragrance¹; "Wen" (雯) means colorful clouds in the sky and a talent for literacy and art. As your name shapes who you are, we want you to become an elegant girl and have a colorful life.

The revelation from my parents empowered me to affirm my identity. Giroux (1995) wrote, "... human subjects are constitutively dependent on the normative approval of others in forming their identity, because they can ascertain their practical claims and goals only on the basis of the positive reaction of a counterpart" (p. 226). I reconstructed my identity by mirroring what I saw through multicultural children's literature.

As Steiner (2008) described, "Books can engage readers in discussions about social consciousness, the interconnections of people on this earth and help them understand the complexity of their individual actions" (p. 234). Book responses with other readers helped me reconstruct my identity during my graduate and doctoral studies. In the meantime, I was involved in Chinese heritage and language school in a local community. This involvement allowed me a unique perspective to understand the conflict Chinese ethnic background of adolescents' face as they struggle to find their cultural identity. Souto-Manning (2010) facilitated culture circles in an American first-grade classroom and found that multicultural literature is a gateway for children to value who they are. If

¹ fragrance is the literal translation of "Yu" (郁) Chinese character. The name implies a talented person who becomes influential. This is what my parents expected me.

multicultural literature can influence Chinese ethnic adolescents' bi-cultural living experiences and reconstruct their identities, I wondered how they would respond to multicultural literature reflecting on their experiences within Freire's 'culture circle setting' (Freire, 2000, p. 120).

Problem Statement

Battle Hymn of the Tiger Mother (Chua, 2011) has been controversial ever since its release. She articulated how a strict parenting style helps children succeed in a competitive world. Later, in 2013, Keltner in her book, *Tiger Babies Strike Back*, contradicted Chu's claim regarding Chinese American descendants raised by tiger mothers, "I think Chinese Americans are in a major identity crisis (p. 72)." My attention, therefore, was strongly drawn to Chinese Americans' identity negotiation. Inspired by these two books, I wanted to understand how Chinese transnational adolescents (CTAs) living in the United States find their voice and identities in Western culture. There have been numerous studies describing how readers make personal connections to the multicultural texts, which are grounded in reader's response theory (Ho, 1990; E.-H. Kim, 2010; H.-J. Kim, 2013; Lee, 2007; Liaw, 1995; Liaw, 2001; Resissman, 1994; Suzuki, 2005). However, few studies addressed Chinese American teenagers' bi-cultural identities (Leu, 2010; Leung, 2003). This study incorporates the use of readers response theory within a culture circle, and in particular examines how CTAs negotiate their identity construction processes while responding to multicultural children's literature. The CTAs discussed seven multicultural children's books related to Chinese immigrants' experiences in Freirean "culture circle" (Freire, 2000, p. 120).

Purpose Statement

The purpose of this study is to examine how CTAs negotiate their identity based on their cultural knowledge and experiences through book discussion in the culture circle setting. Within the culture circles, they responded to selected topics of multicultural children's literature which represents Chinese immigrants' stories in the United States. This study is followed by the interweaving of Rosenblatt's reader response theory (Rosenblatt, 2005), Holland's psychoanalysis response- Defense, Expect, Fantasy, Transformation (DEFT) model (Holland, 1975 & 2011), and Bleich's literacy community formation (Bleich, 1988) in the culture circle setting. I then utilized various literacy activities (i.e., literary responses, group discussion, graphic organizers, and videos, etc.) to investigate how CTAs formulate their identity through a critical lens.

Research Questions

Question 1: How do CTAs build their understanding of the Chinese immigrant history, family values, and Chinese cultural practices in a culture circle?

Question 2: How do CTAs use their cultural knowledge to reconstruct their identities through responding to multicultural children's books and literacy activities in a culture circle?

Significance of the Study

The significance of this study is in its contribution to the field of transnational students' identities within an inclusive community-based setting. Three primary significant contributions are from (1) the scholarly work, (2) sociocultural inclusion to teaching practice in the dynamic diverse classrooms, and (3) CTAs' personal transformation. First, reader response theory is not isolated when studying in students'

literacy performance on the literary comprehension. On the other hand, Freire's critical pedagogy of the culture circle does not merely anchor in social oppression and radical social issues. Rather, this study brings another perspective of views on the identity of negotiation through literary responses in the culture circle setting. Everyone's life experience is valued. The values of personal life experiences give students the power to make critical inquiries through the books they read and the social issues that concern them. This process builds rich dialogues and further gives them personal voice in their revelations. The students reconfirm themselves on the personal level and affirm their place in society and in their community.

Second, the social cultural inclusion occurs because liberal dialogues from the literary responses gives students insights into peers' unique cultural experiences. By understanding each other's cultural backgrounds and life experiences, students learn to embrace differences and similarities. Finally, this study also gives classroom teachers a better understanding of the inter-culture of Chinese ethnic background students, including American-born Chinese, Chinese immigrants and Chinese adopted children. The image of the Asian face does not coincide with the "model minority for Asians," but each one has her/his unique character, personality and a sense of who she/he is compared to others. As for the curriculum design, this study gives classroom teachers references to multicultural children's literature selection, particularly stories representing Chinese immigrants. Also, teachers can incorporate these books into content area instruction between language arts and social studies courses in linguistically and culturally diverse classrooms. This integration helps students break the stereotypes of the "model minority for Asians." Instead of believing how this society labels Asian subjects, students

recognize that what the dominant U.S. majority assumes to be Asian homogeneity actually contains unique stories and cultures.

Toward the end of the study, the participants were confidently developed unique identities for themselves as Chinese American+, Chinese, and Taiwanese American. Multicultural literature and literacy activities, framed in the culture circle setting, are agents to empower the CTAs to better understand who they are and make sense of the world growing up in bicultural contexts.

Definition of Terms

The definition of the following terms I used in this study are listed as follows:

Transnational adolescents (CTAs). In this study, CTAs refer to 12-14 year-old-teenagers who have Chinese or Taiwanese cultural and ethnic backgrounds. They are American-born Chinese, current Chinese / Taiwanese immigrants, one Chinese adopted adolescent. Falicov (2007), the family psychologist, states that transnational immigrants sustain their family bond with extended families across national borders. On the other hand, they not only sustain their life habituals of cultural origin, but also acculturate their generational relationships and rebuild ethnic networks in the adoptive new country. This involvement across their home country “bring about the ambiguities of living with two hearts” (cited in Falicov, 2005, p. 158). The term, ‘adolescence’ comes from Erikson (1968) in *Identity Youth and Crisis*. He describes adolescence as a crucial stage of transition toward adulthood. In this transitional period, adolescents are developing their physical and psychological growth. This stage is involved in identity formation through the daily role-fulfillment. However, identity confusion would likely occur when adolescents could not overcome challenges in a complex society. The maturity of identity establishment could

later re-build or confirm through individual transformation and interaction in the community.

American-born Chinese. American-born Chinese refers to those who were born and raised in the United States. Their parents are (first generation immigrants in the U.S.) from mainland China.

Current Chinese/Taiwanese immigrants. These adolescents were born and raised either in Mainland China or Taiwan. They moved to the United States when their family found work here about four years ago.

Chinese adopted adolescence. In this study, this refers to a 12-14-year-old teenage Chinese orphan who grew up in an orphanage in Mainland China and was adopted by American parents.

Culture Circle. Culture circle is based on Paulo Freire's critical pedagogy (2000). The purpose of culture circle is to help participants develop their literacy skills through interactive dialogues. The participants also empower each other to fight for social justice in an oppressed society. Recent studies have been adapted to Freire's culture circle in teacher education for advancement of critical thinking. For example, Souto-Manning (2010) framed a critical cycle by an adapting Freire's culture circle for teacher education research. This study formed the culture circle as a literacy community in order to examine CTAs' identity negotiation and literary responses.

Multicultural children's literature. Multicultural children's literature means stories from underrepresented cultural groups. The stories describe their sociocultural experiences, which validate their culture, race, identity, and language, etc.

(Gopalakrishnan, 2011). In this study, in particular, multicultural children's literature refers to books that represent Chinese immigrants' life experiences.

Literary responses. Readers respond in the books they read in a deeper sense, including comments, analysis of stories and characters through comparison of their personal understanding of life experiences. The reader plays an active role to construct the meaning between the texts and themselves (Rosenblatt, 1978). Literary responses can be used in various ways. In this study, journal entries, writing poetry, and graphic organizers are utilized as literary responses.

Method

In this study, the researchers created a literacy community- culture circle as a community-based action research for an intercultural group of Chinese transnational adolescents. In order to understand how CTAs construct their identity and respond to selected books in culture circle, the interpretivist qualitative approach was employed. The culture circle in this study is composed of ten Chinese transnational adolescents. They are American-born Chinese, Chinese immigrants, and one adopted Chinese. Six American-born Chinese adolescents were selected from an advanced level of a Mandarin Chinese class in the Chinese Heritage and Language School (CHLS), including four male students (Scarlati, Bach, Handel, and Myaskovsky), and two female students (Vivaldi and Black). Regarding two female Chinese immigrant students, Aria was found in a Taiwanese community in Boise and Ling is a student attending CHLS. One recent adopted Chinese adolescent (Shichi) who immigrated to the United States was found in an English as a Second Language (ESL) classroom in a local high school. These participants attended the 6th through 8th grades and ranged in age from 12 to 14. Regarding language proficiency,

the participants had mixed levels of bilingual proficiency (Mandarin Chinese and English); therefore, Mandarin Chinese and English were used interchangeably as needed. All participants, along with their parents, agreed to participate in this study. The participants and I met for two hours on a Saturday afternoon over a six-week period. I facilitated the culture circle meetings. Within each meeting, we had several different pre-reading activities, silent reading, book response journal entries and discussions, and post-reading activities.

The data sources include video records of each culture circle, participants' literary response journals, artifacts, and researcher's field notes. While transcribing the participants' dialogue and examining other data sources, I used thematic analytical techniques (Glesne, 2010) and the constant comparative method (Glaser & Strauss, 1967) to find emerging themes and patterns. In order to establish the trustworthiness of the study, I triangulated data sources and had frequent peer debriefing sessions. I continuously employed the constant comparative method to find the tentative categories of patterns and themes until solid findings were discovered.

Limitations

It is important to note that the timeframe was restricted. In total, there were only six meetings during a two-month period. Hence, in depth description is provided for research quality. I described how Chinese transnational adolescents responded to the books and how they negotiated their identity in the culture circle setting. If the timeframe had been lengthened, it is possible the results of the study would give more insight into CTAs' perspectives. On the other hand, the small population in this study cannot be transferred to other cases. Due to the fact that there is a small Chinese population in the northwest region

in the United States where I researched, CTAs' life experiences are different from other Chinese individuals who live in Chinatowns. Therefore, this conclusion cannot be generalized to other CTAs outside of this study.

Regarding the book selection, this study focused on six fictional picture story books. Due to time constraints and demanding academic studies, CTAs' did not have time to read longer selections. If participants could have read a variety of genres (for example, novels) the study results may have expanded their perspectives. In terms of researcher's position, I, as an insider of Chinese/Taiwanese ethnicity and international student studying in the United States, I may bring a personal bias to the study. However, my insider position may also make the interpretations stronger.

Organization and Overview of Chapters

This dissertation is composed of five chapters. Chapter 1 introduces how this study topic was generated, problem identification, research purpose, questions, definitions of terms, and limitations for this study. Chapter 2 provides reviews of literature, including Chinese immigrants' history in the United States and the northwestern region of America. Next, I review the empirical studies on how Asian and Asian American readers responded to multicultural children's literature. Also, included are other studies on Freire's culture circle utilization in the different fields. The last section of Chapter 2 is the theoretical framework I intertwined for this study: Rosenblatt's reader response theory (2005), Holland's psychoanalytic response (DEFT) model (1975 & 2011), and Bleich's literacy community (1988). Next, Chapter 3 describes the reasons for utilizing qualitative design of the methodological approach. This chapter also illustrates the process of recruiting study participants, backgrounds of each study participant, and how children's

literature were selected. Chapter 3 also presented how the data collected and process of the analysis. Chapter 4 reports the findings of the research questions: (1) How do CTAs build their understanding of the Chinese immigrant history, family values, and Chinese cultural practices in a culture circle? (2) How do CTAs use their cultural knowledge to reconstruct their identities through responding to multicultural children's books and literacy activities in a culture circle? Lastly, Chapter 5 discusses the research finding in this study which corresponds to some empirical studies on responses to multicultural literature and culture circle setting, and theoretical framework. This chapter also provides pedagogical implication and plans for research in the near future.

CHAPTER 2: LITERATURE REVIEW

One of the great pluses of being an immigrant is you get to start again in terms of your identity. You get to shed the narratives which cling to you.

- Joseph O'Neill

This literature review will include two major sections. The first section of the literature review focuses on the history of Chinese immigrants in the U.S., and more specifically examining in closer detail, the history of Chinese immigrants in the northwestern region of America. The second section aims to review empirical studies, which investigated how Asian and Asian American readers responded to multicultural children's literature, and praxis of the critical pedagogy and other studies on reader response theory. The last section is the theoretical framework for this study, including Rosenblatt's reader response theory (2005), Holland's psychoanalytic response (DEFT) model (1975), Bleich's literacy community (1988), and Freire's culture circle (1968).

History of Chinese Immigrants in the U.S.

Opium War: 1839

In the 1800s, during the Qing Dynasty, British traders smuggled large amounts of opium to China. The import of the opium caused many Chinese people to become addicted to this drug. In 1839, the Opium War broke out. As a result, Chinese officials were forced to make a conditional surrender as part of the import treaty with the European merchants (Yu, 1991; Edmunson, 2012). Following the Opium War, between 1840 and 1850, devastated natural disasters struck Guangdong Province and other

southeastern regions of China. War, disease and famine caused the death of millions of Chinese people. Moreover, in 1851, the peasant riots (Taiping Revolution) broke out because of the famine. Consequently, the economy collapsed, and large parts of regions were no longer under Chinese government control (Yu, 1991; Edmunson, 2012).

Gold Discovery in California: 1848

Because of the conditions in China, some Chinese men left their families behind and traveled to North America to search for work opportunities (Yu, 1991). Employment overseas allowed Chinese immigrants to send money home to their families through businessmen or friends. These Chinese workers thought that they would have a temporary stay in North America and return to China in prosperity (Yu, 1991; Leonard, 2014).

Most Chinese immigrants traveled by boat to North America from Guangdong and Fujian provinces in the southern China coast. They borrowed the travel fees from their employers in advance. Their monthly wages would be garnished to repay their debt. This labor trade was known as “coolie trade” (diligent laborers-苦力勞工) (Yu, 1991).

The laborer trade was led by a group of intellectual Chinese merchants, named “hui guan” (會館), who settled in the U.S. by 1849. Based on the contract with the coolie trade, the employers agreed on equal treatment for everyone and everyone believed they could make a fortune settling in North America.

The employers brought the first wave of Chinese laborers to California, where gold was discovered in 1848 (Edmunson, 2012; Leonard, 2014). According to Yu’s dissertation (1991), approximately 300,000 Chinese peasants arrived in the U.S. between

1849 and May 6, 1882. These Chinese male immigrants worked as gold miners, merchants, laborers, cooks or laundry business owners. Chinese workers' tireless work ethic allowed them to grow rich by Chinese standards even though the payment received for their work was less than other ethnic groups in the U.S.

Transcontinental Railroad: 1860-1869

Gold mining work was not the only economic activity for early Chinese immigrants because the gold was almost gone a decade after their arrival. Therefore, many Chinese workers started to find other opportunities to continue to work in North America, because their debts remained. In 1860, the plans to build a transcontinental railroad to the West Coast suffered from a shortage of workers. To fill the gap, Chinese miners went to work on the transcontinental railway project. They learned to do the necessary work quickly and diligently in order to earn money to support their families in China. Still, they were paid less than the other ethnic groups. Due to the debt to their employers, they could not negotiate for their rights. This unequal treatment mounted. Chinese laborers were assigned to do more dangerous tasks, such as handling explosives and cutting out mountainsides. Some died while undertaking such hazardous work.

Eventually, on the 10th of May in 1869, the first transcontinental railway was completed at Promontory, Utah. Chinese workers from the west met up with an Irish workers from the east - the two lines were joined (Albright, 2015). After the transcontinental railway was completed, many people across the states could not find jobs. The gold rush had run out. White workers started to blame Chinese workers for the lack of job opportunities, despite their contribution to the transcontinental railway. Because the anti-Chinese feeling arose among Caucasians: a series of massacres broke

out around the states and the hostility and riots were rampant. For example, according to Hooper & Batalova (2015), one of the most significant violent events occurred in Rock Springs, Wyoming. Twenty-eight Chinese miners were killed in 1885.

Chinese Exclusion Act: 1882

In 1882, the U.S. Congress passed the Chinese Exclusion Act, which was signed by President Chester A. Arthur (“Our Documents,” n.d.). This bill prohibited Chinese non-laborers from being in the United States. In other words, Chinese immigrants had to hold a certificate from the Chinese government to prove they were not laborers, but that they were merchants or intellectual people and were exempt. As a result, an estimated 15,000 Chinese returned to China in 1889, compared to the 1850s when up to 300,000 Chinese immigrants entered the U.S. (Zong & Batalova, 2015). Because of the Chinese Exclusion Act, far fewer Chinese could enter the United States. Under this restrictive immigration law, it was even harder for Chinese male workers to bring their wives, children or other family members to the United States. Consequently, these Chinese men became bachelors for the rest of their lives in communities primarily in the West (Fee, 1993).

Great Earthquake in San Francisco: 1906

Many Chinese immigrants chose to settle in San Francisco, which had the largest Chinese community in North America. In 1906, the San Francisco's great earthquake destroyed many buildings and thousands of people died from the devastating fire. Many Chinese immigrants became homeless and lost their families (“NPR,” April, 12, 2006). Since all of the birth certificates in San Francisco were destroyed in the fire, it was hard for the city authorities to determine whether Chinese people were born in China or the

United States. Without the papers, the Chinese Exclusion Act was not enforceable. Consequently, the U.S. authorities allowed American-born Chinese to invite their extended families to the U.S. in order to continue to pass the family lineage.

Angel Island Immigration Station: 1910

These new Chinese immigrants known as “paper sons” traveled to the U.S. from China. When reporting to the American immigration authorities, they claimed to be the offspring of American citizens by giving false names of Chinese immigrants already living in the United States. In order to pursue the repressive investigation, between 1910 and 1940, U.S. officials set up a station at Angel Island in the San Francisco Bay. It was there they verified new Chinese immigrants’ identifications (“Angel Island,” n.d.). These immigrants were also subjected to detention and medical examinations. Some family members were separated for days. During the detention, some detainees left evidence of their trials by carving poetry in Chinese on the wooden walls. Today, this artistic expression is evidence of the detention experiences in the Angel Island museum (“Museum Collections”, n.d.).

The majority of Chinese immigrants had an arduous journey from China to North America, regardless of the timeframe of their entry. They eventually settled in the U.S. only to experience the anti-Chinese oppression. Chinese immigrants united to fight fear and hostility. To make unity stronger, some Chinese merchants and other businessmen established Chinese organizations in their communities. The function of their Chinese organizations was to provide new Chinese immigrants with resources: education, food, social activities, and job support.

These Chinese organizations expanded to become well known as Chinatowns in cities across many U.S. states, such as San Francisco, Los Angeles, New York, etc. (Alba, 1985). Because the Chinese supported each other in Chinatowns, they became independent and were able to run their own businesses. Compared to the early Chinese immigrants in the 1800s, the 20th century newcomers did not work as miners, railroad builders and farmers. In contrast, these latter immigrants began to run Chinese restaurants and laundries or worked in city factories and stores. Chinese immigrants became more successful and felt more secure in their communities.

Repeal of Chinese Exclusion Act: 1943

In spite of successful economic activities among Chinese immigrants in their communities, outside of the Chinatowns, the hostility towards Chinese immigrants did not decrease until World War II (1939-1945) when China and the United States became allies against the Japanese after Pearl Harbor was bombed. North Americans changed their hostile attitude. In the meantime, Chinese American organizations urged the repeal of the anti-Chinese laws. In 1943, the U.S. officials abolished the Chinese Exclusion Act (Alba, 1985). Now, non-American born Chinese could apply for American citizenship. In 1965 and 1967, all anti-Chinese immigration laws across the states were abolished. Ever since, a new wave of Chinese people from different professions migrated to North America (Edmunson, 2012). The motivations for migrations were different from the early immigrants who sought a temporary stay. Now, they were, and still are seeking a permanent home.

Table 2.1 An Overview of Historical Events in the U.S. and China (Adapted from Hoobler & Hoobler (1994, p. 122))

Year	Events of Historical Chinese Immigrants in the U.S.	What had happened in China?
1800s		Qing dynasty: British traders smuggle opium to China
1839		The Opium War breaks out
1848	Gold discovery in California: The first flux of Chinese migration to North America	
1860	The beginning of building transcontinental railroad	
1869	Completion of the first transcontinental railway	
1882	Chinese Exclusion Act	
1906	Great Earthquake in San Francisco	
1910	Angel Island Immigration Station opens in San Francisco	
1911		The last Chinese emperor is overthrown by Kuomintang
1939-1945	WWII breaks out	
1940	Angel Island closes	U.S. and China had become allies
1943	Repeal of Chinese Exclusion Act	
1945-1949		Chinese Civil War & Japanese invasion
1949		Chiang Kai <u>Shek</u> retreats to Taiwan
1965 & 1967	Abolishment of all remaining anti-Chinese immigration laws	
2000s	The bloom of a variety of economic activities for Chinese immigrants in the U.S.	

Chinese Immigrants in Idaho

Zooming to the northwestern region, the earliest Chinese immigrants located in Idaho became gold miners. However, when the minefields dried out, Chinese immigrants shifted to different economic activities in order to meet the local needs of the community. This section will shed light on the topics of diverse economic activities between the 1860s to 1950s, and the development of Chinese organizations in local communities.

Because this completed study focuses on Idaho, it is necessary to present the Chinese immigrants' history in this region. This section will include Chinese immigrants' economic activities, cultural practices, organization evolvement and life experiences.

From Gold Mining to Diverse Economic Activities.

The First Gold Discovery in Oro Fino Pierce City. The earliest Chinese immigrants of Idaho came from Western America where the gold mining fields were. According to Yu (1991), the earliest Chinese immigrants relocated to Idaho from California and Oregon because of a new gold discovery in Idaho. On September 30, 1860, the first gold discovery was at the Oro Fino Pierce City in central Idaho and it flourished for more than one year ("Idaho Treasure Hunters," 2010; Yu, 1910). Many white, African American and Chinese people came to Pierce City of Idaho to grasp this opportunity; however, Chinese laborers were forced to work in the difficult situation of exhausted mines. Even though they were discriminated against they succeeded in the mining activity. New rich mine sites, such as Elk City, Newsome, Florence, Clearwater Station, and Warren of Idaho were discovered between 1861 and 1863. Chinese miners were not allowed back to the Oro Fino Pierce district until 1865 when the gold was exhausted. Despite working in the exhausted mine fields, Chinese miners were able to find mineral remains with their hard work. Overall the exploitation of natural resources helped economic development in Idaho (Edmunson 2012; Yu, 1991).

Later Gold Discoveries in Idaho. In 1864, the second gold discovery was found in the Boise region, including Idaho City, Centerville, and Placerville. More and more Chinese laborers from other states came to Idaho for opportunities. According to Yu (1991), "...between 1865 and 1870 among 3,400 residents of Idaho City, 1,426 were

Chinese” (p. 80) and increased up to “3,376 among 5,356 people in the next decade from 1871 to 1882” (p. 81-82). Still, the Chinese Exclusion Act of 1882 restricted Chinese laborers from entering the U.S. and forbade immigrants from doing mining activities. Thus, the growth of the Chinese population stopped increasing. Nevertheless, Yu (1991) mentioned, a few earlier Chinese individual miners were able to find their way to work in the remaining mine fields.

Between 1883 and 1884, Coeur d’Alene district became the third largest gold field. Many white miners came to the new minefield; however, the gold ran out quickly, so they had a short stay there. Because the white miners left, Chinese miners were able to stay for the hard-pressed mining activities, which lasted until the 1890s.

Other Economic Activities. Mining work was not the only economic activity for Chinese immigrants. Since the restriction of the mining laws, some Chinese miners changed their work to meet local needs wherever they saw potential working opportunities. They toiled in the mining camps as food packers, gardeners, cooks, and suppliers (“ENews,” n.d.). Yu (1991) described the characteristics of Chinese, “...their diverse economic activities showed their ability to adapt to the local conditions” (p. 117). Most Chinese immigrants originally came from the warm Guangdong province, which is located along the coast of southeast China (Leonard, 2014). Comparatively, the northwestern US climate was far different. Chinese immigrants were able to overcome the geographical condition differences and create economic activities even in the rough mountains, dry deserts, and cold weather. Yu (1991) further states, “they came to be tolerated because they successfully created a demand for their businesses and services, and in addition, their actual physical number supported the economy of the Boise region”

(p. 117). Other Chinese immigrants worked as domestic servants for white families. They prepared and served meals, cleaned house, and even took care of their employer's children. Because of their diligent work and trustworthiness, some white families kept Chinese servants for years.

In addition, due to the high demand of clean clothes for miners, some Chinese people started laundry businesses. The Chinese laundry businesses were another successful enterprise in the Boise region in the 1870s. They provided hand-washed, hand-ironed, and delivery services to customers. However, not every laundry owner paid his employees fairly, so the Chinese laundry laborers fought for fairness. Eventually, workers received better payments. The boom of the Chinese laundry business lasted 40 to 50 years. It ended in the 1920s when the modernized laundry machines invention invaded the laundry market (Yu, 1991).

Other economic activities sprouted between the 1870s and the late 1880s. Chief among these were Chinese gardening businesses that boomed in the Boise Basin area because of the comparatively warm weather conditions. Entrepreneurs provided fresh green vegetables for mining camps through effective partnerships with local customers (Yu, 1991; Hart, 2002). For instance, a group of Chinese established a commune in the gardening business. They shared lands and collaborated on selling fresh green vegetables in the Boise area and the mining camps with a highly organized market structure (Bauer, 2009; Yu, 1991). The farms were west of Boise, which is now known as Garden City (Fisher, 2010). Chinese vegetable peddlers sold their fresh produce to Chinese and local residents on the streets every morning. However, the Chinese gardeners, who owned horses or mules, also provided shipping services to other mining camps in Idaho City and

Silver City. Yu (1991) mentioned, “Vegetable market gardening was only one of many occupations from which the Chinese people gained recognition and reputation” (p. 123). Chinese merchandise stores were another enterprise in the local community. They provided Chinese goods, including food, clothes, pottery, and herbs for Chinese and American customers. Since the stores developed well, a number of owners expanded to create new markets. These enterprises served the mining fields in the Boise region. They also served as gathering places for the Chinese immigrants to chat, discuss problems and issues with friends and acquaintances.

In order to facilitate the rest of their economic activities, Chinese entrepreneurs developed an organized banking system for the Chinese people even before the American banking system had developed in the Boise region. Chinese customers were assigned a credit account to record their purchases and later paid off their debts without any interest. The Chinese bookkeepers visited them bi-weekly, or monthly. Because of this system, Chinese entrepreneurs built a trusting relationship with their customers. Yu (1991), in her study, described that the restaurant business was another endeavor for Chinese entrepreneurs in the Boise region during the 1870s. George Mong was an example of success. He opened a Chinese restaurant in Lewiston in 1883. His success and good reputation were respected among Chinese and white residents. Two other significant Chinese, Yung Wahs, and See Yups ran their businesses with Chinese merchandise and forged the labor market of miners, packers, and gardeners in Idaho City. Later, some Chinese herb doctors supplied medical practices for both Chinese and non-Chinese patients in their local community. The Ah-Fong influential families medical practice

founded the Hip Sing Association of Boise (Bauer, 2009; Edmunson, 2012; Yu, 1991; Hart, 2002).

Today, the economic activities have changed compared to the earliest Chinese immigrants, who worked as miners, gardeners or laborers. The occupations of later Chinese immigrants have shifted to the white-collar class. According to Hooper (2015), higher education has allowed Chinese to work as programmers in the high-tech companies, consultants in the local construction companies, restaurant owners, investors, international business entrepreneurs, and so on.

Organizations and Social Activities.

Learning about Chinese social activities in American society is important because it helps us better understand Chinese demographic, social interaction, behavior, and Chinese culture in the United States. In addition, understanding Chinese social activities helped me considerably in finding my research participants community. The grounded collective culture for Chinese immigrants changed very little even after they moved to different places. Primarily, because they formed organizations to help support each other. Before moving to the U.S., Chinese immigrants lived with their extended families in a village and collaborated on the farming work. Discussed below is the evolution of the way in which Chinese built community to support each other in the Boise region.

Early Chinese Social Groups. Tracing back to the 1800s, two of the largest organizations, or “tongs” (堂), were actively involved in Boise downtown: Hip Sing Tong and Hop Sing Tong. The first Chinese cultural association, Hip Sing Tong was formed in 1908 (Yu, 1991) and found space to the organization in 1921 (Hart, 2002). They supported new Chinese immigrants with temporary shelter, language translation,

and job seeking consultant services. Yu (1991) mentions, “the Hip Sing Association was actively involved in various public events and acted openly in Boise. It exercised much control over public opinions by having friendly contacts with non-Chinese communities” (Yu, 1991, p. 184). The Hop Sing Tong was less famous compared to the Hip Sing Tong. These two “tongs” had battles involving murders, drugs, gambling, and street gangs. As a result of the bad reputation they developed, there were fewer members remaining and “tongs” gradually disappeared by the 1950s (Hart, 2002).

Three primary types of Chinese social organizations were established in Idaho in the early years based on different foundations (Yu, 1991). First, the family or clan association was grounded on biological relationships or kinship connections. Second, the district association was found based on places of origin or spoken dialects. Last, the secret societies were associated with different political views (Yu, 1991). The particular names of these organizations were unknown. Because of the lack of interaction between Chinese and white people, non-Chinese residents misinterpreted Chinese social activities as intentionally kept secret. Thus, non-Chinese reporters called them “Chinese Masonic Lodges” (Yu, 1991). To make organizations function well, they primarily followed Confucians’ principles, such as reciprocal and hierarchical relationships.

Religious activities played a chief role in the early Chinese life in Idaho. Practices varied depending on individual preferences, often blending Confucianism, Buddhism, and Taoism. Chinese believe in different gods for spiritual supports and assistance. These include gods of fortune, health, medication, kitchen, district, earth, sea, commerce and so on (Yu, 1991, p. 170). Another common form of spiritual support was ancestor worship. Chinese “believed that they owed their fortunes or misfortunes to their ancestors” (Yu,

1991, p. 171). They served food, clothing, and paper money and provided shelters for their ancestors in order to meet their needs in the other world.

Table 2.2 Early Chinese Social Groups

Time	Types of Chinese Social Groups (Early)	Common Activities	Functions	Notes
1860s	family/clan related association	Related to Biological Relationships or kinship connections	Religious practice	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Protection from threats and hospitality outside • Sense of belonging and companionship-Sponsored & built temples
	district association	places of origin or spoken dialects		
	secret societies	political views		
1908	Hip Sing Tong	Leader: Chinese doctor Ah-Fong	Public relations, social & ceremonial activities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Gathering location • Sense of belonging & companionship

Current Chinese social groups. The previous studies in the literature discussed the history of early Chinese immigrants in Idaho between the 1860s and the 1950s (Hart, 2002; Yu, 1991). However, little is known about immigrants' lives in the last sixty years in the Boise Basin area. Therefore, I became involved in the Chinese community and had interviews with people in the Chinese communities to get the following information. I found that three types of Chinese groups are currently actively involved in the Boise Basin area: the Idaho Chinese Association (ICA), the Idaho Chinese Organization (ICO) with a subgroup of Chinese American Youth Group (CAYG), and Chinese Christian Church Group (CCCCG). Both of the Boise Modern Chinese School (BMCS) and the

Boise Traditional Chinese Dance Group (BTCDG) focus on language and cultural praxis in the local community. Generally speaking, members are involved in multiple groups, especially for the celebrations of the Chinese holidays. Other seniors and middle-age people attend badminton and taichi group practice in the Chinese community.

Idaho Chinese Association (ICA). First of all, approximately forty Taiwanese families established the Idaho Chinese Association (ICA) in 1986. The ICA is a platform for Chinese to build friendships and celebrate important Chinese holidays overseas. The goals of the ICA are social interaction and preservations of Chinese culture. Members of the ICA respect different political views, so politics are not discussed in social events. Intentionally, the ICA is a bridge for communication with the Taipei Economic and Cultural Office in Seattle. In 2009, during the Special Olympics World Winter Games, ICA members assisted Chinese players as needed (J. Lin & B. Tsai, personal communication, November 21, 2016). Another way of helping newcomers is providing homestay accommodation for young MBA candidates from Taiwan during their internships (S. Wen, November 19, 2016). By doing so, it allows newcomers to feel a sense of belonging and welcoming in the U.S. and around the world.

The events ICA held between the 1980s-2000 were Chinese New Year, Dragon Boat Festival, Mid-Autumn Festival, and Christmas holidays either in a park or a Chinese restaurant. During these events, children performed in talent shows, playing the piano and violin. Currently, the ICA events have diminished. They are no longer holding as many events; they no longer celebrate the Christmas holiday. They do however hold a potluck party in a park for the Dragon Boat Festival and Mid-Autumn Festival celebrations. Due

to weather conditions, ICA members celebrate Chinese New Year in a Chinese restaurant.

In addition to the holiday celebrations, some ICA members have informal personal activities on a daily basis. For instance, some women lead a study group and share Chinese books they brought from Taiwan. A group of retired men have a lunch meeting twice a week to catch up on their lives (J. Lin & B. Tsai, personal communication, November 21, 2016; H. Tchen, December 7, 2016). During the Christmas holiday break, some ICA seniors usually visit their adult children and grandchildren around the country, and others take a trip to Taiwan to visit their extended families.

Idaho Chinese Organization (ICO) and Chinese American Youth Group.

Second, the Idaho Chinese Organization (ICO) was founded by a group of people from Mainland China. This organization was officially registered as a non-profit organization in 2012 (Y. Ma, personal communication, January 25, 2017). The goals of the ICO are to introduce Chinese culture to American society and pass on the Chinese cultural heritage to the next generation. Currently, the ICO has an estimated 1000 members in Idaho. The ICO is composed of Chinese, a few Taiwanese, diaspora Chinese, and American spouses. Like the Idaho Chinese Association (ICA), they celebrate important Chinese holidays. Other than these events, they created a social media group through We Chat, which is an app for online social interaction established in Mainland China. We Chat is an important medium for the ICO because members can make inquiries and post information to meet the diverse needs of the group. For example, when Chinese newcomers have a question

about settling in the Boise basin region, members share their settling experiences and resources with them through this social media platform.

Chinese American Youth Group (CAYG) is a subgroup of the ICO composed of second-generation Chinese Americans of high school and college age. The goals for the CAYG are to assist with Chinese social events for the ICO, such as reaching out to the performing groups in the local community. Also, CAYG members participate in community service at the Idaho Youth Ranch and Food Bank (Y. Ma, personal communication, January 25, 2017).

Boise Chinese Christian Church (BCCC). Third, the Boise Chinese Christian Church (BCCC) is another Chinese group actively involved in the local community. It started in 2002 with a handful of Chinese families who formed as a Bible study group. Later, their increase of members allowed them to establish the BCCC. Currently, there are 30-40 families involved in this church. The estimated membership is one hundred people (Y. Ji, personal communication, October 2, 2016). They hold Sunday worship, Bible study nights both in Chinese and English and holiday celebrations, including Christmas, Chinese New Year, and etc. (“Boise Chinese Christian”, n.d.).

Table 2.3 Current Chinese Social Groups

Time	Types of Chinese Social Groups (Current)	Common Activities	Functions	Notes
1986	Idaho Chinese Association (ICA)	Mainly Taiwanese Chinese from Taiwan	Chinese holiday celebrations: Chinese New Year, Dragon Boat Festival, and Mid-Autumn Festival	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sense of belonging and companionship • Preservation of Chinese culture • Introduction of Chinese culture to American society
1990s	Idaho Chinese Organization (ICO)	Mainly Chinese from Mainland China		
2010	Chinese American Youth Group (CAYG)	2 nd generation of Chinese Americans		
2002	Boise Chinese Christian Church (BCCC)	Chinese Christians	Religious practice	Spiritual peace

Mandarin Chinese Language and Culture. As mentioned above, different types of Chinese organizations created a platform for immigrants to gather for social activities. The primary goals among these groups are to introduce Chinese culture heritage to the American society, preserve and pass on Chinese culture to their next generation. In order to practice language and culture, Boise Modern Chinese School (BMCS) and Boise Traditional Chinese Dance Group (BTCD) were formed to serve Chinese Americans and the Boise local community.

Boise Modern Chinese School (BMCS). In 1998, before the Boise Modern Chinese School (BMCS) was fully established, several Chinese parents gathered their (approximately 15) children to learn Mandarin Chinese (Y. Ma, personal communication, January 25, 2017). At that time, the Chinese school was in need of certified teachers, a

location, and a systematic curriculum. Parents were volunteers for the Chinese classes and the class meetings occurred every Sunday afternoon. Due to lack of resources, the class locations changed from a Chinese restaurant, to a university classroom, to a local church to a charter school. Despite these struggles, parents attempted to keep the classes alive by having fun. For example, soccer games for the children were an extracurricular activity after the Chinese Sunday School. During the Chinese class time, some parents played badminton as a recreational and social activity.

At this time, the Boise Modern Chinese School (BMCS) is well established. A group of Chinese parents and other community members formed a school administrative team (principal, treasurer, and secretary) and school board. Since BMCS has a strong administrative team and supportive parents, the number of the students has been growing, 130 as of December 2016. The Chinese language classes are offered from kindergarten to AP course level, that is, ten different levels. The location is in a local charter school. Teachers have bicultural education experience both in China and the U.S. The class period is from 2 to 4 p.m. on Sundays. The BMCS also offers an hour of extracurricular activities after the Chinese class, including soccer, chess club and traditional Chinese dance class. At the end of each semester, BMCS invited parents and community members to attend the final presentation in order to share these students' learning outcomes.

Boise Traditional Chinese Dance Group (BTCDG). The Boise Traditional Chinese Dance Group (BTCDG) was established in 2004 as an after-school program for the Boise Modern Chinese School (BMCS). The goals of the dance group are “to serve the Chinese American community by maintaining its cultural heritage, and to introduce Chinese culture to the American society through dance performances” (“Boise

Traditional Chinese,” n.d.). To date, the dance program has developed from one dance class to four dance classes divided by age. In addition, some elite adult and children dancers are selected as a performance group. This particular group has been invited to give annual performances at universities, charter schools, local companies, the historical museum, and non-profit organizations.

The founder of BTCDG (2016) indicates there are 56 Chinese cultural identities with different dancing styles. Thus, they introduce this variety in performances with specialized costumes to a number of local audiences. The local community recognized the founder with the Traditional Arts Apprenticeship three times. The BTCDG continues to promote Chinese cultures annually to the local community and Chinese American children learn to appreciate their cultural heritage through learning Chinese traditional dance. Despite the continuing needs of costumes and constant turnover of members due to local migration, the BTCDG hopes to continue to pass on the Chinese traditional dance to the local Chinese Americans and spread Chinese cultures in the American society (H. Yan, personal communication, November 23, 2016).

Table 2.4 Mandarin Chinese Language and Culture

Time	Mandarin Chinese Language & Culture	Functions	Notes
1998	Boise Modern Chinese School (BMCS)	Chinese heritage school	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Promote Mandarin Chinese language proficiency • Preserve Chinese culture • Spread Chinese culture to the American society
2004	Boise Traditional Chinese Dance Group (BTCDDG)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Dance class for Chinese Sunday school after school program • Performance group for cultural events in the local community 	

Empirical Studies on How Asian and Asian American Readers Responded to

Multicultural Children's Literature

In this section, I will provide an overview of empirical studies on multicultural children's literature in three categories: (1) Asian and Asian American readers with multiple levels of English language proficiency responses to the Asian and Asian American Literature (Liaw, 1995; Son, 2009; Leu, 2010; E.-H. Kim, 2010; H.-J. Kim, 2013), (2) Asian English learners' reading responses to American literature in Asian countries (Ho, 1990; Liaw, 2001; Lee, 2007), and (3) ethnically diverse readers' responses to multicultural literature (Resissman, 1994; Leung, 2002; Suzuki, 2005).

Asian and Asian American readers with multiple levels of English language proficiency responses to the Asian and Asian American literature. Several studies targeted the elementary Asian American children and used Asian American literature representing their diverse backgrounds as reader response exploration. Liaw (1995) investigated whether Chinese children responded to two Chinese American children's books through making connections with their experiences. Eleven Chinese and Chinese

American children responded to the stories by written responses. The results revealed that readers were able to go beyond the literal level of comprehension and demonstrate insight into personal relevance to the stories. Similarly, Son (2009) focused on Korean transnational children (two recent Korean immigrants, two acculturated Korean immigrants, two Korean Americans, and two Korean adoptees) from the second to sixth grade. Son examined how they used their cultural backgrounds to construct meanings through exploring six picture books about Korean people and culture. To do this, she conducted pre-and post- reading activities in four groups. She found that the participants' Korean and American cultural knowledge allowed them to interpret the picture books differently. Building on Sipe's (1996) five categories of literary understanding, including analytical, intertextual, personal, transparent, and performative elements, Son proposed a culturally-based category as an additional element. This would include "responses that are made utilizing readers' cultural awareness, knowledge or experiences" (p. 110) on the recognizing, connecting, inquiring, and evaluating levels.

The other two studies focused on readers past the sixth-grade level (Asian American youth and young adults) and investigated how they responded to multiple texts, such as young adult fiction novels, and media sources (E.-H. Kim, 2010; Leu, 2010). Leu (2010) investigated these young adults' responses to a Chinese American young adult fiction novel, *The Star Fisher* (Yep, 1992). Twelve young adults and adults with Asian and Asian American ethnic background read this novel individually; afterwards, they filled out a questionnaire as a reading response. The findings revealed that the participants had dealt with the between-world dilemma and racism reflecting their cross-cultural experiences in the U.S. The limitation of this study was the superficial nature of

the questionnaire as a single data source. As a result, the researcher failed to gain deeper insights about the participants' reading experience.

E.-J. Kim (2010) investigated how six Korean and Korean American adolescents explored multiple sources representing Korean American cultures, including three young adult fiction books, three online media articles, and one Korean American movie. Also, the multiple sources explorations and group discussions within a student-centered mode of interpretive community, which Kim created, gave these teenagers a space to share their viewpoints and allowed them to gain different perspectives from fellow participants. Utilizing this critical awareness, these Korean and Korean American teenagers were able to reevaluate their identity conflict between two cultural contexts. Furthermore, the participants had positive attitudes towards the book club involvement in this study.

Many empirical studies focused on the role of children and youth's responses on multicultural children's literature (Liaw, 1995; Son, 2009; Leu, 2010; E.-H. Kim, 2010). However, Asian and Asian American parents' points of view on multicultural children's literature were not known. H.-J. Kim (2013) was the first researcher who conducted a study on how ten Korean and Korean American parents responded to seven Korean American children's picture books. In this study, parents held a positive attitude towards this literature. In addition, they were able to distinguish the different values of reading the Korean American versus Korean children's literature because it allowed them to connect their children's bicultural living experiences. H.-J. Kim also found that the Korean parents help their children maintain Korean language and heritage through owning Korean books at home. Furthermore, these parents inferred that different Korean immigrants' backgrounds and educational experiences might have different perspectives

on and interpretations of the Korean American children's picture books. The findings also showed that these parents were concerned about the authenticity of the stories from these books due to the media's misinterpretation of Korea or Korean Americans. Kim also suggested that Korean parents should be concerned about their children's overall life experiences and hear their voices rather than focusing on the academic achievement and English language development.

Asian English learners' reading responses to American literature in Asian countries. In order to have Asian students be on the global market, English language proficiency has been taught and addressed in Asian countries. Numerous empirical studies examined how Asian English learners responded to American literature (Ho, 1990; Liaw, 2001; Lee, 2007). The findings revealed that American literature intervention allowed Asian English learners to gain aesthetic experiences and broaden cross-cultural perspectives.

Ho (1990) in Singapore at the time of the study, interviewed 103 Singaporean teenagers learning English from 13 to 17 about their reading preferences and opinions on American young adult fiction books. The results showed that these teenagers enjoyed reading the western literature. Also, they learned American cultural and societal rules from the stories, but they did not accept them. Ho pointed out despite increasing the understanding of the western cultures, these Singaporean teenagers still tend to hold their own cultural values in their society.

Liaw (2001) utilized the reader response theory with a variety of literary activities in order to examine how thirty-one Taiwanese English as a Foreign Language (EFL)

university students responded to five American short stories, including *No Hair Day* (Rosenfeld, 1996), *I See You Never* (Bradbury, 1979), *A Bag of Oranges* (Athanas, 1995), *The Use of Force* (Williams, 1984), and *Sunday in the Park* (Kaufman, 1986). The results showed that these Taiwanese EFL students increased their English reading interests through broadening aesthetic experiences in a non-threaten learning classroom. Therefore, the activities based on reader response theory assisted English language and literacy instruction.

Lee's dissertation (2007) was a similar study on EL readers' responses to American literature but addressed the cross-cultural reading experience. Six Taiwanese EFL eleventh grade teenagers shared their reading responses to six American realistic short stories in American Young Adult Literature Study Club. The results revealed that these participants reached three levels of literary response, including interacting, interpreting, and evaluating. Liaw's study (2001) echoed to Lee's (2007), for example, these teenagers were able to take an aesthetic stance to enjoy cross-cultural reading with no fears of reading foreign language texts.

Other ethnically diverse readers' responses to multicultural literature.

Reflecting on the pedagogical implication about EL readers' responses to multicultural literature, Resissman (1994) was an early researcher adapting this approach in classroom instruction. She integrated Louise Rosenblatt's (1978) reader response theory and emphasized cultural reader response' aspect to investigate her students' understanding of multicultural texts. Resissman's sixth grade classroom was composed of Asian American and other heterogeneously mixed students. Three multicultural texts, including Chinese American novel- *Joy Luck Club* (Tan, 1989). Puerto Rican American novel- *Felita*

(Mothr, 1999) and Black American poem- *Theme for English B* (Hughes, 1951) were introduced to students. The findings reflected other similar studies. Readers drew on their own cultural knowledge and personal experiences to interpret the texts (Resissman, 1994; Liaw, 1995; Leung, 2002; Suzuki, 2005; Son, 2009; E.-H. Kim, 2010; Leu, 2010; H.-J. Kim, 2013). For example, Resissman introduced *Joy Luck Club* (Tan, 2006) to the class, through the “Leaving out to pull in” reading activity (Resissman, 1994, p. 20). She asked her students what the author’s ethnic background was as a “leaving out” (pre-reading) activity. The Korean and Cuban students both thought the author shared their ethnic backgrounds. Also, Resissman’s “pull in” (interactive reading) activity, which was designed to facilitate sharing between peers, built students’ empathy and respect for each other’s experiences and backgrounds.

Leung’s (2002) participants also had heterogeneous mixed bicultural backgrounds. Four bicultural fourth to eighth grade female students, including three Asian Americans and one Jewish and Eastern European student, read a Chinese American fictional autobiography, *Homesick: My own story* (Fritz & Tones, 1982) on their own at home. Later, Leung interviewed these girls about their responses to the cross-cultural text. The findings indicated that the participants used their bicultural experiences and cultural knowledge within Chinese and American contexts to reconstruct meaning in response to the story. For example, some participants identified with the character of the story, Jean, because they had similar experiences living in the bicultural contexts. Others responded emotionally to the situation of their extended families overseas through learning historical events among Chinese and Chinese immigrants from the story.

Different than the previous studies on Asian American readers' response to the Asian American literature, Suzuki's (2005) investigated if non-Asian American students distinguish two different Asian cultures of literature. The researcher selected a Japanese American book, *Journey to Topaz* (Uchida, 1971), and a Chinese American book, *Dragon's Gate* (Yep, 1993). Nineteen non-Asian American fifth graders (sixteen Caucasians, and three African American girls) participated in the study. The finding revealed that these non-Asian American students developed their empathy through characters and historical facts in the stories. Although these students did not specifically indicate the differences between Japanese- and Chinese- American cultures, they did gain new knowledge of historical facts from the stories.

Conclusion

In conclusion, there have been numerous studies describing how readers make personal connections to the multicultural texts, which are grounded by the reader's response theory (Ho, 1990; E.-H. Kim, 2010; H.-J. Kim, 2013; Lee, 2007; Liaw, 1995; Liaw, 2001; Resissman, 1994; Son, 2009; Suzuki, 2005). However, few studies addressed Chinese American teenagers' bicultural identities (Leu, 2010; Leung, 2003). Even though these two empirical studies mentioned the bicultural dilemma among Asian Americans, much of the recent literature used questionnaires without other sources of data (Leu, 2010). Moreover, some studies had participants read individually (Kim, 2010; H.-J. Kim, 2013; Leu, 2010; Leung, 2003), but without gaining others' perspectives. The monologue of readers' responses fails to learn how readers respond to books with others. Although other researchers shifted from monologue into dialogue by interacting with research participants (Lee, 2007; Liaw, 1995; Son, 2009), the one-on-one interactive reading

activities might still have limits of gaining multiple perspectives from others. Leung (2002) and E.J. Kim (2010) suggest that group discussion is important. Leung also points out that researchers and teachers should “create a ‘third space’ where bicultural youth can construct, deconstruct, and reconstruct their identities through interactions with literature”, which allows Asian American youth to develop ethnic identity and cross-cultural competence through responding to Asian-American literature (Leung, 2002, p. 51).

Praxis of the Critical Pedagogy and Other Studies on Reader Response Theory

Bahruth & Steiner (2000) promoted that critical pedagogy of culture circles offers a pedagogical and democratic spaces for developing students' critical awareness and lifelong learners with humanization. Utilizing meaningful literacy activities is a way to engage students in the culture circles. Souto-Manning (2010) exemplified the praxis of the culture circle by working with different groups of participants, including in/pre-service teachers and young children. Participants gain critical thinking and seek to equity in this hegemony society. Further, Osorio (2018) incorporated multicultural children's literature in her classroom. In the end, students learned to embrace linguistically and culturally diverse students and increase their critical thinking on social issues. The other example of literature incorporation goes to Demoigny & Ferraras-Stone's study (2018). They had developed lesson outlines of historical picture books for an elementary social studies classroom with critical literacy practices. This demonstration allowed students to juxtapose the historical events in a critical lens and develop their responsibility as citizens in a society. Participants gained multiple perspectives with critical thinking through multicultural children's literature discussion in the culture circle.

Regarding reader's response practice on the studies, Grujicic-Alatrisme (2013) and Elsherief (2017) offer new insights into the studies on readers' responses. Grujicic-Alatrisme (2013) conducted psychoanalytic literary criticism of Holland's DEFT (Defense, Expectations, Fantasy, and Transformation) model as a reader response tool in a language classroom. She found that the DEFT model helps non-English language speakers confidently respond to texts because they can express their personal feelings and opinions rather than merely examining the understanding of the story plot. Elsherief (2017) synthesized several readers' response theories into her studies. She criticized that classroom teachers should engage students in meaningful discussion concerning responding to the texts. As a result, she suggested that applying reader's response theory into Freire's culture circle setting gives participants an opportunity to interact with each other and better meaning-making in a sense of literacy community.

Due to the fact that I cannot find any studies on the adolescents' identity negotiation in the response to texts, specifically Chinese ethnic group, I therefore focus on the Chinese transnational adolescents as the study participants. Furthermore, in order to add on the study of multicultural children's literature in classrooms, this study will use Freire's culture circle (2000) as a third space for Chinese transnational adolescents to explore multicultural literature that represents Chinese immigrants' experiences. The participants will respond to the books and I will facilitate the participants discuss their identity, Chinese immigrants' history, relationships with the extended family, holiday celebrations in the U.S., and dream pursuits within the culture circle.

Theoretical Framework

Reader Response Theory

In the late 1930s, reader response theory was promoted in academia and reading education. Louis Rosenblatt was a pioneer who developed this theory. The reader response theory emphasizes the readers' interpretation and feedback on the texts regarding readers' cultural backgrounds and experiences. Readers and texts are not parallel, but they enter into a transactional mode during the reading event. Readers take an active role to give meaning to the texts. This idea has influenced the teaching style in the field of education. Instead of teacher-centered instruction, more often teachers listen to students' inputs. This role shift encourages students to share their perspectives without judgement. The teacher and students, together, collect all the responses to the texts and create understanding.

Groundwork of Reader Response Theory: Louis Rosenblatt

Louis Rosenblatt established theoretical groundwork for the reader response theory, which was inspired by her interdisciplinary experiences in the fields of anthropology and literature. She discovered that the relationship between the natural world and human beings is analogous to reading experience between texts and readers. Rosenblatt (1970) also argues that in the traditional literary paradigm, authors and texts held predominant roles whereas, readers served as invisible roles and participants, passive recipients. She believed that instead, readers' responses should be considered valid and important. In the process of reading, Rosenblatt suggested we should emphasize readers' voices and opinions about the text, instead of letting the author dominate the conversation. This novel point of view has a profound impact on the later development of

the reader response theory. Using this method shifts the classroom style from teacher dominant to students/readers centered.

Rosenblatt (1978) refers to texts as the 'poem,' designated during a reading event. Each reading event is a transaction between reader and text in that particular time and place, which is known as transaction theory. The transactional model concept consists of reader's language, linguistics, and selective attention. In a reading process, the reader turns his/her attention to a particular text based on his/her personality in either an efferent or aesthetic aspect. In aesthetic reading, the reader concentrates on savoring the texts with affective, sensational, emotional, associational, and qualitative aspects. However, for the efferent reading, the reader focuses on "the cognitive, referential, factual, analytical, logical, and the quantitative aspects of meaning" (Rosenblatt, 2005, p. 12). Within the efferent-aesthetic continuum, the reader's stance will not strictly fall into just one part of the spectrum because the reader has the freedom to select and attend to a particular text. However, in efferent reading, the reader's stance most often focuses on the public aspect. The private aspect is when the reader pays attention to the aesthetic reading (See Figure 2.1). When the reader consciously pays attention to a particular portion of the texts, this selective attention ability emanates from the reader's life experiences, language acquisition and linguistic experiences with others in the environments to which she/he belongs.

Figure 2.1 The Efferent/Aesthetic Continuum. Rosenblatt (2005, p. 92.)

Rosenblatt's *Making Meaning with Texts* (2005) highlights the linguistic transaction element of transaction theory. Each reader's interpretation of the texts is varied based on her/his personal history and linguistic-experiential reservoir. That is, the reader gives both verbal and non-verbal signs to the reading response in a particular portion, and the listener supplies comments, questions, and feedback. This dual interaction is a continuous process, allowing readers to reinterpret/reconstruct new meanings from the texts.

Psychoanalytic Response: Norman Holland's Defense, Expectations, Fantasy, and Transformation (DEFT) Model

Norman N. Holland is a literary scholar, and also one of the chief pioneers in the field of reader-response criticism. This model draws on the reader's literary experiences rather than the texts- and authors-oriented study. Holland employed this psychoanalytic literary response to examine how readers respond to readings. The article, *5 Readers Reading* (1975), described how his five university students used a free association technique to respond to the three short stories he selected. As a result, he found that when readers respond to the texts, this stimulated their personal identity to express their thoughts and re-create their own identities during the reading events. Later, *the I and Being Human* (2011) articulates the psychoanalysis theory of identity in literary response. The term definition of identity in Holland's explanation (1975) includes two sides: "Identity can be perceived by the person in question, as when I think about me" from 'inside', or "identity can be perceived by another from 'outside', as when I think about you" (p. 36-37). To coincide with this psychoanalytic theory, readers respond to the texts by using the existing personalities and their identities developed in their childhood and

young adulthood (Holland, 1975). When transacting with texts, each reader's response is varied due to different life experiences. Holland adapted Freud's dream theory to explain the symbolization and the perception in psychoanalytic literary response. When people dream a particular scene, it might be associated with a certain thing, which is related to one's real life desire for wish fulfillment.

These elements in the dream are symbols. Likewise, during a reading event, "symbols tended to appear as a substitute for free associations as if the dreamer took them over ready-made (like grammatical and arithmetic constructions in dreams)" (Holland, 2011, p. 99). The symbols here not only compose the texts, but also the readers' personal experiences and culture. That is to say, readers decode the symbols they read through connecting to their identities and personalities. This process allowed readers to fulfill their wishes and to defend what they fear or were unsatisfied with their past experiences. This concept helped Holland to develop the DEFT model in psychoanalytic literary response. The DEFT represents defense, expectation, fantasy, and transformation. These four elements are not necessarily in chronological order during a reading event. See the explanation of this model as follows.

Expectation. Initially, readers can predict what happens next in the text based on their personal background and culture codes/norms. Individuals' expectations are varied. Some may seek or find the specific literary work, which links to their pre-ordained wish or fear issues.

Defense. Then, if the particular plot, which the reader selects to read, does not satisfy the reader's expectations, she/he may show her/his distaste for the story. Grujicic-Alatrisme (2013) articulates that the defense here means the reader's approval or objection to the story, which (mis)matches her/his thoughts about the characters and plot in the story.

Fantasy. However, whether the expectation is fulfilled or not, the reader could project her/his expectation by weaving a pleasant fantasy for wish-fulfillment. Each fantasy and defense refers to a symbol, which is the production of the reader's experiences and culture.

Transformation. There are two levels of transformation. One is inner transformation, and the other is collective transformation. Inner transformation comes from the readers' interaction with the literary texts and is involved in either fantasy or defense elements toward the literary work. This transformation re-creates the reader's identity and "project into it toward some esthetic, ethical, intellectual, or social coherence" (Holland, 2011, p. 102). However, in the collective transformation, numerous readers gather together to respond to the texts with the symbols (defense or fantasy) they generate. As a result, they re-symbolize their responses. This intersubjectivity gives readers not only a space to explore beyond themselves between the texts/story, but also enriches before-and-after reading experiences. Consequently, readers gain different interpretations to their identities.

As described above, readers get involved in the DEFT elements during a reading event. Holland (2011) also emphasized the importance of receiving 'feedback' from

others. Each feedback response represents an individual's symbol. He added, "We create an inner environment of symbols. Then we live in a delicate tension between our inner and outer worlds of symbols" (p. 105). In short, the instant feedback creates dialogues for inner-self and outer-self which helps each person to better understand self and others' thoughts.

David Bleich: Building a Literacy Community

Both Rosenblatt (1970) and Holland (2011) mentioned the importance of dialectic and intersubjectivity in the reader response theory, which allows readers to enrich their reading experiences. Thus, they can connect the reading to their personalities and personal experiences rather than to the literary meaning itself. David Bleich, a contemporary literary professor, provides educators practical guidance toward praxis of subjective-oriented reader response theory in classrooms. Bleich's *Readings and Feelings-An Introduction to Subjective Criticism* (1969) promoted the 'collective subjectivity' subtracting the traditional method of evaluating students' knowledge of the texts. Bleich asked, "What does one mean by the most important?" (p. 50) He emphasized that there is no wrong or right answer in responding to the texts because each person has her/his unique interpretation to the texts based on their associative connections. When a group of readers responds in unison to the texts, they can gain different perceptions and draw further collective conclusions to the texts. However, the power of literary community formation would not occur if 'feeling' is not released among the readers' responses. In a word, expressing inner 'feeling' is a key to build in a sense of literary welcoming community. Bleich (1988) applied three phases of 'feelings' about literature responses in order to validate the inclusive literary community in his

classrooms: perception, the affective responses and the associative responses. The following is the detailed description of these three phases of the literary responses.

Phase I. Perception. In the first stage, readers showed their initial response to the texts. Individuals ‘see’ something in the texts; however, they may perceive different things because of their different personalities and life experiences. In traditional classrooms, the teachers analyze whether students’ perceptions are correct or incorrect; she may find a variety of responses because of different personalities and life experiences. However, in the traditional classroom, only one answer is valid. Bleich stressed that giving readers time to express what they perceive differently at the beginning is appropriate. This process of reading response promotes readers’ motivation to read and their eagerness to share. Unlike the traditional classroom, in the non-traditional classroom, respondents can either make an inquiry or a (re-)adjustment to what they ‘see.’ There are no ‘mistaken’ answers. All respondents’ perceptions are valued. Also, sharing different perceptions, without judgement, reduces respondents’ worries about criticism. Sharing perceptions might also help them to build trust in the literary community.

Phase II. The Affective Responses. Readers express their ‘feelings’ in the affective responses phase. They describe what they feel or (dis-)agree with. When the ‘feeling’ is reported by each respondent, the follow-up dialogue occurs. Participants might want more clarification as to why the respondents have their individual ‘feeling.’

Phase III. The Associative Responses. With the continuous conversation about the ‘feeling,’ the respondents enter into the associative response phase. When participants reciprocate their feelings about the literature, they connect their past and recent stories

with the literature. According to Bleich's studies (1975), his students' written journals demonstrated their association from interpersonal experiences, family, relationships, social, or even political issues.

When the three phases of the reader response were completed, within an inclusive community, the members of participants would come up with their collective interpretation to the texts. This community response can reflect the group values; meanwhile, individuals' values are still respected.

Freire's Culture Circle is an Agent of a Literacy Community

The father of critical pedagogy, Paulo Freire, is a Brazilian educator and social activist. Freire (1968) facilitated a group of illiterate laborers to become literate by creating a literacy community, known as Freire's culture circle. Literacy development empowered these laborers to find their voices in an unequal society. Within the culture circle, a facilitator utilizes critical literacy to trigger participants to rethink their positioning in social contexts. Shor & Pari (2000) describe how critical literacy allows readers to "examine our own development, to reveal the subjective position from which we make sense of the world" (p.1). Freire's theory of critical literacy also addresses the observation the readers question texts, which connects from the personal level to social contexts, rather than decode words on the superficial level. He claimed, "Reading the world precedes reading the word, and the subsequent reading of the word cannot dispense with continually reading the world" (p. 140). The goal of the critical literacy instruction is to empower oppressed people through reading and rich interactive dialogue within a democratic space, that is, the culture circle.

Within the culture circle, participants are able to gain multiple perspectives and construct knowledge with critical thinking through interactive dialogue (Bahruth & Steiner, 2000; Freire, 2000; Lankshear & McLaren, 1993; Shor & Pari, 2000; Souto-Manning, 2010; Wink, 2005). The process of dialogue proceeds four phases. First, the descriptive phase is an initial understanding of the texts for readers. Second, the personal interpretive phase is where readers connect their personal experiences to the texts. However, readers' reaction can be varied from affirmation to rejection. Third, during the critical, multicultural, and anti-bias phase, readers take critical lenses to reflect what they read rather than decoding words through interactive dialogue with others. Finally, during the creative and transformative phase, readers construct new knowledge and transform themselves in order to fight for social justice or personal advocacy in an unequal society (Wink, 2005).

Souto-Manning (2010) articulated that the interactive dialogue occurs among the participants and the facilitator within the culture circle. She illustrated that the event is a critical cycle (See figure 1). This event is a recurring process as follows: generative theme(s), problem posing, dialogue, problem solving, and action at the personal/societal levels. First of all, the participants are free to share what they have read and experienced. The issue, they point out, is the process of generative themes. Likewise, "dialogues evolve along generative themes of daily living involving all participants" (Bahruth & Steiner, 2000, p. 133). Second, the facilitator utilizes "didactic materials (photographs, slides, film strips, posters, reading texts, and so forth)" for further discussion of the issues and problem posing. This is the codification stage and is the best channel of communication for each theme and its representation (Freire, 2000,

p. 121). When the continuing dialogue has been occurring, the participants are also “capable of generating critical thinking.” (p. 92) Similarly, Shor & Pari (2000) state, “all of us emerge from local cultures set in global contexts where language from multiple sources shapes us.” (p. 1-2) The multiple sources and dialogue engagement help the participants develop their critical thinking. The participants would further think about how they could solve the problems they address and what differences they can make at the personal or societal levels. Overall, this critical cycle within the culture circle occurs when the environment is full of love, trust, and humanizing. Thus, this critical cycle develops a trustful community of learners and makes it a valuable space allowing the learners to exert their voices with critical thinking (Souto-Manning, 2010, p. 123).

Figure 2.2 Critical cycle (Souto-Manning, 2010, p. 20).

CHAPTER 3: METHODOLOGY

We all have a gift; we all have a passion - it's just about finding it and going into it.

Being an asset to your family and community.

- Angela Bassett

In the previous chapter, Literature Review, I gave an overview of the historical background of Chinese immigrants in the United States and Chinese immigrants in the northwestern region of America specifically where the participants were selected. Also, I examined the empirical studies on how Asian and Asian American readers responded to multicultural children's literature. In order to examine CTAs' responses to selected multicultural children's literature in the culture circle, I conducted a qualitative study of community-based action research. The research questions are as follows:

1. How do CTAs build their understanding of the Chinese immigrant history, family values, and Chinese cultural practices in a culture circle?
2. How do CTAs use their cultural knowledge to reconstruct their identities through responding to multicultural children's books and literacy activities in a culture circle?

This chapter explains the methodology employed in this study. The organization of this chapter is divided into multiple sections. The first section explains why the qualitative study of community-based action research approach was utilized. The

following sections are the processes of literature selection based on the particular criteria for this study. They include brief summaries of each selected book by organizing with different topics. The subsequent sections are: (1) explanations of how I found the study participants and background information of each participant and (2) descriptions of the role of the researcher in this study. The next sections give a detail of the data collection procedures and material I utilized for the culture circle meetings. This is followed by the illumination of data collection methods, data sources and data analysis. The last section is the discussion of research quality for this study.

Research Design

This study is an interpretivist qualitative study of participatory action research (PAR) / community-based action research (Glesne, 2010). Glesne pointed out that the PAR approach is usually associated with critical theories and Paulo Freire's work, which empowers marginalized people to transform themselves in an oppressed society. Since Freire mentioned that his intention toward critical literacy work does not have to be manipulated in exactly the same way as his, other researchers and educators can adapt his pedagogy to fit their needs in the context (Souto-Manning, 2010). Regarding literacy work, Elsherief (2017) suggested that utilizing reader's response theory into Freire's culture circle setting gives participants an opportunity to interact with each other and better meaning-making in a sense of literacy community. Therefore, this study is designed to add to the literature in this field. In this study, I create a literacy community-cultural circle as a community-based action research for a group of Chinese transnational adolescents (CTAs). In order to understand how CTAs negotiate their identity and respond to selected books in the culture circle, I conducted the interpretivist qualitative

approach. The purpose of the interpretivist approach is to understand “human ideas, actions, and interactions in specific contexts or in terms of the wider culture” through investigating “how people interpret and make meaning of some object, event, action, perception, etc.” (Glesne, 2010, p. 8). When conducting an interpretivist qualitative approach in a study, a group of members are contextualized in a particular social context. This helps researchers to learn their cultural patterns and how that particular group makes sense of that phenomena (Glesne, 2010). Because the purpose of this study is to understand CTAs’ perception of the book responses and identity negotiation in a particular social setting- culture circle I created, the interpretivist qualitative approach is suitable for this study.

As Rosenblatt (1978) argued, the absence of critical theory fails to stress reader’s response to the text. The culture circle, in this study, is an agent to fill this gap. I intertwined within reader response theory of psychological analysis; specifically, Holland’s Defense, Expectation, Fantasy, and Transformation (DEFT) model (Holland, 1975) from reader’s stance to contextualize reader’s identity negotiation and Bleich’s idea of literacy community formation in the culture circle. Freire (1993) indicated, “Reading the world precedes reading the word, and the subsequent reading of the word cannot dispense with continually reading the world” (p. 140). Through the culture circle setting, participants are not only reading the words in the books, but also reading the word through interaction among peer participants.

Literature Selection

Utilizing multicultural literature in classroom teaching has become a popular trend in education in this decade. The significant genre of the multicultural literature is

that "...the main character a person who is a member of a racial, religious, or language micro culture other than the Euro-American one (Lynch-Brown & Tomlinson, 2005, p. 185). Through the multicultural stories, students learn from different cultural backgrounds of others. Osorio (2018) incorporated multicultural literature in her classroom. The results of the study revealed that students embrace diversity, connect to their cultural backgrounds, honor peers' voices, and increase critical awareness on social issues. Osorio's results of her study coincide with the purpose of my research design.

In this study, the purpose of multicultural children's literature incorporation in the culture circle is to give research participants voices and connected to their cultural experiences. However, literature selection is a vital concern for a teacher so as to meet students' needs and educational goals. Lynch-Brown and Tomlinson (2005) provide criteria for evaluation when selecting multicultural books: (1) proper reading levels for readers, (2) avoid racial and cultural stereotype, (3) significant characters with positive images, (4) accurate cultural details; especially presenting subgroups within a microculture, (5) a variety of the microcultures of books showed in a classroom (p. 186). There are five most populous microcultures published in the U.S., including African American; Asian American; Latinos; Jewish; and Native American. Due to the fact of this study is that research participants are a microculture group with Chinese/Taiwanese backgrounds. I therefore focus on the Chinese immigrants and its bi-cultural experiences. According to Lynch-Brown & Tomlinson (2005), "the Asian-American children's literature contains two major themes both in fiction and nonfiction genres. One is oppression; the other is appreciate, adjusting to life experiences" (p. 192).

When searching multicultural children's books for my study, I found thirty books representative of Chinese immigrant experiences in the United States. The scopes of the themes are from oppression, bi-culture appreciation to life adjustment experiences. Since the time frame of this study, I could not utilize all the books in my study. Instead of using all of them, I began to categorize them into six topics: (1) who am I, (2) relationships with extended family I, (3) relationships with extended family II, (4) Chinese immigrants' histories in the U.S., (5) holiday celebrations in the U.S., (6) dream pursuits. With these six topics established, I asked my dissertation co-chair professor for advice to select the books. To the end, I used seven books within the six topics in my study (to see table 3.1). These books might be too easy for the group of American born Chinese teenagers and the reading level does not meet the common criteria for selecting books at their ages. Whereas the purpose of this study is to learn students' responses to the books and conversation within the culture circle rather than language acquisition examination. Moreover, the concise nature of short stories within the multicultural children's literature helps participants to focus on the topic and participants would not feel pressure in addition to their regular school obligations.

Table 3.1 Selection of Multicultural Children's Literature

Week	Topic	Book title	Brief summary
1	Who Am I	<i>Hannah is My Name</i> (Yang, 2004)	A girl immigrated to the U.S. from Taiwan dealing with her Chinese and English names.
		<i>Three Names of Me</i> (Cummings, 2006)	An adopted girl explored the meaning of her three names.
2	Relationships with the extended family (I)	<i>Shanghai Messenger</i> (Cheng, 2005)	A biracial girl visited her relatives in China to learn about her heritage.
3	Relationships with the extended family (II)	<i>Grandfather Counts</i> (Cheng, 2003)	A Chinese grandfather and an American born granddaughter overcame language and culture. They built a unique relationship.
4	Chinese immigrants' histories in the U.S.	<i>Coolies</i> (Soentpiet, 2003)	Two Chinese brothers worked as migrant workers based on a historical event-transcontinental railroad building.
5	Holiday celebrations in the U.S.	<i>Apple Pie 4th of July</i> (Wong, 2006)	A Chinese American girl learned why her parents kept their restaurant open on the 4th of July.

6	Dream pursuits	<i>Dancing to Freedom: The True Story of Mao's Last Dancer</i> (Li, 2008)	During Mao's time, the boy was trained to become a professional dancer. He made his dream come true with his passion and family's support.
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Topic 1. Who Am I. Two books whose bicultural main characters dealt with their multiple names are *Hannah is My Name* (Yang, 2004) and *Three Names of Me* (Cummings, 2006). In *Three Names of Me* (Cummings, 2006), Ada, a Chinese adopted girl explores the meaning of her three names. Wang Bin was given by her caregiver at an orphanage in China. She interprets Wang Bin as a “queen” because Wang is royalty in Chinese. The second name, Ada, was given by her American parents, which means “arrive with love.” However, the third name is obscure because Ada only heard her biological Chinese mother whispering it to her. With her American parents’ caring and love, Ada embraces her three names both in the past and present because each of them contributes to her identity.

Hannah is My Name (Yang, 2004) was written by Taiwanese American author Bella Yang. The story was about a Taiwanese girl, Hannah, and her family’s immigrant story from Taiwan to the U.S. At the beginning, Hannah was not getting used to her English name in an American school. Also, Hannah and her family had a difficult situation while waiting to receive green cards. In the story, Hannah wondered where she belongs while meeting multicultural people on the street and in the school. In the moment of receiving her green card, Hannah was glad that she felt included in the host country.

Topic 2 & 3. Relationships with Extended Family. The Hungarian American author, Andrea Cheng, wrote two picture books about how biracial children interacted

with their Chinese extended families. Two stories were adapted from her biracial children's stories with her Chinese husband's families. *Shanghai Messenger* (Cheng, 2005) was written in a poetry format with vivid illustrations. The story was about an eleven-year-old biracial American girl, Xiao Mei, visiting her relatives in China. Before meeting Chinese relatives, Xiao Mei was worried about how Chinese would look at her because of her appearance. However, with the hospitality of Xiao Mei's relatives, she stopped feeling anxiety, homesickness, and cultural shock and started to appreciate her Chinese heritage.

The other picture book, *Grandfather Counts* (Cheng, 2003) is a story of a Chinese grandfather, Gong Gong and American born granddaughter, Helen. Gong Gong came to stay with Helen's family from China to America. Helen had to give away her bedroom to Gong Gong and this made her upset. Moreover, Gong Gong did not speak English, and Helen only knew a little Chinese. The language barriers and cultural gaps made them uncomfortable with each other. Gong Gong felt isolated, so he stayed in a room and read a Chinese newspaper until the day Gong Gong and Helen sat by the railroad in front of their house watching trains passing by. They started to teach each other counting in English and Chinese. The interaction developed their bond.

Topic 4. Chinese Immigrants' History. *Coolies* (Soentpiet, 2003) was written and illustrated by an Asian American couple. The story was adapted from an actual historical event, the establishment of the transcontinental railroad across the West in the United States. A Chinese peasant, Shek and his brother, Little Wong, sought for an opportunity in California. Among other Chinese railroad workers, they endured discrimination, and hazardous work as railroad workers. When they had a break time at

night, Shek taught his brother writing Chinese characters. These two brothers were diligent in their work. They hoped they could earn enough money and bring their mother and little brothers to come to the U.S. one day. One image in the story showing the completion of the railroad depicts the Chinese workers in the background unlike the actual photo that has no Chinese workers in the picture.

Topic 5. Holiday celebrations in the U.S.. The Asian American author, Janet S. Wong, wrote *Apple Pie 4th of July* (2006). A Chinese American girl learned why her parents kept their restaurant open on the fourth of July-Independence Day of the United States. At the beginning, the girl felt embarrassed and did not understand why her parents kept their Chinese restaurant open all year round, except for Christmas. While helping parents with the store, the girl saw the parade pass by, but no customers came in. However, during the dinner time, more and more customers came in and ordered Chinese food after watching the parade. When the girl and her parents closed their restaurant, they watched fireworks and ate apple pie on the top of the roof. After the moment of watching the fireworks, the girl realized why her parents meant to keep their store open even though it was a holiday.

Topic 6. Dream Pursuits. *Dancing to Freedom: The True Story of Mao's Last Dancer*, a real story from the author, Li Cunxi (2008). The story was a journey of becoming a professional dancer nationwide. When Li was a young boy, he lived in a remote rural village in northern China with his family. During Mao's time, he was one of a few selected candidates from among millions of children to enter the Beijing Dance Academy for dance training. Whenever Li encountered difficulties in the training process, he recalled a story of a "little frog in the well", which was told by his father for

inspiration. Later, Li's outstanding performance let him go to advanced training in the United States. Even though he was far away from his family, he still appreciated his family's emotional support along the way to pursue his dream.

Participant Selection

The unique purposeful sampling approach was conducted for the selection of participants in this study. When the researcher pursues a better understanding of particular individuals, the method of sampling leads to greater accuracy (Merriam, 1998). Moreover, selecting participants needs certain criteria in order to obtain rich information from informants (Miles, Huberman, & Saldana, 2014; Glesne, 2010; Merriam, 1998). This study strives to understand Chinese transnational adolescents' literature responses and their identity negotiation. Therefore, selected criteria contain American-born Chinese, recent Chinese immigrants, and Chinese adopted teenagers who are ages 12 to 18. The purposeful sampling approach always happens before data gathering (Merriam, 1998). Therefore, in the fall semester 2016, I started to get involved in my local community, including Chinese and Taiwanese organizations, and the language and heritage school, where I could recruit potential participants who met the criteria I established.

The procedure for recruitment starts with building relationships. As Glesne (2010) mentioned, the qualitative researcher makes efforts to establish rapport and maintain field relations for a better understanding of informants' perspectives, especially with adolescents and children. In the study field, the researcher's role is flexible, including friend, observer, leader, or supervisor (p. 145). In the beginning, I took field notes as a class observer with the Chinese school principal's agreement. I observed Mrs. T's

advanced-level Chinese class on Sunday afternoons; 13 teenagers from the ages of 11 to 17 attended the class. During the 10-15-minute recess time, I got a chance to talk to students and learn more about them individually. After several visits, Mrs. T invited me to assist students with class activities. Later, in January 2017, Mrs. T asked me to be a substitute teacher for a month in her class while she was in China. While I served as a substitute teacher, students were curious about my background. They asked me if Taiwanese uses different terminology than they learned in Chinese class, what dialects Taiwanese speak, and what the differences are between simplified and complex Chinese characters. Also, they wondered what life in Taiwan was like compared to circumstances in China. The interaction with these students was a valuable experience. Not only did I gain insight into my potential participants, but I also developed a rapport with them. From an understanding of these young people, I realized that although Chinese diaspora and second-generation immigrants seem different on the surface, they share a common culture, language, and beliefs. After interacting with these potential participants, I was reassured about using the Chinese intercultural adolescents as the criteria I created for the purposeful sampling in my study.

Originally, my target participants were the older teenagers who were 10th to 12th graders. These teenagers showed much interest in this study. However, as high school students, they had many obligations. These included Sunday Chinese class, Advanced Placement (AP) and SAT test preparation, music class, sport competition, and so on. Thus, they were afraid to commit to attend six weekly meetings for this study. Therefore, I lowered the age and grade level of the participants I recruited. As a result, participants from the Chinese school are seven American-born Chinese adolescents between 12 and

14 years old and one recently 12-year-old immigrated Chinese girl. Because most of the students in the Chinese school are American-born Chinese, recent Chinese immigrants are few. Therefore, I got involved in a Chinese organization led by Taiwanese to seek participants who are recent immigrants. As mentioned earlier in Chapter 2 of the Literature Review, Chinese and Taiwanese organizations celebrate holidays, including Chinese New Year, Dragon Boat Festival, and Mid-Autumn Festival. At the Chinese New Year event, I met several recent immigrant families from Taiwan; as a result, a recent immigrant 14-year-old girl joined my study. In addition to the American-born Chinese and recent Chinese immigrant adolescents, I added Chinese adopted student into my selected criteria based on the purposeful sampling approach. My professor referred me to several American parents who had Chinese adopted children. After discussion, they were interested in my study; however, their children's weekend schedule conflicted with mine.

In order to find more target participants (recent Chinese immigrants and Chinese adopted), I contacted an English as a Second Language (ESL) teacher in a local high school. I had previously his ESL class when I served as an event coordinator for the [University] Refugee Alliance. The ESL teacher agreed to have me visit his classroom and talk to his recent Chinese immigrant students. I met two students: one was a Chinese immigrant teenage girl, Angela, who had just immigrated to the U.S. eight months prior. Her mother had remarried an American. Angela's mother agreed to have her to join my study, but the daughter resisted it. As far as I know, she did not want to sacrifice her six weekends just to meet a group of Chinese ethnic students. I think she preferred to spend time with her American friends and explored a new culture. The second was a Chinese

teenage girl, Sichi, who was adopted in 2015. Sichi became my study participant and is the only Chinese adopted adolescent in my study.

Pseudonyms and Confidentiality

Due to the fact of all the study participants were all under 18 years of age, obtaining parental consent is required. Prior to the study, I received the Institutional Review Board (IRB) approval. Both parents and adolescent participants signed consent/assent forms. In this way, participants and their parents learned what the purpose of the study was and how I would work with them. All participants' personal information in the research study is confidential. Therefore, I asked each adolescent participant to give me a pseudonym, which would not reveal their identity. To my surprise, six of the ten American-born Chinese adolescent participants decided to have a theme for their pseudonym. Some used classical composers' name as their pseudonyms. Others preferred to use a name they picked randomly.

Since one of the topics in my study is identity, participants talked about how they got their Chinese and English names. In Chapter 4, the data will reveal participants' names. In order to keep the participants' information private, each individual's both names (English and Chinese) will not be mentioned in the same section. The pseudonyms and both English and Chinese names will be displayed separately. By doing so, participants' identity will not be evident.

Backgrounds of Study Participants

To elaborate on the study participants' background, three primary types of Chinese transnational adolescents are classified: (1) Seven Chinese Americans who were

born and raised in the United States, and their parents are either from Mainland China or Taiwan, (2) Chinese immigrants who were born and raised in Mainland China or Taiwan, but recently immigrated to the United States, and (3) One Chinese adoptee who was born in Mainland China, but was adopted by American parents in 2015 when she was thirteen years old.

American-born Chinese Group. Seven American-born Chinese adolescents were selected from an advanced level of Mandarin Chinese class in the Chinese Heritage and Language School (CHLS), including four male students (Scarlatti, Bach, Handel, Myoskavsky), and three female students (Vivaldi, Black, and Liszt). (See table 3.2)

Table 3.2 American-born Chinese Group

<i>American-born Chinese Group (Total number: 7)</i>					
Name	Gender	Age	Grade	International mobility experiences between China/Taiwan and U.S.	Language Spoken/ Proficiency
Scarlatti	Male	13	8th	Visited Chinese relatives once in a while in China	Mandarin Chinese (communicated); Sichuan dialect (understanding); English (fluent)
Bach	Male	12	7th	Visited Chinese relatives once in a while in China	Mandarin Chinese (communicated); English (fluent)
Handel	Male	14	9th	Visited Chinese relatives once in a while in China	Mandarin Chinese (communicated); English (fluent)
Myoskavs -ky	Male	13	8th	Visited Chinese relatives once in a while in China	Mandarin Chinese (communicated); English (fluent)
Vivaldi	Female	13	8th	Visited Chinese relatives once in a while in China	Mandarin Chinese (communicated); English (fluent)
Black	Female	13	8th	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Born in the U.S., but was raised by grandmother in China until 4 • Visited Chinese relatives once in a while in China 	Mandarin Chinese (fluent); English (fluent)
Liszt	Female	12	6th	Visited Chinese relatives once in a while in China	Mandarin Chinese (fluent); English (fluent)

Vivaldi. Vivaldi is an American-born Chinese girl: an 8th grader age 13. She is a knowledgeable and critical-thinking young lady. Vivaldi likes the Arts and enjoys video games in her free time. She also plays the viola. Vivaldi's parents completed graduate studies in the U.S. and immigrated to the U.S. seeking a better opportunity. Vivaldi and her family visited their extended families for an occasional family events, such as a wedding. Vivaldi's grandparents could not visit them in the U.S. because of aging. Vivaldi said it was hard for grandparents to make such a long trip. Therefore, her family plans to visit grandparents when they have time.

Vivaldi was the first student I talked to while observing her classroom in the CLHS in the Fall of 2016. As I was conversing with her at the indoor of parent pick-up area, her mom came in and we introduced ourselves to each other. Her mom told me that she also has a college age son studying at a university in the eastern region of the U.S. During our conversation, Vivaldi's mom expressed her regret at the Chinese traditional style of authoritarian parenting with their son. Therefore, they do not push Vivaldi as hard as they did with their son. Vivaldi told me that her brother made her parents proud because he became a leader at a school club. Now, he is developing the lifestyle he wishes away from the 'eagle-eye' and restrictions of his parents. In Vivaldi's opinion, her brother's leadership encouraged other people to reduce their negative stereotypes of Asian parenting.

In my observations at the CLHS, Vivaldi likes coloring, reading, or watching other peers playing video games during recess. In the cultural circle meeting, she initiated her peers to create pseudonyms as a theme for this dissertation study.

Black. Black, an 8th grader at the age of 13, is a talented girl. Although she was born in the U.S., she was raised by her grandmother on her mother's side in Mainland China. Her parents both had full time jobs. When she turned four, she returned to the U.S. to live with her parents again. On one occasion, Black's grandparents came to the U.S. and stayed with the family for several months.

Black attends a Chinese traditional dance class in the after-school program at the CLHS. With dancing talent, Black is qualified to participate in the Chinese traditional and professional performance in their local Chinese community. Black and other dancers gave performances at different cultural events and holiday celebrations in local communities. However, she confessed that dancing is not her passion. She dances because her mother wants her to do so. During the cultural circle meetings, she seldom expressed her opinions in the group. She usually said, "I don't know" or "I don't care." However, whenever she had any questions, she would not hesitate to ask. Moreover, she is not involved in the classical composer theme of pseudonyms among American-born Chinese peers. She prefers to use "Black" as her pseudonym.

Liszt. Liszt is a 12-year-old American-born Chinese girl in the sixth grade. Liszt traveled to China with her parents sometimes when they had a vacation. Liszt's relatives in China are Huizu (Chinese Muslims), so she explored Huizu's culture there. Especially, she was impressed by the architecture of the Mosque and the unique costumes. At the CLHS, she transferred from the intermediate level Chinese class to the advanced one in early January of 2017. When I was a substitute teacher in the advanced class on the first day, Liszt came to my class. I was impressed with her fluency of the Chinese language. Liszt and I also spent time together at the community library. The purpose was for her to

make up a session from the cultural circle meeting. She had missed out of some of the regional debate competition with her peers. From the one-on-one meeting, I learned that Liszt's father taught her Chinese classic poetry, Chinese History and Character Writing in their free time. Liszt also attended a Chinese traditional dance class in the after-school program of CLHS. Liszt's mom often played badminton at the gym there while Liszt was in her Chinese and dance classes. Although Liszt did not fully participate in the six prior meetings of the cultural circles, she is still interested in the literature I use in my study. Therefore, she shared her literary response journals with me via Google drive.

Scarlatti. Speaking with Scarlatti, I found that he is an active student in the CLHS. When Mrs. T, the Chinese teacher, asked students to make a compound words with new character, Scarlatti usually looked at the Chinese-English dictionary on his cellphone. He raised his hand and gave an example of what Mrs. T asked for. At the beginning of observing the class, I thought Scarlatti was playing with his phone and not paying attention to the class. After sitting beside him, I realized that he was looking up words in the Chinese-English dictionary. Scarlatti also attends chess class at the CLHS. Scarlatti is a well-rounded person. He plays chess and video games. He has also learned to ski and play the piano. He is interested in other computer related programs. Because of his talent for mathematics, Scarlatti is one of the school's representatives to attend the annual mathematics tournament. In the past, he has won the championship. In the cultural circle meetings, I noticed that he helped Sichi (the newly adopted Chinese adolescent), translate English into Chinese when she did not understand the discussion.

Scarlatti's father also plays badminton while Scarlatti is in his classes. Scarlatti told me that he was born in Texas where his father completed his higher education. They

moved to Idaho because his father got a job there. Scarlatti and his family visited their relatives several times on vacation to Mainland China. On one occasion, relatives came to the U.S. for a visit.

Bach. Bach is one of the youngest students among the study participants. He is also American-born Chinese. He is 12 years old and in the 7th grade. From my observation, he likes to have small conversations with a peer who sits beside him. Mrs. T, the Chinese teacher, sometimes needed to remind him to pay attention in class. He usually did not voluntarily share his opinions with the whole class, but talked, as we noted, to someone else. Therefore, in my cultural circle meetings, I usually called his name to see if he had something to share with the whole group after others finished sharing their opinions. Bach likes reading different genres of books in his free time. He also enjoys a variety of activities, including video games, piano, skiing, sports, and chess. In the cultural circle meeting, he revealed that he does not like traveling to China because his relatives tease him about his American Chinese accent.

Handel. Handel, a 14-year-old in the 9th grade, is a proactive and earnest student. As mentioned earlier, my original target participants were ages 14-18. In the Chinese advanced class, five students were about the age range I expected to recruit. However, only Handel was willing to join my dissertation study even though he had a hectic schedule. From my observation in the Chinese class, he submits Chinese homework on time and does what Mrs. T asked for. During the recess time, he usually gets some school homework to do on the advanced placement (AP) courses, including calculus and physics. He told me that passing AP courses is important for him because he wants to study in an engineering field at college in the near future. Handel likes track, basketball,

and school. He was a track champion on the middle school team in the regional competition. He also knows how to play the piano. In his free time, he likes doing math workbooks because he enjoys problem solving. As I learned from the CLHS, Handel's mom is a Chinese teacher at the elementary level, she also teaches dancing to adults. When Handel and his brother finished the Chinese class, they waited for their mother to finish the dance class. They stayed in the school lobby reading or playing video games. In the cultural circle meetings, Handel was active. He was always the first person in the group to summarize the book and gave literary responses. Handel and his family traveled to Mainland-China to visit their relatives, sometime during the summer break. Handel's relatives also came to visit their family when it was convenient for them to come.

Myoskavsky. Myoskavsky is a thirteen-year-old teenager in the 8th grade. From my observation of him at the CLHS, he is a calm person and does not talk very much. However, I discovered that he is not as shy as I had previously thought. He shared his opinions in the group, talked and laughed with his peers during the break. He likes to play sports, including tennis and basketball. Like the others he learns to play the piano. Myoskavsky joined the chess class in the Chinese after school program. Myoskavsky's mother is a Chinese teacher at the elementary level and also a member of the adult dancing group. Myoskavsky and his family seldom visit their relatives in Mainland China. However, his grandmother comes to visit them in U.S. more frequently.

Current Taiwanese/ Chinese Immigrant Group. Aria and Ling are current immigrants from Taiwan and China. (to see table 3.3 in deals)

Table 3.3 Current Taiwanese/ Chinese Immigrant Group

<i>Current Taiwanese/Chinese Immigrant Group (Total number: 2)</i>					
Name	Gender	Age	Grade	International mobility experiences between China/Taiwan and U.S.	Language Spoken/Proficiency
Aria	Female	14	9th	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Born and raised in Taiwan • Lived in U.S. in 2010-2012 • Moved to U.S. in 2017 	Mandarin Chinese (fluent), Taiwanese (fluent); English (fluent)
Ling	Female	12	6th	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Born in China • Lived in U.S. between 2013-2014 • Studied in an international school where lectured in English while living in China • Immigrants to U.S. in 2016 	Mandarin Chinese (fluent), Shanghai dialect (understanding); English (fluent)

Aria. Speaking of Aria, she is a bright, talented girl. She was born and raised in Taiwan. When Aria was young, her father was assigned to work as a partner with a high-tech company in the U.S. for two years. After that, she and her family returned to Taiwan. In 2017, Aria's father received another job offer in the U.S. Therefore, they immigrated to the U.S. Aria feels lucky to have moved to the U.S. because now she can skip the high pressure of the national entrance exam required of junior high school students in Taiwan. However, she feels sad for her friends in Taiwan because they do not have the leisure time to enjoy extracurricular activities as she does. Aria likes sports and

music. She joined a tennis team in school and played the violin. Due to her recent immigration to the U.S., Aria misses her school friends in Taiwan. She told me that she uses the social network software- LINE. This allows the students to communicate with each other and encourage her friends to diligently pursue high marks in the high school entrance exam. However, she tried to avoid sharing much she enjoys about her school days here, especially a variety of extra-curricular activities. In the cultural circle meeting, she showed us a bracelet she bought when she was with her Taiwanese friends during her junior high school graduation trip. In the cultural circle meetings, Aria is one of participants who does not attend the Chinese class at the CLHS. Thus, she was able to pursue more relationships with American-born Chinese peers.

Ling. Ling is a 12-year-old in the sixth grade from China. When she was eight years old, her mother got a job in the U.S., so Ling and her sister have lived with her mother in the U.S. for two years. Later, they went back to China. She went to an international school there where lectures were in English. In 2015, Ling, her sister and mother, returned to live in the U.S. again. Ling's father, who still works in China, traveled to the U.S. for a visit during the summer break. During recess in the CLHS, Ling reads novels. In her free time, she goes to a local public library to read. Time constraints caused her to miss three of the six scheduled cultural circle classes. However, Ling's literary responses in the group made peers critically rethink the book we read. Therefore, I am keeping Ling in my dissertation study. ShiChi is an adopted Chinese adolescent. (to see table 3.4).

Table 3.4 Chinese Adopted Adolescent Group

<i>Chinese Adopted Adolescent Group (Total number: 1)</i>					
Name	Gender	Age	Grade	International mobility experiences between China/Taiwan and U.S.	Language Spoken/Proficiency
ShiChi	Female	15	9th	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Born in China • Adopted by American parents in 2015 	Mandarin Chinese (fluent); English (still developing)

ShiChi. Shichi is a special case in my dissertation study. While recruiting potential participants with Chinese adopted backgrounds, Shichi was not on my recruiting list. Originally, two potential Chinese adopted participants verbally agreed to join the study. However, later they changed their minds because of other commitments. Shichi was in an English as a Second Language (ESL) class in a local high school where I tried to recruit more recent Chinese immigrants. The day I came to the ESL class to recruit more students. The teacher called up two students who have Chinese ethnic backgrounds. As we walked to the school library, I introduced myself to them. Shichi told me that she was 15 years old and she had been adopted by American parents two years before.

I was touched by hearing her story. We had a heartfelt conversation the first time we were together. I felt so honored at her trust in me. She asked me what my dream is. I told her that I want to become a lifelong educator. She told me that she wants to become a doctor one day so she can help more people like herself. Shichi has a physically disability. She can not walk, so she needs a wheelchair to get around. In addition to her physical disability, she has many other challenges these include language barriers and

traumas from her early childhood. I told her that nothing is impossible as long as she makes a little progress day by day with faith. Eventually, she will make her dream come true.

I explained my goal for the research study. I told her that if she is willing and able to join my study group, she can meet more friends who also have Chinese ethnic background. She gave me her mother's phone number to ask for permission. I met her mother for the first time in the university swimming pool area where Shichi was doing physical therapy once a week. Shichi's adopted mother told me that Shichi was found at a train station at age three in China. She grew up in an orphanage. Based on the policy of adoption, if children are over 15 years old, they become ineligible for adoption. Therefore, Shichi's profile was upgraded by the orphanage because she was nearly 15 years old at that time. Due to Shichi's physical disability, none of potential parents were willing to adopt her. Shichi's mother was the exception. She wanted to give her a new life.

Prior to the cultural circle meetings, Shichi's mom and I had intensive conversations for supporting her daughter. Due to Shichi's physical disability and childhood trauma, she is in counseling therapy. Shichi's mother reminded me to pay attention to Shichi's reaction to her environment. For example, when Shichi did not make eye contact with people, that meant she felt frustrated at some points in the conversation. When the study began, Shichi missed the first meeting because she did not have the confidence to show up among people she did not know. Next time, I met her in her neighborhood library before the weekly group meeting. During one-on-one meetings, she shared her stories of past days in the Chinese orphanage. She told me how frustrating it

was to grow up with a physical disability in an institution. Although she lives in the U.S. now, there are many areas of her life that she needs to acculturate. She needs to catch up on academics, culture, and language. I was very empathetic to her hardships. I also shared with her the struggles I had in the past when I came to the U.S. as an international student. Besides sharing the personal stories, I read aloud to her the picture books I would be using in the cultural circle meeting. The purpose of reading aloud to her was to give her overall concepts of what we would be discussing in the group meetings to follow. Knowing the stories in the picture books ahead of time allows Shichi to catch up to the group discussion and activities as an English language learner.

Shichi and I built a strong relationship, and she later enjoyed the group meeting in my study with peer participants' language support. She realized she could also make a contribution to the group because she speaks Mandarin Chinese better than her American-born Chinese students. The peer support from other students with Chinese ethnic backgrounds allows her to develop confidence and her ongoing education.

Role of the Researcher

As mentioned earlier in Chapter 2, the culture circles are led by a facilitator. The facilitator does not use her/his authority to lead the group based on trust and love. Due to the fact that this study is framed in Freire's culture circle, I therefore exercise my role as a facilitator in the meetings. Building rapport with the participants does not happen overnight, so I regularly visited the participants outside the study. This interaction included in the Chinese Heritage and Language School (CHLS), sport fields, and home. By doing so, this helped me to get to know more about my participants and their families. Within the culture circle, I honestly shared my bi-cultural living experiences as a

Taiwanese woman, international student, wife, and mother with the participants. My ethnic and cultural background of Taiwanese and Chinese allows me to connect to my participants life experiences.

Even if my experiences were not exactly like my participants, we shared bi-cultural (Taiwanese / Chinese and U.S.) experiences. I define myself as an insider, as well, throughout the study. According to Glense (2010), she states that “Insiders who couple research theories and techniques with an action-oriented mode can develop collaborative, reflective data collecting and analysis procedures for their own practices and thereby contribute to the sociopolitical context in which they dwell” (p. 23). The culture circle is an agent of the literacy community in this study. This micro community establishment helps me as an insider and facilitator glean insight into the participants’ perspectives.

Data Collection

I collected multiple data sources for this study. They are video records, written documents, participants’ response artifacts, and researcher’s notes. The culture circle meetings were video recorded and each session last 1.5 to 2 hours. Written documents include literary response journal, “I Am” poem, and final thoughts about the participation in this study. Participants’ response artifacts consist of the reports from the participants’ literacy activities. Last, researcher's notes were my reflective journals, informal conversation with participants and their parents, and other observation notes. The more detailed data collection procedure is presented in the following section.

Data Collection Procedures. As mentioned in the previous section, between September 2016 to March 2017, I had been establishing rapport with potential research participants in local communities. During that time, I took observational notes, which I later combined into researcher's notes as part of source work for data analysis. The actual culture circle, composed of ten Chinese transnational adolescents (CTAs), took place in early April, 2017. These study participants and I met for two hours on Saturday afternoons over six weeks. The meeting location was in my university classroom where we formed the chairs into a circle. In this way, everyone could see each other and engage in class activities in an inclusive environment.

Regarding language proficiency, the study participants had mixed levels of bilingual proficiency (Mandarin Chinese and English); therefore, Mandarin Chinese and English were used interchangeably as needed. Each meeting consisted of a topic with literary response activities. The general procedure for each meeting proceeded as follows (see figure 3.1):

(1) A pre-reading activity drew on participants' prior knowledge and experiences, including visual displays and short video clips.

(2) Study participants had 20-25 minutes of independent reading time and wrote initial literary responses in their journal. Participants were encouraged to connect to what they felt about the book in their written responses (Bleich, 1969). While reading, they could select a place to sit where they would feel comfortable. When the time was up, they returned to their original seats.

(3) When the class got together, I asked for volunteers to share their initial responses to the book. I also shared mine with participants.

(4) During the interactive dialogues, literary activities were used, as needed, for juxtaposing the readings and historical events, including literary responses, gallery walk, videos, and graphic organizers.

(5) At the last meeting, participants shared their “I am” Poem, which they had been developing during the first five weeks. Also, they wrote their final thoughts for this study in their journal.

(6) In Freire’s critical pedagogy of culture circle, students are primary agents to generate themes through interactive dialogue, as well as being problem solvers (Souto-Manning, 2010). In this study, the triple concepts of reader-response theory (Rosenblatt’s transactional theory, Holland’s psychological response, and Bleich’s community-based response) are woven into the classroom practice with the culture circle format. As Souto-Manning (2010) described, the culture circle practices should let the dialogues flow and have participants generate themes. Therefore, I pre-designed discussion questions to ensure fruitful dialogue and broaden participants’ perspectives. I gave participants a period of time to freely express their thoughts about the books. Sometimes they matched the themes I expected them to discuss, and sometimes not. I gave clues to help them discuss the themes I pre-designed. Then, I gently asked the participants questions on the premise when they were running out of ideas. The questions are centered on readers’ feelings and personal connections based on the reader response theory that I inter-wove from three respected scholars: Rosenblatt, Holland, and Bleich. Not all pre-designed

discussion questions were used due to the time constraints of the dynamic discussion. The conversations we produced were organic, so the weekly topic was circular around the six weekly meetings. For example, particular historical events were mentioned several times, and we returned to topics as needed. The flow chart displayed below is a general procedure of how I facilitated the culture circle meeting. The following section describes the precise materials and discussion questions I designed on each topic of reading events.

Figure 3.1 Flow Chart: The General Procedures of the Culture Circle Meeting

Week 1. Introduction & Who Am I. Some participants were not acquainted with each other prior to the culture circle. In week 1, I created a friendly community to have them get to know more about each other. Freire (1993) advocated that dialogue in the culture circle should be based on humanity; love, faith, and hope. With these elements in mind, building an inclusive atmosphere is the facilitator’s primary task at the beginning of the meeting. Show and Tell Time was a jumpstart activity. Participants brought one or two artifacts, which represented something about themselves. They shared these artifacts with fellow participants. I also shared mine. After the jumpstart activity, two books related to identity and names were read. These were *Hannah is My Name* (Yang, 2004) and *Three Names of Me* (Cummings, 2006). We also discussed two sets of questions: (1)

Hannah and Ada each had three different names. I asked them, “Do you know how your parents/caregivers gave you your name? Do you know the meaning of your names? What is the backstory of your names? (2) What names do you prefer to be called in different situations? Can you tell us more about it?”

Week 2. Relationships with Extended Family (I). In week 2, the topic is relationships with extended family. We read *Shanghai Messenger* (Cheng, 2005). The focus of the discussion was on Chinese transnational youngsters learning about their Chinese heritage and language with Chinese relatives during their visits in China or Taiwan. (Prior to the reading, I asked participants if they had traveled to their parents’ homeland and what they thought about the experience.) Because this book is longer than the ones we read in the first week, participants and I extended the independent reading time up to 25-30 minutes. After reading, several volunteers shared their initial thoughts as to how they felt about this story. I then asked participants questions about the Cultural Revolution, which was illuminated in the poem from the story. Below are the questions I asked the participants following the slideshow presentation.

From the poem of Rain, we learned that Xiao Mei’s relatives, Jing and Xiao Gang had a hard time during the Cultural Revolution (1966-1976) lead by the chairman, Mao. The result of the Cultural Revolution was a great famine. Jing was sent to the countryside by the government: They called it “re-education.” She says with shrill voice,

I assumed that some participants might already know about the Cultural Revolution, but some did not. The purpose of asking participants these questions was to spark them to think about the historical events. I then had participants watch two short

video clips from YouTube. In order to help participants learn the evolution of the Cultural Revolution, I first showed them a video clip about the Great Leap Forward (1958-1962) (<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=A6XQKYnrlSA>). Secondly, they viewed the Cultural Revolution (1966-1976) video (<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=LqJ9IpWOYQA>). After watching these two videos, we re-visited the two questions above to see if participants had a critical lens toward a deeper understanding of the historical events; and to what extent they knew their relatives' lives were affected in the past.

Then, I led participants in another theme discussion about their personal connections to the visiting relatives' experiences in China or Taiwan. In order to give my students similar examples of visiting experiences echoing the story we read, I showed them an American situation comedy (sitcom), entitled *Fresh Off the Boat* (Huang, 2016). This drama series was adapted from the book, *Fresh Off the Boat* (Huang, 2013) based on the author, Eddie Huang's real story growing up in an Asian-American family in the U.S. The title, *Coming from America* (Huang, 2016) in episode 1, season 3, was about the Huang traveling experiences for a relative's wedding banquet in Taiwan. After watching the selected plots of *Fresh Off the Boat* (Huang, 2016), I asked participants two sets of

questions to connect their personal experiences to the scene from the video and the book, *Shanghai Messenger* (Cheng, 2005). The discussion questions are shown below:

When Xiao Mei was sick, her uncle brought medicine to her. The label says, “This medicine will cleanse evil spirits from the body.” Xiao Mei was upset because she knew that she did not have evil spirits, so she refused to swallow the pill. The question is, “When you visited your relatives/friends what special and/or different experiences did you have?”

At the beginning of the story, Xiao Mei did not want to visit her extended family in China by herself. She was afraid that the Chinese people would stare at her because she is only half Chinese. Her grandmother, Nai Nai drew a family tree and showed her relationships among the relatives. Later, Xiao Mei agreed to be her grandmother’s messenger. Keeping grandmother’s words in mind, “Look everything. Remember.” and Xiao Mei took her courage to visit her extended family in China by herself. After visiting her relatives, Xiao Mei learned about her relatives’ lives in China and got to know more about them. What are some of your most memorable experiences when you visited your extended family/friends? What did you learn from your relatives/friends?

Week 3. Relationships with Extended Family (II). Prior to the week 3 topic, we recalled the themes we generated in the previous topic: visiting relatives in China or Taiwan, including cultural shock, lifestyle differences, life adjustment, unforgettable experiences, gift preparation, technology, economic development, and so on. While revisiting the themes we developed earlier, participants discovered another theme — food safety regulation. Participants juxtaposed food security between China and the United

States. After discussion of the previous topic, we started the week 3 topic — relatives coming to visit them in the U.S. from China or Taiwan. First of all, I briefly asked participants the experiences of their relatives' visit in the U.S. from China or Taiwan as prior-knowledge activation. Then, participants read the picture book, *Grandfather Counts* (Cheng, 2003) for 10-15 minutes. After that, usual routine, several volunteers shared their initial thoughts related to their feelings about the story. During the interactive dialogues, participants pointed out they had similar experiences concerning language gaps between two generations. I also shared mine. I discussed my son and my mother-in-law as well as my grandmother. I communicated with each to overcome the language barriers. In terms of language usage, dialect differences between China and Taiwan were discussed. In addition to the discussion of dialectical differences, I posed guided discussion questions. They are as follows:

Dialect Differences		
English	Mandarin Chinese	
	China	Taiwan
tomato	西红柿 <u>xīhóngshì</u>	蕃茄 <u>fānjiā</u>
potato	土豆丝 <u>tǔdòu sī</u>	馬鈴薯 <u>mǎlíngshǔ</u>
cabbage	茼蒿白 <u>huí zi bái</u>	高麗菜 <u>gāolí cài</u>
kiwi	猕猴桃 <u>míhóutáo</u>	奇異果 <u>qíyì guǒ</u>

In order to enrich participant's conversation, I had participants watch selected episodes from *Fresh Off the Boat* (Huang, 2016) with the titles of *Grandma's Perfume*, *Driving Miss Jenny*, and *My Name is....* This selection portrayed a Taiwanese grandmother, Jenny's lifestyle and interaction with her grandchildren to the U.S. Even

though grandmother Jenny did not speak English, she found a way to adjust to American life and overcome language barriers in the host country. The purpose of this video screening was to help participants connect to their life experiences with the scene and the book, *Grandfather Count* (Cheng, 2003). The discussion questions are as follows:

- Has anyone experienced something similar (the way of communication like *Grandfather Counts*) with a relative or friend who came from China?
Would you be willing to share your story?

In Week 1, we talked about names. In *Grandfather Counts* (Cheng, 2003), names were mentioned again as in the Chinese American's family. Helen's grandfather gave her the Chinese name, 'Yin Hua.' And the grandfather was willing to learn his granddaughter's English name (Helen). He wrote HELEN over and over again in order to remember how to address by her English name.

- What name do you prefer to be called when your grandparents/relatives call you? Why so?
- What name do you prefer to be used when your grandparents/relatives call you? Why so?

After the discussion, I showed the participants a sample of a "I Am" poem and gave them a template (see Appendix A). I encouraged them to create their "I Am" poem and finish it for the last meeting. That meant they had three more weeks to develop the assignment. This activity was designed for them to discover their identity. Before the participants left, I gave them a take-home task: I encouraged them to interview their parents about their immigrant experiences. I explained that I had assigned them this task because the topic (Chinese immigrants' history in the U.S.) would be discussed in the next meeting.

Week 4. Chinese immigrants' history in the U.S. We read a picture book *Coolies* (Soentpiet, 2003), which corresponds to the week 4 topic: Chinese immigrants' history in the U.S. Prior to the book reading, I presented a "gallery walk" as a pre-reading activity. I posted several pictures of early Chinese immigrants to the U.S. on the walls. Participants walked around the classroom and jotted down their thoughts on blank paper attached to the pictures. Afterwards, they started to read *Coolies* (Soentpiet, 2003). Then, participants wrote down their initial thoughts in their journals. Shortly thereafter, they shared their contributions according to the routine of the past the culture circle meeting. Due to the facts around the historical event of the transcontinental railroad across the Western U.S., I gave participants a quick glance at a timeline of this significant event between China and the U.S. By doing so, it helped participants extend their background knowledge of why so many Chinese people became laborers in the U.S. in the 1800s. (See the table 3.5 below)

Table 3.5 History of Chinese Immigrants in U.S. and Mainland China (1800s-2000s)

	Year	Events of historical Chinese immigrants in US	What happened in China?
Forced to leave	1800s		Qing dynasty: British traders smuggle opium to China
	1839		The Opium War breaks out
Seek for working opportunities	1848	Gold discovery in California: 1 st flux of Chinese migration to North America	
	1860	Transcontinental railroad built	
	1869	The 1 st transcontinental railway is finished	
Discrimination 排華法案 Seek for a better life	1882	Chinese Exclusion Act	
	1906	Great Earthquake in San Francisco	
	1910	Angel Island Immigration Station opens in San Francisco	
	1911		Last Chinese emperors overthrown by Kuomintang
A variety of economic activities	1939-1945	WWII breaks out	
	1940	Angel Island closes	U.S. and China become allies
	1943	Repeal of Chinese Exclusion Act	
	1945-1949		Chinese Civil War & Japanese invasion
	1949		Chiang Kai Shek retreats to Taiwan
	1965 & 1967	Abolishment of all remaining anti-Chinese immigration laws	
	2000s	The economic activities for Chinese immigrants in the U.S. are various	

Instead of discussing the details of the story from the book, I divided participants into two groups. They juxtaposed the early Chinese immigrants and current Chinese immigrants' life experiences in the U.S. I lead a literacy activity— Venn diagram and told participants that there were no right or wrong answers. They were instructed to use examples from the book, their existing knowledge or the information they gathered from their parent's immigrant experiences. Below is a sample of the guiding activity.

- ◆ Compared to the early Chinese immigrants, what would similar and differences of experiences current immigrants/your family encounter?

Each group then reported what they created in the Venn diagram. Due to the time limitation, I did not use all of the pre-designed discussion questions with the participants. Since participants mentioned the language barriers and Chinese culture practices in their reports, these issues corresponded to two sets of questions I pre-designed. Therefore, I pulled out these questions and had a brief discussion with the participants. See the discussion questions below.

- In the evening, he helped the little Wong practice Chinese calligraphy. Why did he teach his brother, the little Wong Chinese calligraphy?
- What do you think about the assimilation of Chinese culture in growing up and/or living in the American society?
- How do you experience Chinese culture at home?

Week 5. *Holiday Celebrations in the U.S.* Participants talked about bicultural life experiences, and schooling experiences in Week 4. The conversation was also an extension of the material in Week 5. The topic was Holiday Celebrations in the U.S. I showed the participants a short specific episode entitled *So Chineez* from the drama *Fresh Off the Boat* (Huang, 2016). It depicted how American-born Chinese children experienced attendance at the Chinese school. The plot exaggerated ABCs' real-life experiences. However, the exaggerated plot triggered participants to defend their schooling as better than the show presented. After this video discussion, I gave students 10-15 minutes to read another picture book, entitled *Apple Pie 4th of July* (Wong, 2006). Time limits restricted us from spending more time on conversation about the book response. However, participants had time to write their thoughts in their journals. Their written journals became the sources for me to analyze their book response later. I then moved to a literacy activity—*Define who you are*. I used it to recall the identity topic in Week 1. First of all, I demonstrated how to proceed with this activity. I defined myself as Taiwanese because I was born and raised in Taiwan. I wrote the word- Taiwanese on a poster. Next, I asked participants how they defined themselves. They responded, “Chinese,” “Chinese American,” “American,” and so forth. As they were responding to me, I wrote down each term on a separate poster as different categorizations. Shortly after, they came to the front and wrote down how others define them in the specific category to which they chose to belong. After that, we altogether discussed the characteristics on each category they wrote about. (See Figure 4.3-4.5 in Chapter 4)

Week 6. *Dream Pursuits and Final Thoughts*. Ending week 5, I did some housekeeping tasks with participants because Week 6 was the final meeting. First, I

handed an index card to the participants and asked them to write down the pseudonym name they preferred me to use in my study. After collecting their cards, participants shared the bio-poem they had created over the past weeks. Next, participants who did not have a chance to share stories of their parents' immigrant experiences last time, reported this week. Participants then read *Dancing to Freedom: The True Story of Mao's Last Dancer* (Li, 2008) in the period of usual format 10-15 minutes. Participants had initial responses in their journals and shared their opinions in the culture circle, as usual. I showed participants a movie trailer — *Mao's Last Dancer* (Bereford, 2009), which was adapted from the book, *Dancing to Freedom: The True Story of Mao's Last Dancer* (Li, 2008). Participants and I then had a brief discussion afterwards. The discussion question is below.

Chunxin was selected to the ballet training during the Cultural Revolution (1966-1976). Because of his outstanding performance, he was sent to the U.S for advanced training. How would you compare Chunxin's life before and after ballet training in the U.S.?

The next activity was a graphic organizer created by synthesizing the themes we generated in the past sessions and including this last week. To recall, the topic was primarily the immigrants' life experiences. Participants were divided into two groups. They created their own graphic organizer and reported to the culture circle. The purpose of this group activity was to help participants recall and synthesize what they had been discussing over the past meetings. The guided discussion is below.

Think about Chunxin's first arrival in the U.S. What kinds of struggles did he have? In Week 4, we compared and contrasted the difficulties that early Chinese immigrants and recent Chinese immigrants had experienced. Let's think about the similarities and differences of Chunxin's immigrant experience with early Chinese immigrants and your family's immigrants' experiences.

Participants described Chinese immigrants' difficulties in the U.S.. I further asked them how these immigrants overcame their hardships and survived in the host country. I then displayed numerous celebrities' pictures: men and women who had Chinese ethnic backgrounds and had succeeded in different fields, including politics, media, sports, arts, music, and education. By mirroring the celebrity of individuals of Chinese ethnic background and Chunxin's story, I asked participants to report what was their dream. The purpose of this activity was to highlight the echo of others' experiences in the culture circle meeting and to rethink what their life purpose was. The guided questions were as follows.

At last, participants answered the last question about overcoming challenges in their journals for this study. They then wrote their final thoughts in their journals for this study (Appendix B).

- What is your dream? (What do you want to be?) What do you hope for?
- What efforts do you need to make in order to achieve your dream?
- What difficulties do you believe you may have while pursuing your dream?
- How do you think you would be able to overcome those challenges?

Data Sources. The following data were collected in this study: video records of culture circle, participants' literary response journals, artifacts, and researcher's notes from before participant selections were made including getting to know the Chinese/Taiwanese community, meeting potential participants and parents, during the culture circles through video recordings and after the group meeting reflections.

Video Records. The purpose of the video records was to capture the participants' interaction within the culture circle. Because I facilitated the culture circle throughout the meetings, it was difficult for me to take field notes in this situation. The video records

helped me to recall what had been happening during the meetings. To be specific, I examined the participants' interactive dialogues about book responses, questions responses, and group discussion of the literacy activities compared to what I observed in the videos. According to the community-based establishment of Freire's culture circle, I also looked at the participants' non-verbal responses from their social interactions.

Written Documents. The written documents include the participants' literary response journal, final thoughts, and "I Am" poem. The participants wrote initial literary responses in their journals after reading the books in each session of the culture circle meetings. They were encouraged to connect to what they felt about the books in their written responses (Bleich, 1969). In their journals, they responded to the questions which I posed to them. Also, they shared their thoughts without worry about right or wrong answers. The participants had been developing their "I Am" poem over the six-week period of the meetings. At last, the participants read aloud their "I Am" poem to the class. They transcribed their final thoughts about the culture circle participation in their journals.

Artifacts of Literacy Activities. The aims of artifacts are to examine the results of literacy activities which the participants generated. These sources would help me further understand how the participants compare and contrast their lives with others. There are five sets of artifacts, as follows. Table 3.6 below is an overview of how the artifacts of literacy activities collected aligned with topics within the culture circle meetings.

Table 3.6. An Overview of the Literacy Activities in the Culture Circle Meetings

Week	Topic	Multicultural Literature	Literacy Activities
1	Who am I	<i>Hannah is My Name</i> (Yang, 2004), <i>Three Names of Me</i> (Cummings, 2006)	Show and Tell Time: Sharing artifacts representing themselves
2	Relationships with the extended family (I)	<i>Shanghai Messenger</i> (Cheng, 2005)	Watch video clips and discuss them: (1) <i>Fresh off the Boat</i> (Khan, 2015) (2) The Great Leap Forward (3) What was China's Cultural Revolution?
3	Relationships with the extended family (II)	<i>Grandfather Counts</i> (Cheng, 2003)	Watch <i>Fresh off the Boat</i> (Khan, 2015) and discuss about it
4	Chinese immigrants' history in the U.S.	<i>Coolies</i> (Soentpiet, 2003)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Gallery walk: Walking around and commenting on photos of early Chinese immigrants • Venn diagram: comparing early & current Chinese immigrants
5	Holiday celebrations in the U.S.	<i>Apple Pie, 4th of July</i> (Wong, 2006)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • T-Chart: Defining who they are and how they are perceived by others • Sharing "I Am" Poem
6	Dream pursuits	<i>Dancing to Freedom: The True Story of Mao's Last Dancer</i> (Li, 2008)	Graphic organizer: Synthesizing the topics that have been discussed

Personal artifacts. In the first week of the culture circle, the participants brought one or two artifacts, which represent themselves. This jumpstart activity allowed me to learn about the participants' backgrounds and their interests growing up in a bi-cultural environment.

Comments on photos. In week 4, the topic was Chinese immigrants' history in the U.S. The participants engaged in Gallery Walk activity as a pre-reading activity. I posted seven pictures of early Chinese immigrants' activities on the walls along with a comment sheet below. The participants walked around the classroom and wrote down their thoughts about the photos, on the space provided.

Venn diagram. In week 4, we also read a book, *Coolies* (Soentpiet, 2003), which corresponded to the topic of Chinese immigrants' history in the U.S. After reading this book and interactive dialogues, the participants juxtaposed early and current Chinese immigrants. They worked into two groups and wrote down their thoughts on Venn diagrams.

T-chart posters. In week 5, the topic was holiday celebrations in the U.S. I led the participants to recall what we had been discussed in the past five topics and they did another literacy activity. That is, we made T-chart posters about how we define ourselves and how we were perceived by others.

Graphic organizers. In week 6, the title of dream pursuits was the last topic for the culture circle meetings. We synthesized all the topics which had been discussed. The participants were divided into two groups and made their graphic organizers as a synthesis of what they had learned within the culture circle meetings.

Researcher's Notes. Researcher's notes include reflective journals and observation notes. Outside the culture circle meetings, I recorded the participants' life experiences at Chinese Language and Heritage School (CLHS) and sport fields. For the reflective journals, I wrote down my reflection upon each culture circle meeting. Moreover, I summarized the informal conversation with the participants, their parents, Mandarin Chinese schoolteacher, and principal.

Data Analysis

The constant comparative method (Glaser and Strauss, 1967) and thematic analytical techniques were conducted in this study for data analysis. Data analysis should be concurrent during the process of data collection (Miles, Huberman, & Saldaña, 2014) because it will help researchers familiarize the existing data and better plan for further collecting data. During the data collection process, I listened to the video I recorded in the culture circle meetings and reviewed my researcher's notes. This strategy helped me be more familiar with each participant's responses to the books and conversation among peers. It also helped me adapt the upcoming activities and book response questions, which connect to their life experiences and trigger their critical thinking into the book responses.

Managing the data well allows the researchers to keep track of their thoughts while engaging in data analysis (Merriam, 1998). At the data management stage, I began to scan each participant's written journal and save them into each participant's electronic file by using their pseudonyms. I further took photos of the posters we created in the study and save them into an electronic file- name as participants' response artifacts. I also totaled the entry of the research notes I took. There are 36 entries of the researcher's

notes. Next, I transcribed videos on the word process program after I completed six-week of the culture circle meetings. The transcription includes participants' dialogues, interaction with verbal and nonverbal responses during the culture circle meetings. Below Table 3.7 are the data sources I organized,

Table 3.7. Organization of Data Sources

Data Sources	Data Collected	Entry / Timeline
Video records	Participants' interaction & dialogue, including verbal and nonverbal responses during the cultural circle meetings	Week1 (1:33") Week 2 (1:56") Week 3 (1:44") Week 4 (45:72") Week 5 (1:24") Week 6 (1:32")
Written documents	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Literary response journal: participants' responses to the book and discussion questions 	6 entries (week 1-week 6)
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Final thoughts: Participants' final reflection about their participation in this study 	1 entry (week 6)
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> "I Am" Poem: had been developed by participants over the past six weeks of meeting 	1 entry (week 6)
Participants' response artifacts	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Week 4: Gallery walk activity (comments on pictures) 	Comments on 7 pictures (week 4)
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Week 4: Venn diagram activity (juxtaposed early and current Chinese immigrants) 	2 Venn diagrams from 2 groups (week 4)
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Week 5: Posters (Definition of Who You Are & How other define you) 	4 posters (week 5)
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Week 6: Graphic organizer activity (synthesized the topics have been discussed) 	2 graphic organizers (week 6)
Researcher's notes	Informal conversations (with participants, parents, and Ms. T in the CLHS)	12 entries
	Reflective journals: Document the process of collecting data, including the recruiting participants stage and culture circle meetings	12 entries
	Observation notes: Record participants' life experiences (Chinese school, sports activities, etc.) outside the culture circle meetings	12 entries

At the data analysis stage, I utilized Saldaña's (2013) suggested method: First Cycle coding and Second Cycle coding. With these two cycles of analysis, it helps me to find the recurring patterns and let the findings revealed. This coding process also actualizes the thematic analytical techniques as Glesne (2010) said, "searching through the data for themes and patterns" (p. 187). The First Cycle coding is an initial stage for the researcher to glance at the data chunk and jot down the initial codes. The Second Cycle coding also refers to pattern codes, which is a stage to generate group data chunk into a smaller categories and themes (as cited in Miles, Huberman, & Saldaña, 2014).

The First Cycle Coding: Primary Codes. At the First Cycle coding stage, I scanned the transcription of the videos and jotted down notes on the Microsoft Word's Comments' feature. I began to use alternative methods of coding as needed, including Descriptive Coding, In Vivo coding, and Values coding. For the values coding, I noticed participants' attitude and belief toward particular topics or events we discussed. For example, "study hard." For the In Vivo coding, I used the participants' own words as codes, such as, "try to fit in." For the Descriptive Coding, I summarized data with a word or short phrase in observing participants' interaction in the culture circles. For instance, "not much talk," "chat during the break time," "nudge peers' to share," "help with translation," etc.

After the primary coding, I read the data again with the initial coding scheme and wrote some notes on the sticky notes as needed. This process allows me to see if any coded segments has interrelationships. I then sub-coded the particular emerged data, which appears in a detailed entry.

The Second Cycle Coding: Pattern Codes. Prior to the Second Cycle coding, I printed out all the data of the First Cycle coding and cut it into pieces with the labeled coding scheme. Shortly after, I laid out the data clusters on the ground and integrated with other data sources. By doing so, it helps me to find the recurring patterns. Once the recurring patterns were found, I categorized them and put a sticky note with a label name for each (to see figure 3.2). I then employed Miles, Huberman, and Saldaña's (2014) pattern codes method: categories or themes, causes/explanations, relationships among people, theoretical constructs. In order to prevent bias, I asked my co-chair professor for a reliability check. We relocated and renamed the labeled the data clusters during the team coding process. After that, I formatted the major codes and emerged themes around the research questions into a systematic matrix.

Figure 3.2 An Example of Coding Process.

Research Quality

In qualitative investigation, the researcher seeks for understanding of the phenomena in the specific research site. Examining different components of the study, including the process of data collection, analyzed techniques, and data interpretation would affect how the findings are demonstrated (Merriam, 1998). In this study the importance of qualitative research, trustworthiness is demonstrated. This study involved

participants' interaction within a designed literacy community and this phenomenon might influence how a researcher would interpret and analyze data (Creswell, 2013). According to Merriam (1998), internal validity, external validity, reliability, ethnics, and bias are essential strategies to establish trustworthiness. In order to maintain the research quality, I choose several strategies to demonstrate my study's trustworthiness. Additional details of the strategies I conducted are as follows.

First of all, I used internal validity, which "deals with the question of how research findings match reality" (Merriam, 1998, p. 201). In order to present the findings more valid, I utilized triangulation, member checks, and peer examination/debriefing strategies.

1. Triangulation. The feature of the triangulation is to investigate multiple sources of data. This technique would help the investigator validate the data and prove the findings (Merriam, 1998). The multiple sources I triangulated are video records of each culture circle meeting, participants' literary response journals, personal participant artifacts, and researcher's notes. Along with the multiple sources of data, I also incorporated multiple theories (see chapter 2 Theoretical Framework) for the accuracy of the validation in this study.
2. Member checks. Throughout the study, the researcher asked the research participants to check whether the data transcription and tentative interpretations meet what they presented (Merriam, 1998, p. 204). To prove the authenticity of this study, I had the participants read the video transcripts, interpretations, and analysis of the data for feedback and verification.

3. Peer examination/debriefing. According to Merriam (1998), the researcher usually asks fellow colleague(s) to give comments on the research findings as the data was emerged. I invited my dissertation co-chair professor to assist as my peer debriefing colleague. Since she had worked with similar research topics in the past, her research experiences and inquiries helped me to pinpoint and discover research findings. She helped me to analyze and interpret the data with different angles. All this, in spite of the fact that my professor was a non-Chinese and non-Taiwanese person with an Asian ethnic background.

Second, reliability examination is required for data analysis. In the qualitative research, human behavior in the social contexts is unpredictable. The reliability technique can ensure “whether the results are consistent with the data collected” (Merriam, 1998, p. 206). I used three techniques for reliability examination below.

1. The investigator’s position. The investigator should describe her/his position in the data collection process (LeCompte and Preissle, 1993). As mentioned earlier in the section of the researcher’s role, I explained my role as a facilitator and insider. When conducting the culture circle, I was a facilitator to build a sense of inclusive community. While observing the participants outside the study, I was an insider because my ethnic and cultural background could relate to their experiences.
2. Audit Trail. Merriam (1998) suggested that the purpose of the audit trail is to give details of “how data were collected, how categories were derived, and how decisions were made through the inquiry” (p. 207). Such techniques make the findings more

authentic. In the earlier section of data collection procedures, I detailed how I collected data over six weeks period of the culture circle meetings.

Third, external validity is another essential examination technique for maintaining the research quality. The features of the external validity are “the findings of one study can be applied to other situations,” that is to say, the results of a study can be applied to other research studies (Merriam, 1998, p. 207). I incorporated rich, thick description as an external validity tool.

1. Rich, thick description. The investigator gives a detailed description of the research study, which helps potential researchers determine whether the findings are transferable to other research projects (Merriam, 1998, p. 211). I gave comprehensive descriptions as to how the themes emerged from the data sources in chapter 4.

In addition to the validity and reliability, ethnic and bias clarification are also important techniques for the research quality examination. Qualitative research is involved in human interaction, so the researcher has to be careful of ethnic matters. The qualitative research is also about the researcher-participant relationship based on both data collection process and research finding presentation. The participants have their rights and preserve their privacy. Hence, the researcher has to obtain the participants’ consent to a study and protect their identity. By doing so, the ethical issues can be minimized.

Prior to the study, I obtained an Institutional Review Board’s (IRB) approval for conducting this study. I then gave research participants and their guardian parents’ consent forms (see appendix C), which described the study purposes, procedures,

potential risks, and benefits. Upon doing so, research participants learned their rights, and how much privacy and protection from harm they are acceptable for this study. In order to eliminate the bias (Glesne, 2010), I took a research journal when I observed research participants outside the study and conversation, I had with them and their parents. Later, I talked to my dissertation co-chair professor about what I had recorded. In doing so, it helps me not to creep into bias, but gains different perspectives.

CHAPTER 4: FINDINGS

I think there is a danger with young people of being dependent in the sense that they don't acquire any identity or self-image of themselves as thinkers.

- Edward de Bono

As stated in the preceding chapters, the purpose of this study is to examine the process of how Chinese transnational adolescents (CTAs) negotiate their identities through responding to seven multicultural children's books in a culture circle. This chapter presents the findings of the study. The presentation of findings is structured into two sections which are based on research questions. The first section responds to question 1: How do CTAs build their understanding of the Chinese immigrant history, family values, and Chinese cultural practices in a culture circle? Section two responds to question 2: How do CTAs use their cultural knowledge to reconstruct their identities through responding to multicultural children's books and literacy activities in a culture circle?

The results of the study emerging from data brought out several interesting points regarding the CTAs' dialogues, book responses, and their interaction in the culture circle. The figure 1 below offers a glimpse of the overall findings. This figure, which I constructed, is adapted from Souto-Manning's (2010) critical cycle in order to meet research findings for this study. The findings showed that two primary stages occurred. The first stage was an invitation, that is, CTAs and I made our life experience connections. The purpose of this stage was to get CTAs involved in conversation through

generative themes, including share communal experiences, build knowledge together, recognize living in bi-cultural contexts, juxtapose and negotiate Chinese immigrants' history and stories of the literature, and reconnect cultural heritage and roots. The second stage is the process of identity (re)construction: critical inquiries and responses to the texts, examination on social perception and parents' expectations, and identity negotiation. In the continuous process of the culture circle meetings, CTAs had formed their unique literacy community around these two stages in the culture circle over six weeks. I will also provide examples of how CTAs formulated their community along the way over the six weeks of the meetings.

Stage One: Invitation

Stage one is an invitation for CTAs to engage in the discussion about the selected books they read and get to know more about each other. The stage of the invitation was involved in building trust and literacy community in the culture circle because not every participant knew each other. Books are medium for readers to mirror their personal experiences (Bishop, 1994). Readers often release their 'feelings' by associating their past and recent stories with the literature responses (Bleich, 1969). Media is also a way of reflecting a person's life in the particular culture she/he belongs. Therefore, books and media are agents for creating a trustworthy community within the culture circle. According to Bleich (1988), an inclusive literary community is based on the freedom of sharing feelings about literature response for readers. When the readers' feelings are validated in the community, it helps them to open up the dialogue.

Moreover, as a researcher participant in this study, I consciously remind myself that I am a role model for CTAs in the culture circle. I was open and honest about sharing

my personal stories with CTAs and how my bi-cultural living experiences helped me understand who I am. For example, Chinese immigrants' history and schooling experiences in Taiwan and the United States. CTAs and I (researcher participant), therefore, had been generating these themes together based on the book discussion, literary activities, and other intermittent personal conversations, observations, and interactions with the CTAs.

As described in Chapter Three, I incorporated discussion of seven books and literary activities with different topics across the six-weekly meeting with CTAs. Each meeting was video recorded, transcribed and analyzed. The coding process underwent the triangulated technique and the recurring data emerged from the following categories. The stage of invitation responds to the research question 1 (How do CTAs build their understanding of the Chinese immigrant history, family values, and Chinese cultural practices in a culture circle?). The data reveals six themes which were generated throughout the culture circle meetings: (1) share communal experiences, (2) build knowledge together, (3) recognize living in bi-cultural contexts (4) connect to cultural origins (5) re-connect to cultural heritage.

Share Communal Experiences

According to Rosenblatt (1978), readers focus on referential aspects of meaning about literature responses in public, but they have the freedom to transact their responses within the efferent-aesthetic continuum. The readers flow to aesthetic continuum in private aspects of sense, including affective, emotional, and associational aspect. In this study, CTAs made their aesthetic aspects more transparent with an open mind while responding to the books within the culture circles. When CTAs shared their affective,

emotional, and associational responses to the books, they altogether generated their collective responses and further built a sense of literary welcoming community (Bleich, 1969). The data revealed that CTAs shared their relevant experiences in terms of similar cultural experiences. Using these collective experiences, I categorized the theme as communal experiences. Within the culture circle, CTA shared their communal experiences by mirroring the book, *Shanghai Messenger* (Cheng, 2005) and the video, *Fresh Off the Boat* (Huang, 2013).

Shanghai Messenger (Cheng, 2005) was about an eleven-year-old Chinese American girl, Xiao Mei, visiting her relatives in China by herself. Before meeting her Chinese relatives, Xiao Mei was anxious about how Chinese people would look at her because of her bi-racial appearance. However, as Xiao Mei immersed herself in Chinese culture and interaction with her relatives, she started to appreciate her Chinese heritage by seeing their hospitality and values. Handel's initial response to *Shanghai Messenger* (Cheng, 2005) was between the efferent-aesthetic continuum. He stated, “很像我們去中國拜訪親戚的經驗。但是我們是跟家人一起去，但是他是一個人去。有些經驗很像，像是調時差，發燒但是休息好就好了。(The story is like our visiting experience in China. Xiao Mei went there on her own, but we went to visit our Chinese relatives with our family. However, some of Xiao Mei's experiences were similar to ours. For example, jet lag and fever. We all recovered from the fever by taking good rests (Handel, W2-V2, p. 3).” Handel's visiting experience in China is similar to Xiao Mei's. Handel's associative response to the story enlightened other CTAs to connect their communal experiences in the culture circle. Vivaldi and Scarlatti had similar experiences as to how their Chinese relatives provided them with abundant food to eat. Scarlatti showed how

much he appreciated the good food by using exuberant and hand gestures and a smiley face whenever they visited their relatives in China. Scarlatti's emotional response reminded Vivaldi and Handel of their communal experiences. The dialogue below showed how Vivaldi, Scarlatti, and Handel reacted to the hospitality with their Chinese relatives.

Vivaldi: Food is amazing.

Scarlatti: Food is big. They just throw food at you every hour.

Vivaldi: Every time your relatives are like... "eat, eat, eat."

Scarlatti: You are not big enough.

YuWen: So does that mean you don't feel hungry at all? You are full every day.

Handel: 我每天都吃很多。(I ate a lot every day at my relatives' home in China.)

Scarlatti: 每天都吃很多。(I ate a lot every day there.)

Scarlatti: 每次都吃這麼多。他們還說多吃一點。還是一樣做很多飯。我生日在那兒過。他們準備好多東西給我吃。每天都很像盛宴。(I ate a lot every meal. They kept telling me to eat more. They made abundant food. I once spent my birthday there. They prepared a lot of food for me. Every meal was like feast.)

Handel nodded his head in agreement.

Vivaldi: Food is really good.

Scarlatti: 好像是原來他們以前也沒有吃飽。所以，現在就是說，盡力地補給我們。都是因為他們過去的 experience, but you know we have food now. (It seems that they used to be starving in the past. Hence, they try to compensate and give us more food because of their past experience.) (Culture Circle Meeting, W2-V3, p. 18-19)

As we see in the dialogue above, Scarlatti, Vivaldi, and Handel's communal experiences made Scarlatti think more critically about the reasons why these events occurred. Scarlatti thought of his Chinese relatives' life in the past. His relatives went through a period of starvation. This experience was very similar to that of many other Chinese peasants, a decade before. They no longer suffer from starvation, but the

abundant service with grace shows hospitable respect for this new generation of guests. In addition to the generous supply of food, giving money is the other way of showing hospitality to Chinese relatives. Vivaldi, Handel, and Scarlatti recalled the scene of receiving money from their relatives in China. Vivaldi said, “When we go there, they gave us food and 紅包 (hóngbāo: lucky money in the red envelope)” (Vivaldi, W2-V3, p. 26). Handel added, “They all give us money” (Handel, W2-V3, p. 26). Scarlatti excitedly said, “My relative is like putting it (hóngbāo) in the pocket and hand it money to you” (Scarlatti, W2-V3, p. 26). Other CTAs opened their eyes wildly and nodded with agreement as Scarlatti described how his relatives showed their generosity. Not everyone responded to the literature verbally. However, their non-verbal expression supported the experiential responses of their fellow CTAs. The description of other communal experiences of visiting relatives in China was consensual within the culture circle.

There was even more interactive dialogue of shared communal experiences after CTAs watched *Fresh off the Boat* (Huang, 2013). This drama was adapted from the book, *Fresh off the Boat* (Huang, 2008), which was based on the author, Eddie Huang’s real story growing up in an Asian-American family in the U.S.. Handel was the first person to make an association with his life experience at home. He echoed the scene of the *Fresh off the Boat* (Kahan, 2008), “我連想到我們在家裡，也想要保守中國家庭的生活。所以不會把美國所有的生活一些東西放進去” (I connected the scene to my family. We also want to maintain our Chinese lifestyle. We don’t exactly live in American ways; Handel, W5-V1, p. 4). Handel's eagerness to preserve Chinese culture in the United States gave Black, Myaskovsky, and Aria motivation to think of how they actually practice Chinese culture in the U.S. Handel's affective responses (Bleich, 1986;

Rosenblatt, 1978) in the culture circle created an opportunity for Black, Myaskovsky, and Aria to share their communal experiences as seen in the dialogues below.

YuWen: 例如呢? (Could you give us some examples?)

Handel: 在家我們還是會穿拖鞋。但是，有時候吃飯會吃西餐，換口味。
(We wear indoor slippers at home. We change the eating style, so we eat Western food sometimes.)

Black: (raising her hand and asking YuWen) 老師，中國人在家裡都穿拖鞋嗎? (Mrs. Chen, do all Chinese wear indoor slippers at home?)

YuWen: 嗯嗯對，就我所知，大部分的中國人都習慣在家穿室內拖鞋。
(Umm, as far as I know, most of Chinese wear indoor slippers at home.)

Aria nodded.

Vivaldi: Yeah, we usually wear slippers.

Handel: 是呀！是會穿拖鞋我們住南方，在家都是穿拖鞋。[Yes, we do. We (my extended family in Mainland China) live in the south, so we wear slippers at home.]

Myaskovsky nodded in agreement.

YuWen: We (people from Taiwan) too. We are afraid to get a cold if we do not wear slippers at home.

Aria nodded yes too. (Culture Circle Meeting W5-V1, p. 4-5)

In the above excerpt, Handel, Black, Aria, and Myaskovsky said that they also wear indoor slippers at home like a scene from the video. Unlike most Americans, who wear outdoor shoes at home, the CTAs wear indoor slippers at home like other Chinese people. Black also began to wonder what other overseas Chinese lifestyle traditions, either in Taiwan or Mainland China, are similar. As Black asked me, “老師，中國人在家裡都穿拖鞋嗎? (Mrs. Chen do all Chinese wear indoor slippers as well?"; Black, W5-V1, p. 5).

This question revealed that Black not only reflected her cultural practice at home, but also encouraged other CTAs to seek to understand the differences in intercultural matters from other Chinese who live overseas.

When describing Chinese lifestyle, Handel not only considered his family in the United States, but also included his extended family in Mainland China. He used “We” to describe that all of them wear indoor slippers at home. This example showed that Handel and his family maintained their cultural tradition and brought it to America from their home country. In addition to the experiences of strong family bonds and life experiences in common among these CTAs, they also shared their struggles when they interacted with their extended family and traveled to China. Their struggling experiences gave them the other aspect of mutual understanding of living in bi-cultural backgrounds. The communal experience here I mean is based on sharing common experiences in a particular culture group. As a researcher participant in this study, I, therefore, shared my life experience of recognizing language barriers living in a bi-cultural society after reading *Grandfather Counts* (Cheng, 2003). One of the story plots in this book was about the language barriers and cultural gaps that Helen and her grandfather (Gong Gong) encountered. As a result, Helen and Gong Gong strengthened their family bond while teaching each other English and Mandarin Chinese. This story reminded me of the relationship between my child and my mother-in-law. My child was born in the United States. Like Gong Gong in the story, my mother-in-law is also Chinese. She does not speak English. When she came to visit us from China, my child had trouble understanding his grandmother's Chinese language. However, they had a similar way of building their family bond through hands-on materials like the story of *Grandfather Counts* (Cheng, 2003). When my child said, “done,” grandmother thought her grandson wanted to eat an ‘egg’ (Chinese pronunciation is Dàn. It sounds like English, 'done'). In this case, grandmother learned that when her grandson finished eating, he said, "done." On the other hand, my child learned Mandarin

Chinese from his grandmother. When he was playing with a toy car, grandmother taught him, “大車車” (Chinese pronunciation is *Dà chē chē*). My child later said, 'Dà chē chē' when he was playing with that toy. I shared with CTAs my observation of the interaction between my child and his grandmother.

This associative response sharing gave Handel, Myaskovsky, and Bach a chance to recall their interaction with their grandparents and extended family who speak only Mandarin Chinese. The following list provides some examples of how Handel, Myaskovsky, Scarlatti, and Bach interacted with their relatives regarding language barriers.

- 有時候會比手畫腳。(Sometimes, I just used body language to communicate with my grandparents; Handel, W3-V1, p. 5)
- 我的姥姥有時候我說的東西他們聽不懂，也不知道我在說什麼。(My grandmother sometimes did not understand what I said to her; Myaskovsky, W3-V1, p. 6)
- When I was in Beijing.....because my Chinese accent is not that good, I have troubles a few times talking to my relative. They see me shy....I guess...they embarrassed me....I never solve this problem (having English accent when speaking Chinese). (Bach, W3-V1, p. 6)
- 他們跟我說四川話，我用普通話回他們。他們都聽得懂。但是，聽四川話，有時候會有問題。(They talked to me in Sichuanese and I responded to them in Mandarin Chinese. They can understand what I said, but sometimes I do not fully understand Sichuanese.) (Scarlatti, W3-V1, p. 6)

Body language is a way for Handel to better communicate with his grandparents. Even though Myaskovsky speaks Mandarin Chinese to his grandmother, his grandmother sometimes does not understand what he said because of his American accents. Similarly, Bach had a problem with the accents. Scarlatti does not thoroughly understand Sichuanese dialect. These experiences helped them understand each other's situations and

gave other CTAs commonality through their mutual struggles. Bleich (1969) indicated that promoting the ‘collective subjectivity’ for readers helps them make their associative connections to the texts and build a sense of literary welcoming community. As CTAs shared their communal lifestyle from visiting experiences to struggling experiences, they began to bond with each other within the culture circle.

Build Knowledge Together

According to Rosenblatt (2005), when readers respond to books, they gave each other mutual feedback, comments, and questions based on their personal history and linguistic-experiential reservoir. This dual interaction helps the readers reconstruct/reinterpret new meanings. In this section, the data revealed that CTAs and I reconstruct new meanings based on our funds of knowledge of culture and linguistic experience (Moll et al., 1992). The new meanings here in this study are not text response oriented, but rather constructing by the participants of the culture circle building knowledge together. Each participant brings his/her own new meanings based on his/her own background of knowledge. Each participant’s contribution of their new meanings resulted in their existing knowledge and response to texts. When the participants gather new meanings from each other, they build their knowledge together, including language experience, intercultural understanding of family values, Chinese historical facts, and interpersonal stories of family’s immigrant experiences in the U.S.

Lexicon usage differences. As seen in the report of CTAs’ communal experiences above, CTAs become more familiar with their fellow participants. In the earlier section of ‘share communal experiences,’ Scarlatti and Bach had a problem communicating with their Chinese relatives because of their accents and dialect understanding in response to

Grandfather Counts (Cheng, 2003). Collecting Scarlatti's and Bach's difficult communal experiences, I then shared my similar experiences with CTAs. I told them that I used to have a hard time understanding my husband and mother-in-law's words when we went grocery shopping. The following example is about the lexicon usage differences I brought up in the interactive dialogue.

Ling: When we say 蕃茄 (tomato), we mean the little tiny one (tomato) in Shanghai.

Handel: 北方人說西紅柿，南方人說蕃茄。(In northern of China, people say "xīhóngshì". People who live in the southern China, they say fānjiā).

Myaskovsky: 我們可能也住在 southern 一些). I think we (my relatives) might also live in the southern area of China.

Ling: 我們說大的叫做西紅柿，小的叫做蕃茄。(We say that the larger one is "xīhóngshì", and the smaller one is "fānjiā" in Shanghai.)

YuWen: 茼蒿子白有沒有聽過? Have you ever heard "huí zi bái"?

Myaskovsky, Ling, Scarlatti, and Handel: 我們叫白菜。We say "Báicài."

YuWen: In Taiwan, we say romaine lettuce is 白菜 (Báicài); cabbage is 高麗菜 (gāolí cài).

YuWen: Have you ever heard 彌猴桃 (míhóutáo)?

Handel and Bach: 對。Yes (nodded their heads).

Scarlatti: 我都不知道叫什麼，只知道 kiwi. (I don't know how to say them in Mandarin Chinese at all. I just know kiwi.)

YuWen: 在台灣，我們說是奇異果。(In Taiwan, we say "qíyì guǒ".)

Scarlatti: 所以中國人到台灣，就會有很多（語言上的）issue 嗎? (Does that mean people from Mainland have trouble with talking to Taiwanese when they travel to Taiwan?)

YuWen: 也還好。只是有些東西的名稱不太一樣，但還可以溝通。(Not really.

There are some words that are different, but overall they still can communicate with each other.)

Scarlatti: 所以，只有一些地方不一樣? (So...there are just a little bit differences?)

YuWen: 對，用詞有些不一樣，但語句是一樣的。(Yes, some words are different, but the sentence order we say is the same.) (Culture Circle Meeting, W3-V1, p. 8-10)

In the above example, we build knowledge of lexicons differences together. Ling explained that people who live in Shanghai have a different lexicon of saying tomato based on different classifications of tomato. Handel further distinguished differences of the lexicon of tomato between Northern and Southern China. When I talked about the different lexicons of cabbage between China and Taiwan, Myaskovsky, Ling, Scarlatti, and Handel responded at the same time. They stated that they, as Chinese Americans, have different ways of saying cabbage from China and Taiwan. These responses show that these participants and I learned lexicon usage differences together through recalling what lexicons we had learned from the places we lived and traveled or even interaction with other relatives. Handel highlighted the lexicon usage differences varied in different regions among Chinese. This distinction made Scarlatti wonder if the lexicon usage differences have an impact on the communication issues among Chinese and Taiwanese people. Scarlatti's inquiry led other fellow participants to develop intercultural understanding. No matter whether people come from Mainland China or Taiwan or even a diaspora, they can still communicate with each other even though some lexicons are different.

This accumulation of knowledge in languages also brought up a discussion about the names of food in bilingual English and Mandarin languages. This topic corresponds to children's literature *Apple Pie 4th of July* (Wong, 2006), by extension, *Fresh Off the Boat* (Kahan, 2008, "So Chineez Scene"). In the story of *Apple Pie 4th of July* (Wong, 2006), a Chinese American girl complained that her parents kept their Chinese restaurant open on the fourth of July-Independence Day of the United States. She thought no one would be willing to eat 'chow mein' at a Chinese restaurant on that holiday. As an

example of meal experiences, I showed a video clip from *Fresh Off the Boat* (Kahan, 2008, “So Chineez Scene”) to the CTAs as a means of continued discussion. Eddie’s father, Louis from *Fresh Off the Boat* said, “I thought you were going to shop for a thousand-year-old egg.” “(Kahan, 2008, “So Chineez Scene”).” This script made Vivaldi, Aria, and Handel curious about what the food is like. The following is their dialogue.

Vivaldi: What does that mean?

Aria: 皮蛋 (pi dang)

Handel: 皮蛋 (pi dang)

Vivaldi: It’s not supposed to be a chicken in it?

Handel: (explaining to Vivaldi) Yeah, it’s supposed to be black and it’s preserved.

It has a weird smell.

Vivaldi: My mom likes that.

Handel: It tasted good (with a thumb-up gesture). (Culture Circle Meeting W5-V1, p. 3)

Not all of the CTAs had tried “a thousand-year-old egg” (pi dang) before. Vivaldi was not sure what the equivalent term of “a thousand-year-old egg” was. It is a Chinese preserved food which is often made by preserving chicken, duck or quail egg. It also contains a mixture of clay, ash, salt, and quicklime for preservation. With other CTAs’ help, Vivaldi resolved her question and she realized that “pi dang” is one of her mother’s favorite Chinese foods. As seen in the dialogue above, Vivaldi can identify a certain food (a thousand-year-old egg) in Mandarin Chinese (pi dang). She once heard a report from family members’ experiences about eating pi dang. However, when the food is named in English (a thousand-year-old egg), she might not know what it was. This reveals that family has an impression on Vivaldi regarding the knowledge of some particular Chinese food which she rarely finds in the United States. However, when the fellow participants explained to her what ‘a thousand-year-old egg’ was like, this explanation help Vivaldi to

add on her knowledge of how to say the name of the food both in Mandarin Chinese and English.

Gain understanding of historical facts and stories of Chinese immigrants.

Concerning about Chinese immigrants' historical stories of responses, the theme of data was revealed into two levels: macro and micro. That is to say, macro level focuses on the historical facts in China and early Chinese peasants' migration to the United States as laborers. On the other hand, micro level draws on CTAs' interpersonal stories of their grandparents' life circumstances in China and their parents' stories as the first generation of Chinese immigrants. Due to the fact that CTAs are the particular group I formed for this study, they have similar cultural backgrounds, but they have different life stories that they can contribute in the intercultural group. Hence, five books are deliberately utilized in this study for discussion in order to answer the research question 1: How do CTAs build their understanding of the Chinese immigrant history, family values, and Chinese cultural practices in a culture circle? These books are *Hannah is My Name* (Yang, 2004), *Shanghai Messenger* (Cheng, 2005), *Coolies* (Soentpiet, 2003), *Apple Pie 4th of July* (Wong, 2006), and *Dancing to Freedom: The True Story of Mao's Last Dancer* (Li, 2008). The stories drew on Chinese immigrants' experiences (i.e. gold mining, railroad building activities, bi-cultural living experiences, and dual identity) and Chinese historical facts (i.e. Cultural Revolution in China, gold mining and railroad building in the U.S.). I chose these books on purpose is to help CTAs build a solid understanding of Chinese immigrants' circumstances in the past and recall their parents' or grandparents' experiences. One activity related to this topic was that CTAs interviewed their parents' immigrant stories because CTAs' parents are the first generation of immigrants in the

U.S., except for ShiChi, Chinese adopted teenager's. As a result, CTAs envisioned the historical facts through sharing what they saw and how they felt about the story. Moreover, CTAs had a better understanding of their interpersonal stories of family's history among other fellow CTAs.

Macro level of Chinese immigrants' history. As for the macro level of Chinese immigrants' history, CTAs not only learned the historical facts, but also shaped their critical thinking about the foundation of the history. Souto-Manning (2010) recapped that "culture circles are grounded in problem posing, critical dialogues and problem solving" (p. 35). She articulated how to apply Freire's culture circle pedagogy into practice. The pictures or slide projects are a mediator for students to generate themes for critical discussion. The exploration of the pictures also allows students to share their "collective realities and cultural legacies" (Souto-Manning, 2010, p. 35) rather than just spotlighting individuals feeling with insecurity. Similarly, revealing the collective realities in the culture circles echoes to the readers response of framing a literacy community (Bleich, 1969). Readers of group memberships share their cultural experiences within this community by responding to art images and historical literature (Beach, 1993). Utilizing images and particular historical periods of stories for particular cultural groups during the literacy activity gives them a better understanding of that historical period with critical lenses (Beach, 1993).

Intertwined the theories of Freire's culture circle and reader response theories, I, therefore, incorporated images of Gallery Walk activity into the cultural circle meeting for a pre-reading activity. CTAs walked around the classroom and gave comments on the seven pictures of early Chinese immigrants' activities posted on the walls (Appendix A).

CTA later responded to the book, *Coolies* (Soentpiet, 2003). The story was adapted from an actual historical event: the establishment of the transcontinental railroad across the West in the United States in the 1800s. The Chinese railroad workers endured discrimination, and hazardous work in order to survive and make a better living for their families. Bach discerned the consequence of why Chinese peasants were forced to become migrant workers in the U.S.. He said, “I believe that they were desperate because of the issues about rebellion in China and because of the prices China had to pay to Europe for the Opium Wars (Bach, literary response journal 4). Bach’s perception of the literary responses (Bleich, 1986) gave the fellow CTAs insight into the untold truths of why Chinese peasants fled to the U.S.. On the other hand, Black showed her empathy with the Chinese railroad workers in the story, “It must have been harsh” (Black, literary response journal 4). Black’s affective responses (Bleich, 1986) allowed the fellow CTAs to know how she felt about the story. According to Bleich (1986), when readers show their response to the texts on the phase of perception and further make affective responses of how they feel about the literature, these responses help readers to build an inclusive community. As a trustworthy community developed, readers are more willing to make associative responses regarding to their interpersonal stories.

The other example of macro level of Chinese immigrants’ history was presented when the CTAs were divided into two groups and responded to two books. They are *Coolies* (Soentpiet, 2003) and *Dancing to Freedom: The True Story of Mao's Last Dancer* (Li, 2008). CTAs created a Venn diagram in posters, and they juxtaposed the early and current Chinese immigrants. In general, they considered some factors which influenced either formal or current life of immigrants. These factors were language,

education, work, technology, transportation, politics, discrimination, and racism. The following was a report from group 1 and group 2 in the culture circle. See the Venn diagram which CTAs created below (Fig. 4.1 and 4.2).

from Group 1

Figure 4.2 An Activity of Juxtaposing Early and Current Chinese Immigrants from Group 2

Group1

Myaskovsky: In the 1800's, there was no phone. Disease, cheap labor, no long-distance communication tech, they were sad and sent on the boat and went on. There is no similarity in Trump's' age, but there are some similarities in Mao Zedong's age, which is a hard life.

Vivaldi: They had to get selected before they get opportunities in Mao's time. It's communism. There was also reeducation, which screwed up pretty badly. If you did anything that's against Mao, then he will send his red guards to beat you now, they have less discrimination and 1800's-question about leadership, Mao and Trump. They also had phones, but the phone couldn't reach China at that time. The phones are so America. Now, Trump time, capitalism both in U.S. and China.

Myaskovsky: But, China is communist.

Myaskovsky: Now, we have smartphones.

Vivaldi: You work hard and have a better opportunity to get selected. There's no experience that threatens by. Asian acceptance rate is not like Caucasian acceptance rate. The college selection rate for Caucasian is still discrimination. China is the second best. Life is less hard.

Myaskovsky wrote: American+.

YuWen: What do you mean by "American+" you wrote in the poster?

Myaskovsky: It means freedom here (the United States). (Culture Circle Meeting, W6-V7, p. 13-14)

Group2

Handel: Before Li's time----little English, long travel. They were treated badly, no planes. Now, Trump's time. We have the technology. Capitalism in China and there are more opportunities and more English. There is North Korea being a threat.

YuWen: Could you explain us what you mean by North Korea and Trump? Both of the groups mentioned Trump.

Vivaldi: He (Trump) has to pretend to like China so that he can get allies so life gets easier.

Myaskovsky: He told Chinese president we should celebrate our friendship, but it was a lie.

Vivaldi: They are kinda get scared. Both are superpowers. So, they are scared one flap over to the other. So, China helps North Korea, pretty much the nuclear weapons (nuks) and Russia is ok with relationship with China, bad relationship with America. America is like Israel. They are a

bunch of allies and NATO. One of them flips out, and the world is screwed up. (Culture Circle Meeting, W6-V7, p. 14)

As seen in both group's report above, CTAs had a better understanding of early Chinese immigrants' experiences in the 1800s and Mao's time. Chinese peasants left their country because they wanted to have more and better opportunities. Nevertheless, Chinese immigrants had suffered different obstacles when they immigrated to the U.S., for example, language barriers and discrimination. Given these points of insight into the Chinese immigrants' circumstances, CTAs steered the conversation on to the newest political phenomenon globally, rather than limiting themselves to the book responses alone. They portrayed how different countries maintain their relationships with harmony. However, each leader of a country has an individual purpose beneath the surface of the harmony. CTAs expressed their opinions on the political issues with a critical lens. As Holland (1975) noted, readers gain different interpretations to their identity through exploring beyond themselves between the texts and the story. These reading response experiences generated their collective transformation. Moreover, CTAs' collective responses continued to build their literary community (Bleich, 1969) in the culture circle as they provide different perceptions and collective conclusions to the texts for each other.

Micro level of Chinese immigrants' history. The associative responses of interpersonal stories I called is "micro level of Chinese immigrants' history". When CTAs responded to the historical event, they recount the story of the *Shanghai Messenger* (Cheng, 2005). From the poem of Rain, Xiao Mei's relatives, Jing and Xiao Gang had a hard time during the Cultural Revolution (1966-1976). Jing "was sent to the countryside by the government. They called it re-education. We cannot study, only work in the fields.

Waste eight years not enough food, yams every day, and mud on the floor” (Cheng, 2005, p. 22). Handel reported connections to his grandparents' experiences during the Cultural Revolution. Although he did not have a chance to hear the story from his grandparents, his family told him about the events that happened during that time. The example is as follows.

Handel: My grandpa worked for Chinese government.

YuWen: Ok, could you tell us more about it?

Handel: I think he and his whole family go to the labor. After the Cultural Revolution, they returned.

Ling: I think I guess my grandma was sent to the labor during that time as well.

YuWen: Could you tell us about how they or your grandpa think about the re-education, Handel? How's his life at that time?

Handel: He passed away, but I heard from my family. It was tough for them. They saw people suicide and sacrificed. (Culture Circle Meeting, W2-V2, p. 6-7)

From Handel's and Ling's dialogue above, Handel's grandfather and Ling's grandmother also had a hard time during the Cultural Revolution reflecting Jing's experience in the story of *Shanghai Messenger* (Cheng, 2005). These associative responses (Bleich, 1969) gave other CTAs one more example of life during the Cultural Revolution. Learning Handel's and Ling's family historical story in an unequal society allowed the fellow CTAs to gain more understanding of their peers' family background in the culture circle.

In the response to *Dancing to Freedom: The True Story of Mao's Last Dancer* (Li, 2008), Li's immigrant story and personal growth inspired CTAs to learn more about their parents' immigrant experiences in the United States. They interviewed their parents at home. At the beginning, Myaskovsky, Vivaldi, Handel, and Scarlatti gave a general idea of why their parents immigrated to the United States. These included educations, work,

children, buy a house, etc. Later, Bach gave insight into what her mother was struggling with. She talked about a new culture in the United States and how she found a sense of belonging in American culture through getting involved in a Chinese community. This testimonial story exemplified the deep cross-cultural adjustment and the purpose of the American dream pursuits of their parents. See the dialogue below.

Myaskovsky: They said they just switched over the plane and got here. They got money and they have children. And then, they moved here. I am here now.

Vivaldi: The same.

Handel nodded.

YuWen: Any significant experience?

Scarlatti: No. Just got here. Education. Work, and buy a house and we are here.

(Bach and Handel raised their hands.)

Bach: I have one. My mom can't fit in the American people and she did not know how to speak English that well. But, she finally found some Chinese people here and became friends.

Handel: My dad first came here thinking to get an education and go back to China. But, he decided to stay to have more opportunities.

YuWen: How about Black?

Black (shrugging her shoulders): No.

Scarlatti: Honestly, my parents just came here, and they didn't really plan for that. Vivaldi: My dad does because of his religion, and he didn't like farming. He is like, this is my ticket for me out of farming and free. He still sent back money and they help his family to get a better education.

Honestly, getting more education is getting out of farming. (Culture Circle Meeting, W6-V4, p. 5-6)

Vivaldi and Handel addressed the fact that there was more opportunity living in the United States compared to life in Mainland China regarding education and work. From the dialogue above, it also revealed that their parents were able to survive in their work, raise their children, and acculturate their life into the dominant culture. Bach's mother had a difficult time with adjusting in American life, but later she found a sense of

belonging in a Chinese group where she could serve and relate to her cultural origin. Every immigrant encountered different obstacles that she/he needed to overcome, resulting in her/his unique story. The interpersonal stories of family history among CTAs allowed them to gain mutual understanding with each other. This testimonial story exemplified the deep cross-cultural adjustment and the purpose of American dream pursuits for their parents.

Summary

In summary, CTAs gain more understanding of the historical facts and stories of Chinese immigrants with two levels: macro and micro. At the macro level, CTAs critically examined the historical events through extending the book discussion and involvement in the literacy activities. The critical awareness of historical events allowed CTA to express their feelings about the historical facts. When the feelings were released, CTAs were comfortable in bringing up political issues about they concern around the world. They concluded their collective responses to the propaganda with a critical lens. On the other hand, I also found that the empathy expressed shifted CTAs to the micro level of interpersonal family histories. At the micro level, CTAs further associated their grandparents' experiences during the Cultural Revolution. Sharing the interpersonal stories helped CTAs gain more understanding of family backgrounds among the fellow CTAs. All in all, CTAs built their unique literacy community by understanding the Chinese immigrants' histories from both macro and micro levels.

Recognize Living in Bi-cultural Contexts

The theme of recognition of bi-cultural living includes the responses to the story, *Shanghai Messenger* (Cheng, 2005), *Apple Pie on the 4th of July* (Wong, 2006), *Dancing to Freedom: The True Story of Mao's Last Dancer* (Li, 2008), and a literacy activity- Define Who You Are. First of all, CTAs revealed their values as a result of living in bi-cultural contexts, including freedom and practices of daily life. Second, they also recognized issues that surround them, including parents' high expectations and the Model Minority Stereotype. Last, they further recognized pros and cons of daily living practices in both cultures; for instance, choices of medication and dining manners.

Value of Freedom. Regarding the holiday celebration on the 4th of July, CTAs thought it was not necessary to follow American traditions, i.e. watch the parade, enjoy firecrackers, eat American fast food, or have a BBQ party. Instead of assimilating to totally American culture, CTAs valued the American spirit of freedom while maintaining the values of their roots in the Chinese culture. According to Holland's psychoanalytic response (1975), readers make fantasy response by giving a fantasy imagination for fulfilling the expectation based on their culture experience. Likewise, Vivaldi and Black gave fantasy response (Holland, 1975) to the *Apple Pie on the 4th of July* (Wong, 2006). They wove a pleasant fantasy for their wish-fulfillment based on their bi-cultural living experience and observation. For example, Vivaldi said, "In America, freedom here is held highly. Just because the 4th of July is a patriotic day, doesn't mean people will only eat American food" (Vivaldi, literary response journal 5). Black said, "Who says we don't eat Chinese food on the 4th of July? It's food" (Black, literary response journal 5). Vivaldi and Black embrace both American and Chinese cultures by extracting values from both

core cultures, that is, the spirit of freedom in America and the ethic of hard work, a characteristic of Chinese culture (Handel, Culture Circle Meeting, W5-V2, p. 22). They give a liberal view on holiday celebrations. Some Americans or other ethnic groups eat Chinese food on the 4th of July as well. The celebration style does not have to follow the dominant culture because everyone has her/his free will to choose what they like to do and eat. As Handel said "... I sometimes feel this way as some of our traditions may seem un-American, but then more people have embraced us through recent popular culture" (Handel, literary response journal 4). Because of the value of freedom, Handel gave further insight into the inclusion of cultural diversity in a dominant society.

Everyday values. From the societal aspect, CTAs saw the value of freedom living in the United States. CTAs also drew closer to the household and daily accommodation aspect living in bi-cultural contexts from their life experiences. First of all, Vivaldi, Handel, and Bach, compared bargaining experiences after watching *Fresh off the Boat* (Kahan, 2016, "Coming from America Scene"). This scene was about how a Chinese American mother bargained a pair of shoes for her son in an outdoor market of Taiwan. Bargaining is a popular custom in outdoor markets both in China and Taiwan. Vivaldi noticed the differences in customs of bargaining between the U.S. and other countries. Seeing the variation of customs of other countries, she chose not to bargain even though she traveled to the place where the customers are allowed to bargain. The following is the dialogue.

Vivaldi: In America, we don't expect to bargain because we give you the price like that. In Europe, you are expected to bargain. In China, you are also expected to bargain. When we went to Italy, these kids are in the bargain, the vendor really give you bargain. I was like (shrank her shoulders). That's your problem.

YuWen: So, when you go back to China, will you bargain?

Vivaldi: My mom will bargain in China.

Handel: There is a place selling pearls...We had to converse over the prices. Those are 800. We are like they are 15 dollars.

Bach: No. (Culture Circle Meeting, W2-V3, p. 24)

Handel shared his bargaining experience in China with his family. He learned how the sellers secretly increase the price making monetary for customers to bargain. Handel had observed bargaining techniques and learned how to obtain a reasonable price. Handel, Vivaldi, and Bach saw cross-cultural differences in matters concerning bargaining. They hold their values whether or not they are bargaining in different cultural contexts. The other example of custom differences has to do with household appliances. Handel expressed them his impression about a small refrigerator in the *Shanghai Messenger* (Cheng, 2005) story. He mentioned that his Chinese relatives also have such a small size refrigerator and it is different from that in America. In the United States, a family usually owns a much larger type of refrigerator for food storage because grocery stores are far away from their residence. In Mainland China and Taiwan, outdoor markets or grocery stores are usually located directly in the neighborhood. As Ling added, “There are some street vendors in the sub-vision where we live in China” (我們住的小區裡，一下樓就有賣菜的攤販; Ling, W3-V1, p. 3). Most Chinese local residents do not need to purchase large amounts of food for storage. They can access fresh ingredients on a daily basis, so a small refrigerator is more convenient. Ling and Handel distinguished the size of refrigerator they own in the United States from their Chinese relatives' in China. This notice gave other fellow CTAs a better understanding of why the refrigerator used is different from their Chinese relatives because of different structure in the neighborhood.

Issues of stereotypes and parents' expectations. As seen in the previous paragraph, Handel saw the beauty of diversity, but there were some issues underlying the debates of CTAs during the literacy activity- Define Who You Are. This activity was about how participants described themselves and how they are perceived by other people. The participants altogether discussed the characteristics they identify with themselves and explain the reasons how others identify their characteristics. In the later section of response to the research question 2 (In a culture circle, how do CTAs use their cultural knowledge to reconstruct their identities through interactive dialogue?) I also discussed this literacy activity- Define Who You Are data to explain how CTAs build their identity in other aspects. In order to respond to the research question 1 (How do CTAs build their understanding of the Chinese immigrant history, family values, and Chinese cultural practices in a culture circle?), I merely draw on CTAs' initial recognition of living in bi-cultural contexts on the issues of stereotypes and parents' expectations. The following excerpts are examples.

Excerpt 1

Aria: Not every Asian is good at math? Ok... I am not good at math. (Aria looked at everyone and slapped the table). I just got an A because I STUDY math.

Vivaldi: You're probably good at math in the eyes ball of Americans. They grow up like C, believe or not.

Myaskovsky and Handel: Yap.

Aria: Because we study a lot, that's why.

Handel: Because we work hard pretty much doing it than others.

Vivaldi: It's our parents-math. They said you need to do math. Think of my childhood. I remember I had recited multiplication table. This is why I am here today.

Myaskovsky: My mom said, "Give you a dollar if you memorize it correctly (multiplication table)". But, she never gave me.

Vivaldi: My mom never does that. She is like...you'd better do it.

Handel: Maybe the big thing for me was like “write out letters. They asked me to write every single letter, like 10 times a day while I was a kid. It was really painful.

YuWen asked Black: How about you, Black?

Black: She (My mother) asked me to do something during the summer.

When we went back to China, I was bored. She just gave me some English worksheet like math, science, etc. Instead of watching TV, I did it (worksheet). (W5-V2, Culture Circle Meeting, p. 22)

Excerpt 2

Vivaldi: My mom checks my grade online more often than I do. She checks once a week.

Handel and Vivaldi laughed.

YuWen asked Vivaldi: How do you feel about your parents checking your grades frequently?

Vivaldi: Annoyed. She seems to make every effort to help me. It’s very sucks.

Vivaldi: I mean they (my parents) try to pressure me, but I did ignore them. What I do in the school because I want to go to school like that. I want to take an AP class, not because of my parents.

YuWen: How about you, Aria?

Aria: They don’t push me hard. They just ask me, “How are you doing in school?” I said, “Good.” They said, “Ok, good.” They never look at my grade, except for what’s the matter whatsoever. It’s like it’s for yourself. You have to have expectations for yourself. My brother and I just study by ourselves.

Myaskovsky: Like... (My parents) make you do lots of studying and extra work.

Handel: They (parents) seem to expect you to get all the time. (W5-V2, Culture Circle Meeting, p. 23)

As seen from the two excerpts above, CTAs recognized that they are not only influenced by their parents’ expectations at home, but also experienced the hidden model minority stereotype from the societal expectation living in the bi-cultural contexts. Lee (1996) in his book, *Unraveling the Model Minority Stereotype- Listening to Asian American Youth*, mentioned that Asian Americans, generally speaking, are regarded as

hard workers and they are always submissive. However, as CTAs' recognition of their lack of confidence on living in-between circumstances, they expressed their feelings and spoke up for themselves. Aria and Handel refuted the stereotype of societal expectations. They explained that they are inherently not in math wise, but they study harder than others. Moreover, Vivaldi, Myaskovsky, and Black mentioned that they were under their parents' supervision with their academic learning in their childhood. Their parents also have high expectations for their academic performance. Even so, they said that they study hard for themselves rather than meeting societal and parents' expectations.

Recognizing self-expectations for learning in the bi-cultural contexts, CTAs also noted that the friends they hang out with are not limited to Chinese ethnic friends. When hanging out with Caucasian friends, they see the differences of their lifestyle and values, and they respect the differences. For instance, Myaskovsky likes to go to a gas station store with Caucasian friends and eat “bunch of junk food.” He was surprised to see them “mouthfully” drink a “2-liter bottle of soda costing 99 cents” (Myaskovsky, W5-V2, p. 14). Bach gestured 'bunch of...' with his hands as in agreement with what Myaskovsky said. Handel, however, shared his thoughts about hanging out with Caucasian friends. Handel said, "Try to fit in. Try to play more sports. Eat junk food, and go shopping" (Myaskovsky, W5-V2, p. 14). For Bach and Myaskovsky, they do not consider hanging out with Caucasian friends as a problem. It is not difficult for them to fit into the dominant culture. Vivaldi added that her American girlfriends “tend to go shopping too often” and spend too much money on “shoes and clothes.” Even so, she still joined them once a month at the mall. Whereas, Vivaldi prefers to enjoy window shopping. She does not spend too much money on material things because she wants to make her allowance

“private” (i.e. to save money) (Vivaldi, W5-V2, p. 14). As seen in the situation of CTAs' social life, they enjoyed spending time with Caucasian friends, but do not completely act as their peers do. They respect their mutual differences in terms of values and lifestyle.

Differences of living in bi-cultural contexts. Relating to the book, *Shanghai Messenger* (Cheng, 2005), CTAs explained differences of a bi-cultural context living experience regarding medication and dining manners between Chinese and American cultures. In the story, Xiao Mei and her Chinese relatives had dinner at a dining table together. This scene caused Vivaldi to express her preference and appreciation of a Chinese eating style at a dining room table. The example is as follows.

Vivaldi: There are lots of differences because they are like ...In America, it's not normal to have your dish and use your own 筷子 (chopsticks), but in China, they put real extra stuff, the tradition, they are like using the wheel. In America, you have one dish, but when you finish, they bring the next, instead of spinning wheel. I personally like Chinese style.

YuWen: Why do you prefer Chinese style?

Vivaldi: You didn't talk to your relatives, everyone at the table by interacting with others. You focus on eating because everyone else is eating. Because so many people are there, that is the only way you have feeling like there is no awkward silence.

YuWen: Interesting. I agree with you. I didn't notice that before. (Culture Circle Meeting, W2-V3, p. 17)

Vivaldi gave associative response (Bleich, 1969) when connecting the dining scene from the *Shanghai Messenger* (Cheng, 2005) to her bi-cultural dining experiences. Regarding dining styles, as for Western culture, individuals have their own food on their own plates of food to eat; however, in Chinese/ Taiwanese culture, dishes are put in the center of the table with a spinning wheel (lazy Susan). Vivaldi further expressed that she felt 'awkward silence' when having a meal with others at an American dining style which

everyone has her/his own plate to eat. Vivaldi's preferences and feeling expression is affective response, which means when readers respond to texts, they showed their preferences and feeling to the texts (Bleich, 1969). However, the American dining style is that the host usually transfers the food from the serving dish to the guests' plates or the guests can serve by themselves. Unlike the Chinese dining style, everyone at the dining table has more interaction and talk. That makes social atmosphere more ease among guests and host at a dining table. Vivaldi's opinions on the pros and cons of American and Chinese dining manner gave the fellow CTAs a new understanding of what Vivaldi value is living in bi-cultural contexts, which they may or may not talk about on a regular basis.

The other example of seeing pros and cons occurred when I shared my impression of the story of medical treatment from *Shanghai Messenger* (Cheng, 2005) with CTAs. Xiao Mei, a Chinese American girl in the story, was sick when she visited her relatives in China. Her uncle gave her Chinese medicine from a package reading, "clean your evil spirit" (p. 15). Xiao Mei was upset, and thought, "I don't have evil spirit" (p. 15). This kind of medical treatment was a cultural shock for XiaoMei in Mainland China. I had a similar cultural shock in the United States. I shared my experiences with CTAs. When my son was ill in the United States, I took him to a pediatrician who did not prescribe any medicine or give an injection. I could not accept this lack of action. I was worried that my son's condition would become worse without any medication. However, this American pediatrician believes that youngsters heal themselves by their own body immune system naturally. It has taken time for me to get used to this way of holistic treatment in the western culture. CTAs then shared their experiences and opinions about the differences

between medical practices from the east to the west. Below examples are what CTAs think and have experienced about the east and west medical treatment.

- I just took some vitamins (whenever I am sick in the U.S.)...When I got sick in China, Chinese medicine works. (Ling, Culture Circle Meeting, W2-V2, p. 8)
- Rest and eat...Drink whole bunch of water.... It (Chinese medicine) is herb, but you don't know if it's really safe for you. (Handel, Culture Circle Meeting, W2-V2, p. 8)
- The bacteria and virus are strengths. The doctor said "you got your strength of this kind of bacteria." This is cool. I am like...uh...ok....In America, we have the over-counter medicine, so people don't really need to go to a doctor, because they can just buy something whether it works or not. So, I got the feeling that Americans are a bit more independent on medicine not necessarily their doctors. And then in China, at least traditionally, when my mom lived there, they were more like, let your body cure itself naturally, don't depend on medicine. And then my mom said that her mom, she usually goes to the doctors for like herbal stuff. But practically, any illness of any sort, my mom's mom will go to the doctors. So, she's more dependent on the doctor than medicine. (Vivaldi, Culture Circle Meeting, W2-V2, p. 8)
- 我覺得我來這裡 (美國)我的抵抗力變強了。今年我沒感冒，藥有副作用。(I thought my immune system becomes stronger here in the U.S. compared to the days I was in Mainland China. I did not get a cold this year. Taking medicine causes side effects.) (ShiChi, Culture Circle Meeting, W2-V2, p. 8)

Regarding pros and cons of medical treatment between Chinese and American style allows CTAs to make their preference of in what ways of treatment they are more acceptable. Vivaldi analyzed how people take care of themselves in different cultures. She pointed out that Chinese rely on doctor visits more than Americans. Whereas, Americans are more independent in their own medical treatment by purchasing medicine at an over-the-counter pharmacy. Interestingly, CTAs seem to prefer the American independent style of over-the-counter medicine to let their body heal naturally.

Summary

In summary, CTAs constructed their understanding of their cultural values and practices through recognizing the bi-cultural contexts which they are living. As seen in the examples above, the awareness of the pros and cons of each culture values and customs allow CTAs to distinguish what certain values they attempt to hold or custom practices around them. Moreover, noticing the model minority stereotypes and parents' expectations helps CTAs to articulate the issues that have preoccupied their minds and bring up authenticity of what they actually do living in bi-cultural contexts.

Connect to Cultural Origins

As evidence shown earlier, CTAs do not simply assimilate American dominant culture of individualism, but they hold values of collectivist cultures regarding family bonds. In this section, CTAs provided evidence as how they connect to their cultural origin even though they live in an American society when they responded to *Apple Pie*, *4th of July* (Wong, 2006). Chinese language, media and technology are mediums used at home for Chinese cultural heritage sustained among the CTAs' family. Through watching Chinese TV programs, Handel has learned different features ranging from provinces in Mainland China to the medical practices in the Eastern and Western culture. Handel's recognition of cultural differences helps fellow CTAs to have a better understanding of differences. This remark also gave them a perspective: every culture is no inferior to the other. Different people have different ways of living because of geography, climate, history, belief, and custom. See the examples of dialogues below.

YuWen: 除了吃飯以外，還有什麼事情你們也保留了中國的文化？

(Except for food, what else do you preserve Chinese culture in your family?)

ShiChi: 不好意思，可不可以再說一遍？(Pardon, could you say it again?)

YuWen asked ShiChi: 那在家裡還有沒有保留一些中國的文化？(Do you have any Chinese culture practice at home?)

Shichi: 弟弟有用 app 學中文。媽媽有時候想知道一些中文詞怎麼說，我會教她。(My brother learns to speak Mandarin through app. My mom sometimes wonders how to say some items in Mandarin Chinese and I teach her how to say it.)

YuWen: 除了吃飯以外，還有什麼事情你們也保留了中國的文化？(Except for eating Chinese food, what else do you do in order to maintain Chinese culture?)

Handel raised his hand.

Handel: 我們會看中國電視。(We watch Chinese TV program.)

Myaskovsky: 我們也有時候會看。(Sometimes, we do as well.)

YuWen: 這邊要怎麼看呢？(How can you watch Chinese TV program here in the U.S.?)

Aria and Black: 網路都看得到。(We can access it through internet.)

YuWen: 是看什麼節目呢？(What kind of TV program do you watch?)

Myaskovsky: 看中國的新聞。(Chinese TV news.)

Handel: 看中國的節目。(We watch Chinese TV show.)

YuWen: 例如呢，談話性或是其他類型的？(What types of TV shows, talk show or others? Could you give us an example?)

Handel: 學習的。(Educational type.)

Myaskovsky: 爸爸有時候會讓我看一些學習節目。(My father sometimes let me watch some educational programs.)

YuWen: 例如呢？(For example?)

Myaskovsky: 好的東西。介紹中國各地的節目。(Something good for us. Some TV show introduces different features and cultures of provinces in Mainland China.)

Handel: 有時候看東方和西方講的東西不一樣。例如說中醫。醫治的方式跟西方不一樣。(We also watch a TV program which talk about differences between Eastern and Western cultures. For example, Chinese medication. The way of Chinese treatment is different from Western's.)
(Culture Circle Meeting, W5-V1, p. 6)

The example of dialogues above showed that Handel's and Myaskovsky's parents purposefully selected some Chinese online on TV programs for them, including educational, cultural, TV shows, and news. These programs allow them to get a better understanding of Chinese culture and provide them with a glance to a place to China they

have not yet visited. As for ShiChi, a Chinese adopted girl, her American mother and her brother would like to retain ShiChi's Chinese culture through learning the Mandarin Chinese language with her. ShiChi is also happy to introduce what she knows about China to her American family. Moreover, the fellow CTAs learned how ShiChi retained her Chinese culture and language while adjusting to life in an American society and family.

Besides the sources of Chinese media and language for maintaining Chinese heritage and roots, the data also showed that CTAs' parents made an effort to transmit Chinese cultural heritage into their children in different ways, especially the American-born Chinese group. The parents provided Chinese educational programs and discussed Chinese culture with CTAs at home. Liszt, an American-born Chinese girl, described how her father passed on the value of learning Chinese heritage and language when responding to *Grandfather Counts* (Cheng, 2003). Below is an excerpt from her literary response journal,

I liked this book because it shows how important Chinese is to all ABC (American born Chinese) families and I am glad that my parents made me learn Chinese at a very young age. Learning a language can be hard at first but it becomes easier and easier when you can recognize patterns or similarities from something you've learned before. (Liszt, literary response journal 2)

Learning the Chinese language is also a way of maintaining Chinese culture for American-born Chinese youngsters. From the culture circle, seven Chinese Americans attend Chinese language and heritage school (CLHS) on Sunday afternoons. Below is a dialogue of what CTAs think about the Chinese language learning experiences at the CLHS.

YuWen: Can anyone share with us your Chinese schooling experience?
How do you like it?

Black: (Smile)

Vivaldi: (smile and looked at Black) It's a struggle. It is a weekly struggle. It takes a two-hour every week. It's a long weekend.

Scarlatti: Yap.

Vivaldi: There is something up toward all of us.

Liszt: My Chinese is ok.

YuWen: Why do you think it's important to go to Chinese Sunday school?
What are the pros and cons?

Vivaldi: Pros- I am not going to school in China. Cons- It takes us two hours every weekend of my week.

Scarlatti: Very slow process.

Vivaldi: It's a struggle. Actually, learning is hard. It's just a lot of work any work than I did.

YuWen: So, ShiChi and Aria don't go to Chinese school. What's your opinion on going to Chinese school, Aria?

Aria: They destroy your childhood life, so please don't go.

Vivaldi: They really give us support. (Culture Circle Meeting, W4-V2, p. 9)

From the dialogue above, Vivaldi and Scarlatti thought they were struggling with learning Chinese language, and it took away their time on weekends. Aria, the current Taiwanese immigrant adolescent, gave Vivaldi and Scarlatti suggestions of not going to the Chinese language and heritage school because she thought it would not give them pleasant learning experiences. These dialogues revealed that the American-born Chinese group and current Taiwanese/ Chinese immigrant group have different needs of learning the Chinese language because of differences in their prior backgrounds.

CTAs shared a variety of ways to embrace their cultural heritage, including Mandarin Chinese language and heritage school, media (Chinese TV program), and technology. The delivery from these sources increases information among CTAs in the culture circle. In other words, every participant contributes their sources in the culture circle and expands their inclusive literacy community. CTAs learned that even though

they have Chinese ethnic background, but their life experiences are varied. That is why they have different ways of preserving their Chinese heritage and language. This mutual understanding helps the inter-cultural group develop insight into their own needs and respect each other.

Re-connect to Cultural Heritage

In the previous section, the data showed that CTAs shared what sources they use and practice in order to maintain their cultural heritage, including Chinese TV programs, news, and Chinese language and heritage school. In this section, I will present that Aria and ShiChi have their particular ways of demonstrating their cultural heritage which is different from their peers (American-born Chinese). Due to the fact that Aria was a recent Taiwanese immigrant and ShiChi is a Chinese adopted teenager. They maintain a strong connection to their countries of origin even though they live far away from their friends and family in Taiwan and China. The data showed that ShiChi and Aria are still adjusting to their new life in the U.S.. Because of their recent immigration status, they still have a strong connection to their countries of origin. Thus, they tend to find ways to maintain their cultural heritage, even keeping in touch with friends in their home countries.

Aria is an example that shows how she began to reconnect cultural heritage with inherent search for her dual identity. To begin with Aria compared the life differences between Taiwan and the United States after reading *Shanghai Messenger* (Cheng, 2005). She expressed that she felt empathy with her peers in Taiwan. Aria's Taiwanese peers had many hectic days because they had to prepare for the high school entrance exam. Therefore, her Taiwanese peers do not have the time for extra-curricular activities at school. In the personal conversation, Aria told me that she tried to hide her happiness at

having an un-stressful life in the United States when she was chatting with her Taiwanese peers through a social media- LINE. Aria did not want her Taiwanese peers to envy her school life. She wants to emotionally support her peers in Taiwan. Through LINE, Aria gave her Taiwanese peers daily encouragement. She counted down the examination date with them. She also felt like she plays different roles in her Taiwanese peers' eyes: mentor, friend, and counselor. She shared with me that one of her Taiwanese peers grew up in a disadvantaged family. He did not have a vision for his future. Aria tried to encourage him to think big and dream big and not to underestimate his personal potential. From my researcher's notes, I discovered that family and environment impact children's perspectives on their life purpose. Aria shared her experiences and what she saw about this world with those on-line friends who had never been out of their native country- Taiwan. While Aria has been experiencing American culture, she does not want to leave her Taiwanese friends behind. She shares what she saw and learned in the United States with her Taiwanese friends through the LINE (Researcher's note, week2).

According to Holland (1986), when a reader interacts with the literary texts, he/she is involved in either fantasy or defense response. With this response, a reader undergoes inner transformation, which he/or she re-creates his/her identity and "project into it toward some esthetic, ethical, intellectual, or social coherence" (p. 102). When Aria responded to *Shanghai Messenger* (Cheng, 2005), she related her social coherence in Taiwan and realized that she is not only a friend for her Taiwanese friends, but also serves as a mentor and counselor for them. Aria also revealed that she is privileged to avoid the high school entrance examination in Taiwan, unlike her Taiwanese peers. Before moving to the United States, Aria completed all the Chinese classical literature (sì

shū and wǔjīng) courses in the afterschool program. She thought it was worth spending time learning Chinese literature and building a foundation of knowledge. She believed that she would not have a chance to learn Chinese literature living in the United States. Aria's hunger for Chinese classical literature showed that she wants to immerse herself in the Chinese heritage.

ShiChi is another example of showing her wish about reconnecting to her cultural heritage in China. She did not mind sharing her background with the fellow CTAs as an adopted daughter. ShiChi made a fantasy response (Holland, 1986) after reading *Shanghai Messenger* (Cheng, 2005). Fantasy response is when a particular story plot does not meet a reader's expectations, that person will create a fantasy for wish-fulfillment. The reader's experiences and cultural background allows the reader to have this kind of response. The following is an excerpt from ShiChi's fantasy response.

ShiChi: 我希望再次看到我的朋友。因為我的家庭背景比較特別。其實我是被收養的。我是在孤兒院長大的。如果我能回去，最期待的事是跟我的朋友相見。他們給我的感受就像是親人一樣。(I wish I could have met with my (orphanage) friends in China again. Because my family background is special, to be honest, I was adopted. I grew up in an orphanage in China. If I could have gone back to China, I would be excited to see my orphanage friends there. They are like my family.) (Culture Circle Meeting, W2-V3, p. 19-20)

ShiChi's fantasy response revealed her personal background to the fellow CTAs. Prior to the culture circle, ShiChi's mother had told me that ShiChi might not want to share with the group her past experiences in China. She cautioned me not to apply any pressure on her in the culture circle meeting. However, when ShiChi made her fantasy response, which imagined her wish to meet with her friends in the orphanage, she was comfortable with her feelings and shared her wish with the fellow CTAs. This data

revealed that readers get motivation for fulfilling their wishes when reflecting their life in reality. ShiChi made a fantasy response, even though the wish could not make it real at that moment; however, this gives her hope and the vision of dual identity as Chinese and an adopted adolescent in the U.S.. Last, other fellow CTAs gave ShiChi positive feedback when ShiChi shared her thoughts in the group, and from the video record, their facial expressions showed their empathy.

To sum up, Aria and ShiChi have different ways of maintaining their cultural heritage compared to other fellow peers (American-born Chinese) because of their new status of immigration. Aria's and ShiChi's intention of re-connecting to their cultural heritage revealed that they are still familiar with their home cultures. Whereas living in the United States gives them different perspectives of life experiences. Even though these new experiences motivate them to share with their friends in their home countries, they have to hide their day-to-day joy of freedom and flexible schedule when they talk to their friends either in China or Taiwan. Their reaction showed that they came to understand that people live in different contexts, some with less pleasant circumstances. Moreover, Aria's and ShiChi's sharing of how they tried to re-connect to their cultural heritage and current immigrants help other peers become what they (current immigrants) think. I found that this data revealed that CTAs have two ways of showing their empathy toward different people living in different contexts. First, Aria and ShiChi have empathy with their friends in China and Taiwan because they contextualize their life experiences in different cultural settings. Second, the American-born Chinese group in this study have empathy with Aria (current Taiwanese immigrants) and ShiChi (Chinese adopted

adolescent) because they learned their interpersonal stories and how passionate they are about connecting to their cultural heritage.

Conclusion

In conclusion, the stage of invitation responds to the research question 1 (How do CTAs build their understanding of the Chinese immigrant history, family values, and Chinese cultural practices in a culture circle?). CTAs contextualize their life and cultural experiences in the responses to children's literature in the culture circle. In this study, culture circle (Friere, 1993) is a safe and trustworthy environment for CTAs to have interactive dialogues and responses to children's literature. The data emerged by utilizing the interweaving of theoretical framework, including reader response theory (Rosenblatt, 1964), DEFT model of psychoanalytic response (Holland, 1975), and literacy community establishment (Bleich, 1986). The results revealed five primary themes at the stage of invitation in the culture circle.

First of all, CTAs shared their communal experiences by generating their commonality of traveling and language experiences. With communal experience revelations, CTAs started to become more familiar with each other. In the meantime, I found that the examples of CTAs' cultural experiences and value are influenced by collectivist cultures from their Chinese relatives and parents. CTAs do not thoroughly follow the collectivist cultures, but in certain situations, they see the values of collectivist cultures.

Second, CTAs build knowledge together about the differences of language usage across different regions and learned the facts of Chinese immigrants' stories for both historical events and interpersonal family histories. CTAs learned their family

immigrants' stories not only allowed their fellow peers to understand their intercultural group's stories, but also helped them to understand their parents' or grandparents' journey of immigration. When CTAs contribute their understanding of historical events of Chinese immigrants, they generate their interpretation of what they think about the events with a critical lens.

Third, CTAs recognize the pros and cons of living in bi-cultural contexts by constructing the meaning of their cultural values and practices. The distinction of bi-cultural living experience differences allows CTAs to refute the Chinese model minority stereotype and parents' expectations. Instead of fitting into the stereotype, CTAs present their own cultural value they hold- extracting cultural values from both cultures as they choose.

Last, American-born Chinese students make use of a variety of sources in order to connect to their cultural origins. For instance, they watch Chinese TV programs and attend the Chinese Mandarin Language and Heritage School (CMLHS). Finally, the current Taiwanese immigrant, Aria, and Chinese adopted adolescent, ShiChi tried to reconnect their cultural heritage because they wanted to share what their experiences were like in the U.S. with their friends in China and Taiwan. CTAs revealed their passions for maintaining Chinese language and cultures. This projection helps them understand their mutual needs with respect.

Stage Two: The Process of Identity (Re)construction

Stage two demonstrated CTAs' process of identity (re)construction. In this study, I found that identity construction is not a one-time revolution, but it is an ongoing process. CTAs will have been searching for their identity on a continuum. This study, however,

offers CTAs to explore their identity through readers' interaction with the literary texts and mutual feedback within the culture circles. During the exploration of their identity, CTAs have undergone the collective and inner identity transformation (Holland, 1986) regarding psychoanalytic response. The inner identity results in readers' personal identity recreation through involving in fantasy or defense responses toward the literary work. On the other hand, the collective transformation resides in a group of readers' collective responses to the texts. The multiple interpretations among readers offer them to explore who they are between themselves and the texts and create their collective identity. This section also responded to research question 2 (How do CTAs use their cultural knowledge to reconstruct their identities through responding to multicultural children's books and literacy activities in a culture circle?) CTAs' process of identity reconstruction went through: critical inquiries and responses to multicultural children's books, examination on social perception and parents' expectations, and collective and inner identity reconstruction. The results revealed that CTAs used their cultural knowledge to make critical inquiries and responses to the selected multicultural children's books we read in the culture circle. Because of an inclusive literacy community CTAs had established with their similar bi-cultural life connections and historical fact understanding at stage one (i.e. invitation), CTA leaped forward to make critical inquiries and responses to the books based on their value and culture experiences. When looking into the storyline and characters, CTA noticed that even though they have similar bi-cultural experience to the storyline, they do not thoroughly agree to them. This realization helped them to further search for their own identity. When searching and discussing about their identity, they find their voice which they proved that they are not representatives for

model minority stereotype. The following is the process of CTAs' identity reconstruction in details.

Critical Inquiries and Responses to the Texts

1. Inquiry of Judgement. First of all, CTAs engaged in dealing with their identity through their response to two books, including *Hannah is My Name* (Yang, 2004) and *Three Names of Me* (Cummings, 2006). As a Chinese adopted girl in the story of *Three Names of Me* (Cummings, 2006), a stranger stared at her because her appearance was different from her American adopted parents. Vivaldi made a critical inquiry, “How early do we teach our kids to start judging people?” (Vivaldi, W1-V3, p. 8). She pointed out the existence of judgement in this society. She noted that people often look at someone's appearance and make a judgment without knowing the person individually. Below is Vivaldi's inquiry about judgement in details.

Vivaldi: (raised up her hand) Something struck me was for the pain for me the page someone stared at her. I was wondering for younger people if there was judging. How early do we teach our kids start to judge people?

YuWen: When we are very young, do you think somebody teaches us the judgement or it just comes natural for us?

Vivaldi: They go something surround them. When you go to China, they are different people. When you look in America and America is someone. For example, if someone has bad grades. But, it's like average and no judgment. It's like part of life here, but if you go to China, someone has bad grades, they will see a lot of judgment and be looked down on them. So, it's varied where you grow up and what you learn. (Culture Circle Meeting, W1-V3, p. 8)

Vivaldi expressed that a societal environment has an impact on how people define a person's success in life. People from different countries place different values on students' academic performance. She indicated that academic performance is held very high in China. People could be judged by their academic performances in Mainland

China. Whereas, in the United States, poor academic performance does not determine one's destiny, but is a just aspect in one's life. Vivaldi made a critical inquiry and further elaborated behind reasons for judgement. This clarification allowed Vivaldi to resolve her inquiry and see insight into cultural value in two different countries (i.e. the U.S. and China).

2. *Inquiry of family bonds.* Vivaldi made the other inquiry in response to *Grandfather Counts* (Cheng, 2003). This is a story of a Chinese grandfather, Gong Gong, traveling by himself to visit his American-born granddaughter, Helen, and her family from China. The story drew on how Gong Gong and Helen developed their family bond. Vivaldi's initial response to this book was beyond my expectations. Instead of discussing about the interaction between Helen and Gong Gong, Vivaldi made an inquiry by inspired from an illustration. The illustration related that Helen and her family met Gong Gong at an airport lobby. Vivaldi asked, "What happened to Helen's grandmother? Why did Helen's grandfather travel alone? Did her grandmother die or get divorce?" (Researcher's note 5, Vivaldi). Due to the fact that the fellow CTAs shared their communal experiences earlier at invitation stage, and some CTAs' grandparents traveled to the U.S. together for visitation. They have strong family bonds. Moreover, based on Vivaldi's cultural experience and knowledge, she thought that Chinese grandparents were supposed to travel together when visiting their grandchildren in the United States. Vivaldi's inquiry manifested that her cultural experience and knowledge influence how she expects the storyline. When the storyline does not meet her expectations, she depended on her prior knowledge to make an inquiry for clarification.

3. *Inquiry of historical facts.* When CTAs' response to the historical events, we recounted the story of the *Shanghai Messenger* (Cheng, 2005). From the poem of Rain, Xiao Mei's relatives, Jing and Xiao Gang had a difficult time during the Cultural Revolution (1966-1976). Jing said, "I was sent to the countryside by the government. They called it re-education. We cannot study, only work in the fields. Waste eight years not enough food, yams every day, and mud on the floor" (Cheng, 2005, p. 22). Handel and Bach shared their opinions about the Cultural Revolution and the earlier policy executed in China (i.e. the Great Leap). Bach shook his head and said, "They tried, but..." (Bach, W2-V2, p. 6). Handel added, "Yah, they tried, but people still died" (Bach, W2-V2, p. 6). These CTAs showed their regret about the results of Chinese policies. This empathy drove Vivaldi then to connect the results of the Cultural Revolution to other similar historical events globally. She thought the peasants suffered from starvation during those times. Below is Vivaldi's critical response on selected historical events. said that history repeats itself.

Vivaldi: They were really upset afterwards. After that, they said they had another policy/movement - Cultural Revolution. This pattern did happen everywhere revolution and Sterile in Russia, the labor camp where the people were forced to be labored and ate bad food during the concentration camp brings together in Germany. So, pretty much any revolution abused the power as a sacred situation and re-education. Mao lead to industrialize in China, but they were upset. (Culture Circle Meeting, W2-V2, p. 5)

From Vivaldi's response above, Vivaldi critically reviewed other historical events globally related to the Chinese history. She pointed out that every political revolution sacrificed many people. The social movements did not make the nations function well. Vivaldi's critical response is developed by learning other fellow CTAs' empathy with people who suffered from historical events. The shared empathy led Vivaldi to critically

think related historical events in other countries (i.e. Russia and Germany). This supports Freire's argument that the dialogues in the culture circle are "capable of generating critical thinking" (Freire, 1993, p. 92).

4. Inquiry of story development. CTAs made an inquiry of story development after reading *Dancing to Freedom: The True Story of Mao's Last Dancer* (Li, 2008). The story was the author, Li's journey of becoming a professional dancer nationwide. When Li was a boy, he lived in a remote rural village in northern China with his family. During Mao's leadership, he was one of a few selected candidates from among millions of children to enter the Beijing Dance Academy for dance training. Later, Li's outstanding performance allowed him to go into advanced training in the United States. Commenting on the story, Scarlatti, Myaskovsky, Vivaldi, and Bach had a distinct dialogue about Li's story. They wondered how the boy, Li, was so fortunate as getting selected to become a dancer during Mao's time in power and questioned the development of the story plot. Vivaldi and Scarlatti also made an inquiry about the later development of the story for Li's family members in real life. They wondered if Li's parents and brother had a chance to reunite with Li in the United States. The following is the interactive dialogue.

Scarlatti: He is lucky on his own.

Myaskovsky: Yes.

YuWen: Why do you think he was lucky?

Vivaldi: How many people got selected to Mao's academy? How many people got selected to the United States of America?

Vivaldi: They went to test them and they selected.

Bach: It's really weird.

Vivaldi: He was like attractive or something. He said his teacher pointed out to them. He wasn't selected if it weren't for his teacher.

Vivaldi: (Vivaldi was looking up the book.) The book said his teacher planned it out for him. His teacher chose him, not classmates.

Myaskovsky: Maybe he was insisted to do that.

Bach: I thought so.

Scarlatti: More importantly, jump high. It was really hard.

Vivaldi: Did his family survive or just his parents?

Scarlatti: Oh, yeah. What happened to his brother?

Vivaldi: Was he able to send his money back? Or Was he just dancing?

Scarlatti: He did not need to worry about that?

Vivaldi: Was he worried about getting back? This book didn't mention anything about it. Or it was illegal to get back.

Scarlatti: Can his parents stay with him in U.S.? Where are his brother and parents? (Culture Circle Meeting, W6-V5, p. 6)

Due to the fact that the book ended in Li's success in his dancing career, Scarlatti and Vivaldi were eager to learn what had happened to Li's parents and brothers. Their concerns about Li's family members revealed that they hold the strong family bond values based on their culture experience. As seen in the example above, at the beginning, Scarlatti and Vivaldi thought Li was a lucky person. Vivaldi looked up the story plot for validity. Vivaldi's reaction fell into the 'expectation' element of the DEFT model (Holland, 1975). 'Expectations' here mean that readers 'predict' a story of the book depend on their personal background and cultural norms. Their prediction motivates them to find the answers for accuracy. As seen the dialogue above, Vivaldi attempted to find the answers of expectations whether it is right or wrong. Vivaldi proved that Li's teacher was the key person to help Li change his life. Because of Li's teacher's recommendation, Li was selected to join Mao's dancing academy. Vivaldi's response is not directly related to her personal experience or the cultural norms she received, but her knowledge of Chinese history and politics gave her a vision of how difficult it was to get selected to become a professional dancer.

On the other hand, Scarlatti and Bach had different opinions from Vivaldi's. They argued that Li was forced to attend Mao's academy even though the book did not say so.

Scarlatti's and Bach's responses fell into a 'defense' element (Holland, 1975). In terms of 'defense,' readers select a particular plot of the story whether it meets their expectations or not. They defend for themselves why the characters or plot in the story (dis)supports their conclusion. Scarlatti and Bach asserted that Li was most likely forced by his teacher to attend the dance training. Through triangulating data, I discovered why Scarlatti and Bach assumed Li was forced to attend the professional dance training by his teacher. Based on the data of literacy activity, CTAs mentioned that it is commonly thought that Chinese American students have 'pushy parents' and that they are often forced to do something, particularly academic, in order to meet societal expectations. In summary, when storyline did not meet CTAs' expectations, CTAs used their existing knowledge and their cultural experiences to defend themselves for satisfying their expectations for the results of the story.

5. *Inquiry of character's decision.* Myaskovsky, Vivaldi, and Black disagreed to character's decision in response to the story of *Apple Pie on the 4th of July* (Wong, 2006). In the story, the daughter of Chinese immigrant parents had to help her parents when the restaurant was open on the 4th of July. At the beginning, she was upset because she thought no one would eat Chinese food on this American Independence Day. Instead of helping her parents in the restaurant, she preferred to celebrate the day outside. Myaskovsky disagreed with the girl in the story, "Most restaurants are closed on the 4th of July. The child should have more trust in her parents, who are much more intellectually advanced than she was" (Myaskovsky, literary response journal 5). He explained that parents have more life experiences than their children. Parents can share what they have learned from their mistakes. If children take parents' suggestions, they

could avoid making bad decisions. Myaskovsky disagreed with expressed his ‘defense’ response (Holland, 1975) to the story. ‘Defense’ response of the DEFT model represents that a reader disagrees with a character in a particular plot of a story because the character’s behavior does not meet her/his expectations (Holland, 1975). Myaskovsky argued that the girl should have listened to her parents and trusted her parents’ decision to keep their restaurant open. Myaskovsky’s justification for his opinion gave fellow participants a notion of his family value (listen to parents). By further analyzing why Myaskovsky has this kind of family value, I, as an insider and researcher participant, pay attention to the hierarchy concept rooted in Confucian values. Many Chinese people are profoundly influenced by Confucian values in their daily life, including “respect for hierarchy, honoring one’s parents, obedience to superiors,...and education” (Liu, 2009, p. 39).

As for Vivaldi and Black, their response also fell into ‘defense’ of the DEFT model (Holland, 1975) because the girl’s behavior does not meet their expectations based on their personal values they held resulted from their bi-cultural context living experiences. Vivaldi said, “In American, freedom is here held highly. Just because the 4th of July is a patriotic day, doesn’t mean people will only eat American food.” (Vivaldi, literary response journal 5). Vivaldi thought people should hold the value of freedom they receive in the United States. Therefore, they enjoy culturally diverse food even though it is on the American Independence Day. On the other hand, Black showed her disagreement to the girl in the story, “Who says we don’t eat Chinese food on the 4th of July? It’s food.” (Black, literary response journal 5). Black argued that we should not categorize people and culture of what ethnic food we eat on American holidays. The above responses reveal

that Myaskovsky, Vivaldi, and Black took a personal stance on their opinions of disagreement with the character in the story. Their opinions are shaped by their cultural experience and extraction from the bi-cultural values they hold.

In summary, CTAs made critical inquiries and responses to the texts in the process of identity transformation. CTAs' book responses were involved in different inquiries to the books, including judgment, family bonds, historical facts, story development, and character's decision. The data analysis above show that CTAs use their cultural knowledge, life experiences, and cultural value they take from a biculture to interpret the children's multicultural literature. Their interpretation to the books with different perspectives allow them to critically think the story plot and characters of stories and further express their opinions by taking their personal stance.

Examination on Social Perception and Parents' Expectations

Beyond the critical inquiries and responses to the texts, CTAs leaped forward to examine how societal perception and their parents' expectations influenced them. They argued that they would carve their own path rather than merely fulfilling their parents' expectations and fit the Model Minority Stereotype. As a process of understanding who they are, they reflected on their lives and critically examined different features that compose their identity.

CTAs first began to investigate social stigma for Asians from a historical perspective. Inspired by *Coolies* (Soentpiet, 2003), they learned the term “coolies” (ku li lao gong-苦力勞工), which refers to low-wage laborers of the early Chinese immigrants. These people worked on the transcontinental railroad in the United States in the 1800s. Ever since then, Chinese immigrants have carried a social stigma known as “Chinese

coolies.” Such a term made CTAs look further into how Chinese immigrant descendants are perceived in a modern society: they are “hardworking,” “Asian looking,” “good at math,” “trying too hard,” “4.0+ GPA,” “going to Ivy League schools,” etc. (See. Fig. 4.6). To sum up, these are common characteristics of the Model Minority Stereotype for Chinese Americans. As a point of interest, the CTAs addressed that they do not choose to live up to others’ expectations but have their own opinions about their personal goals. Besides this social stigma, the participants also brought up the issue of ‘pushy’ parents. (See. Fig. 4.6). This feature is characterized by high expectations of academic performance and parents’ request to study hard.

The participants’ personal commitment to academics appeared to be influenced by their familial and social expectations for Asians. However, the participants strongly claimed that they are not impacted by their parents and social expectations regardless of having ‘pushy parents’ or Model Minority Stereotype. They emphasized that they have high expectations for themselves and ideal college/university attendance without falling into their parents’ expectations and someone else's agenda. CTAs spoke up for themselves of what mattered to them through examining outsiders’ judgment and expectations.

Collective Identity (Re)construction

The process of identity (re)construction among CTAs began with making critical inquiries and responses to the texts and further examining social perception and parents' expectations. This identity exploration established a comfort zone for them to further discuss what they define who they are, and what they perceived from others. CTAs mirrored themselves to the texts and echoed something in common with the story and the

characters. On the other hand, CTAs also saw the differences between themselves and the characters in the stories because of diverse experiences and cultural values. When readers offer feedback to each other, they create dialogues for their mutual understanding of their readers' responses. In Holland's psychoanalytic response (1975), he built a model of Defense, Expectations, Fantasy, and Transformation (DEFT) for reading events. In this study, the data showed that post-reading activity (definition of who they are) revealed that CTAs generated their collective identity reconstruction. That is to say, when readers give feedback to each other about the book responses with the symbols (defense or fantasy) they generate beyond themselves between the texts/story, they re-symbolize their responses. As a result, readers gain different interpretation to their identities. CTAs generated their collective identity reconstruction resulted from the book responses and literacy activity (define who you are). The results of their collective identity reconstruction goes: American-born Chinese group of CTAs (Scarlati, Bach, Handel, Myaskovsky, and Vivaldi) defined themselves as Chinese American+. Handel, one of the American-born Chinese groups defined himself as Chinese and Chinese American+ category. Aria, from the current Chinese immigrant group, defined herself as a Taiwanese American. For ShiChi, one Chinese adopted adolescent, considered herself Chinese. Below is the negotiated process of CAT's collective identity reconstruction of who they are and how they define themselves.

YuWen: 現在我們來談談你們把自己定義成什麼人? (Let's talk about how you define yourself.)

Aria: (with serious face and said) Ok. I am Taiwanese because I am from Taiwan.

Handel: Chinese.

ShiChi: 瀋陽人。 (Shenyangese.)

Aria: 瀋陽算是在中國裡。 (Shenyang province is in the Mainland China.)

YuWen: 所以瀋陽算是在中國的一部分。(That means Shenyang is part of China, right?)

ShiChi: Okay. 對。(Yes. Chinese.)

YuWen: How about you, Vivaldi?

Vivaldi: I am Chinese American, but I am doing more than Chinese.

YuWen: How about I wrote Chinese American +?

Vivaldi: (nodding her head with a smile)

Black: American citizen.

Bach: Chinese American, but more American.

YuWen: So it's like Vivaldi's? Chinese American+.

Bach: (nodding).

Myaskovsky: The same thing. (Chinese American+).

YuWen: I define myself as Taiwanese because I was born and raised in Taiwan.

Aria: Can I change?

YuWen: Yes.

Aria: I am not...Okay... (smile) talking about legally or just what I feel?

Handel: Either one.

Aria: I am not American citizen yet, but...

Vivaldi: You try to be American, but you are not yet...

Aria: (laughing).

YuWen: You don't need to care about if you are legally or illegally one. Just share with us how you define yourself as you are comfortable.

Handel: Yeah. I want to have both. Chinese and Chinese American+.

Aria: So I am American Chinese+, but un-Chinese. Oh, no. I am equal. I don't have plus.

YuWen: How about having you write down your term in the poster?

Bach and Myaskovsky: (talking about how to write the poster)

Myaskovsky: (talking to Bach) Think about our characters...

Vivaldi: (grabbing a color pen and start to lead the discussion) Yeah, Chinese American+. Ok, being Chinese American+, ok, genetically Chinese...(Culture Circle Meeting, W5-V1, p. 7-9)

The dialogue above showed that CTAs helped each other find their identity during the process of negotiation. The American-born Chinese group, obviously, did not want to define themselves as 'Chinese American,' which is the common impression for American-born Chinese. Vivaldi said, "I am Chinese American, but I am doing more than Chinese."

(Vivaldi, W5-V1, p. 7). Bach, Handel, and Myaskovsky agreed with Vivaldi. In order to distinguish themselves from the common 'Chinese Americans,' they prefer to have a new term for themselves- Chinese American+. Aria, a member of Chinese current immigrant group, originally defined herself as Taiwanese. However, as the conversation flowed to different aspects of living in the United States, she was hesitant about her identity. She felt some concern about her immigrant status. Aria and her family are under the process of green card application. Non-American citizen status influences which term Aria chooses to define herself- Taiwanese or Taiwanese American. Vivaldi and Handel helped Aria ease her worries about legal status. Aria then gathered her courage to change her identity from Taiwanese to Taiwanese American. Shichi, the Chinese adopted adolescent member, expanded her views of seeing this world through the process of identity negotiation. Shichi, originally, defined herself as Shenyangese. She made this distinction because she was born and raised in Shenyang province and had never traveled to other places until she was adopted at thirteen years of age. However, as Aria and Vivaldi mentioned that Shenyang is part of Mainland China. This gave Shichi a bigger picture of how she could define herself as Chinese.

The negotiated process of how CTAs define themselves within the culture circle allows them to consider who they care beyond judgmental concerns from others. Regarding the terms of Chinese, Chinese American+, Taiwanese American, with which CTAs identified themselves, CTAs discussed about a common attribute among these terms based on the stereotype they perceived from others. In the meantime, CTAs spoke up for themselves and tried to detach from the Model Minority Stereotype for Asians.

Chinese American+. When reporting on a category of Chinese American+ (see Fig. 4.3), CTAs, especially American-born Chinese participants, presented three burning issues concerning their appearance, social life, and academic performance and societal expectations. They discussed what they perceived from others and what they really are. Regarding appearances, Vivaldi asserted that they do not merely “look” genetically Chinese, but “are genetically Chinese.” CTAs' appearance was often misunderstood as other nationality because of “looking Asian.” CTAs gave several examples they perceived they had in the United States. The attributes of what they perceived from the society help them to take their stand to declare how different they are from others. See the dialogue below.

Figure 4.3 An Excerpt from a Literacy Activity (T-chart):

Chinese American+

Aria: We all have black hair. We look Asians.

Handel: Yap. They think we all look the same.

Vivaldi: Yah, I have been asked by five different people, am I from South Korea? Korean people asked me if I am Korean. I am like... you go to Korean church. They are Korean party. How do you not know that I am not one of your people? How did you now know the Korean people you go every weekend? How can you not see different?

Aria: Asian people look the same in their eyes.

Myaskovsky: Someone asked me where my parents are from. I said, "They are from China." The person said, "I thought you were Asian." And then, I told him it's the same place.

Vivaldi: A road study, a map of Africa. Is this an Asia? We said the 7th grade talked about Africa and Asia are apart, but I guess it's not.

(YuWen explained to ShiChi what the dialogues we had been discussed.)

ShiChi: 別人沒有誤會我是哪裡人，如果好奇的話，會問我。但是在我的數學課上，有一個來自阿拉伯的同學以為越南人就是中國人。旁邊有一個越南人，他就問我他(阿拉伯同學)是中國人嗎？(No one misunderstood me where I come from. If they wonder where I come from, they just go ahead and ask me. However, once when we were in a math class, a classmate from Saudi Arabia thought Vietnamese was Chinese. There was the other classmate from Vietnam sitting beside him. He then asked me, "Is he Chinese?")

YuWen: Some people I met in the United States confused where I am from. Once someone asked me where I come from. I said, "Taiwan." He said, "Oh, Thailand, right? I traveled there before." I explained to him that Taiwan and Thailand are different countries even though they are in Asia. (Culture Circle Meeting, W5-V2, p. 21-22)

As seen in the example of the CTAs' interactive dialogues, Vivaldi and Myaskovsky had experiences of being misunderstood by others. Because of their appearance, people have a hard time to recognize what exact country they come from. Aria jumped in to explain the misunderstanding situation even though she is not American-born Chinese (Chinese American+). Aria is recent Taiwanese immigrants. She declared, "Asian people look the same in their eyes" (Aria, W5-V2, p. 21). Even if Aria is not in American-born Chinese group (Chinese American+), she jumped in to explain the misunderstanding situation. This declaration made CTAs more understandable to people's misunderstanding of where they come from. Moreover, the moment of being misunderstood by a person gave Myaskovsky an opportunity to explain that China is a country, and Asia is a continent. China is a part of country in Asia. This explanation

informed the person Myaskovsky met that they are different countries on the Asian continent.

Regardless of Asian appearance, Chinese American+ participants argued that even with inherited Chinese genes, they do not live the way typical Chinese or Chinese Americans do. Vivaldi stated, “We focus more on social life than studies compared to stereotypical Chinese Americans,” “. . . the typical Chinese Americans focus more on their studies than social life” (Vivaldi, W5-V2, p. 17). Myaskovsky also added, “We do need to have a social life” (Myaskovsky, W5-V2, p. 17). Social life apparently plays an essential part for these Chinese American+ adolescents. They distinguished how their social life varies from other stereotypical Chinese Americans'. As a T-chart they made (see Fig. 4.3) showed, sports, circle of their friends (white friends), and "act white/more American than Chinese" were identified.

Playing a variety of sports is an important extracurricular activity for Chinese Americans+. They observed that people thought “Asians” merely played tennis and golf. However, as a matter of fact, they (Chinese American+) play basketball, soccer, badminton, skiing, swimming, and more. The examples are as follows.

Handel: We see only the race like only Asian sport because we seem to always...

Aria: Wait...what do you mean?

Vivaldi: Tennis and golf are for Asians. They just have Asian sports right there.

YuWen: You mean tennis is for Chinese?

Vivaldi: No. Not only Chinese, but Asians in general. So South Korean girls tend to go golfing. If you look at the world's standard; practically all the top golfing women are South Koreans. But, tennis...there are lots of Chinese people there.

YuWen: Do you like it (tennis)?

Handel: (nodding his head and with excitement) “Yes!”

Vivaldi: Sure.

Myaskovsky: Yap.

Handel: Track. 長跑， 短跑。其實在(中國)沒有那麼多。(Track. It includes the long run and short run. There are not popular in China.)

Technically, there are lots of Chinese who are also good at swimming.

Vivaldi: Yes, that's a good one.

YuWen: What other sports do you do?

Myaskovsky: Basketball.

Vivaldi: I play basketball often. Sometimes I am enjoyable. (Culture Circle Meeting, W5-V2, p. 18-19)

In the excerpt above, Vivaldi and Handel pointed out that generally Asians are good at playing golf and tennis. Chinese specifically are good at tennis; South Koreans are good at golf. In fact, Handel not only likes tennis, but also he likes many other sports, including track. From my researcher's notes, I recorded that Handel brought his track shoes to the first meeting of the culture circle. He is fascinated with the track activity. I also learned that Myaskovsky, Black, Bach, Handel, and Scarlatti formed as a soccer team when we scheduled the culture circle meetings with them. Based on the personal conversation with Bach's mother, a group of parents hired a private soccer coach for their children. They usually have their private lessons on weekends. CTAs' clarification of their interest in sports broke the societal myth of seeing who they are. For example, Myaskovsky and Vivaldi play basketball other than just do what typical Chinese do for sports (i.e. tennis). The clarification of the sport activities allowed these CTAs to clearly know that what sports they prefer to do. Sports are part of their identity in their life.

Academic performance is the other topic emerged from the recurring data set. When mentioning academic performance, CTAs had tried to speak up for themselves about their identity in academic aspect. As mentioned earlier at stage two (the process of identity transformation), CTAs' academic performance is magnified by many people even

though they live in the United States. The parents of CTAs' academic expectations and the Model Minority Stereotype for Chinese Americans are primary factors of labeling what they were supposed to achieve for those who have Chinese American backgrounds. CTAs unraveled the mystery behind the Model Minority Stereotype for Chinese Americans. On the other hand, American-born Chinese (Chinese American+) group talked about their cousins' lives in Mainland China and compared them with their own lives in the United States. Myaskovsky and Bach both stated that they felt sorry for their cousins in Mainland China because they needed to stay in school far longer than students in the United States. Since they must focus on the entrance examination preparation, they did not have the privilege of attending extracurricular activities such as sports or music. Handel said, "They [Chinese students] don't have a guarantee of going to college. You try hard because it doesn't guarantee that you go and get it" (Handel, W5-V2, p. 12). Handel pointed out that Chinese students' hard work does not necessarily mean that they have an opportunity to get a higher education. The disturbing situation for Chinese students allowed the CTAs to further explore their position as American-born Chinese. Handel, Bach, Myaskovsky, and Vivaldi felt that they "slack off more than the typical Chinese students" (See Fig. 4.3). Vivaldi explained, "Sometimes, I feel lucky because the world isn't expecting too much from me. But, when I realize I am in the global economy, I feel I am useless. I am living in (a) rural place (state), growing potatoes. All of my cousins are gonna be billionaires. So, it is a tradeoff. Childhood enjoyment versus practically guaranteed success" (Vivaldi, W5-V2, p. 12). Vivaldi admired her Chinese cousins for their hard work and competitiveness in China. But at the same time, other fellow CTAs started to critically think about the possibility of potential career

opportunities when comparing students in China and the U.S.. In response to historical events in China from the story in *Shanghai Messenger* (Cheng, 2005), CTAs mentioned that job opportunities usually involved knowing people with power and authority in China. Hence, obtaining a job was not based on their abilities, but relationships with people of higher hierarchical level in bureaucracy. This critical dialogue enabled CTAs to feel fortunate about who they are as American-born Chinese living in the U.S.. CTAs critically negotiate if working diligently has equal opportunity to get a job through justifying the differences of Chinese and American workplace cultures. Understanding bi-cultural differences of workplace allowed Chinese American+ construct their identity in their future career.

Regardless of the pursuit of job opportunity, CTAs extended the topic to the higher education path. Vivaldi, Handel, Myaskovsky, and Black have their idea of going to a college. The following dialogues show how CTAs express their opinions on higher education.

Vivaldi: We want to go to a good college, but it doesn't have to be a name brand. Well, all of my American friends, ALL OF THEM, they assumed that I would only attend Stanford or Harvard. I am like...no...

Handel and Myaskovsky shook their heads, and Black smiled to agree on it).

Handel: We have some friends like me. Some people go to the University of Washington. They are all good schools.

Myaskovsky: They just overview who you go to college.

Vivaldi: Undergraduate school, what is the matter? My brother is going to a really expensive school. A lot of people go to U of I undergraduate, and then they go to expensive [graduate] school. They go really pretty far.

Handel: (Smiling) Yap. That's why, lower standard when you start to go to college. (Culture Circle Meeting, W5-V2, p. 20-21)

In the excerpt above, Vivaldi and Handel explained that Ivy League schools were not the only option for higher education. Even though they are qualified to attend a ‘brand-name’ school, they might choose another school for undergraduate studies because it is less costly. Considering the cost of tuition, Vivaldi and Handel had a particular idea of pursuing undergraduate and graduate studies. They thought to pursue more prestigious schools for graduate studies in the long run, but attend regular college/university for undergraduate work. This unique perception negated the Model Minority Stereotype of going to Ivy League schools only. CTAs' elaboration of their vision on the higher education path proved that society does not thoroughly understand their ideas of higher education. With these interactive dialogues, CTAs reveal their identity for their academic journey.

In addition to challenging the social stigma, the participants also brought up the issue of ‘pushy’ parents (see Fig. 4.3). This feature characterized high expectations of academic performance and parents’ request to study hard. Most other people they know thought they have “pushy parents,” and they admit they do. However, compared to other American-born Chinese peers outside this study, Vivaldi stressed that they have “less pushy parents.” Despite this admission, they confessed that their parents were “annoyed, suck, and painful,” regarding their parents’ parenting style. For example, Vivaldi’s mother weekly checked her grades online. Black's mother gave her worksheets in different subjects when they were traveling to China during the summer break. Handel's mother asked him to "write out the alphabet ten times a day,” when he was a kid. When Myaskovsky was young, his mother asked him to memorize the multiplication tables by offering him money as a reward. In junior high school, the Chinese American+ group's

parents requested that they keep their Grade Point Average (GPA) at the highest level.

This supports a report in Thiagarajan's book, *Beyond the Tiger Mom: East-West Parenting for the Global Age* (2018) that Asian parents usually put a value on their children's high achievement of academic performance.

Nevertheless, the participants argued that they study hard and keep up their high academic performance for themselves, not just for their parents. A dialogue among Vivaldi, Handel, and Aria is an example below.

Vivaldi: I mean they [parents] try to pressure me, but I did ignore them. I do what I do in school because I like to go to school. I want to take advanced placement [AP] class, not because of my parents.

Handel: My parents even do not push me. I push myself.

Aria: "They don't push me hard. They just ask me, "How are you doing in school?" I said, "Good." They said, "Ok, good." They never look at my grade, except for what's the matter whatsoever. It's like it's for yourself. You have to have expectations for yourself. My brother and I just study by ourselves. (Culture Circle Meeting, W5-V2, p. 19-20)

This intense dialogue above showed they are making their voices heard. On the other hand, Myaskovsky had different ideas about having pushy parents after reading *Apple Pie, 4th of July* (Wong, 2006). In Myaskovsky's journal, he stated that the girl in the story should listen to her parents because her parents have more experience than she does. He feels that parents' perspectives are valuable and wiser because of life experiences. This showed that parents somehow have a strong impact on the CTAs' values.

Since both parents' high expectations and the Model Minority Stereotype are aligned with the CTAs' commitment to academics, it appeared difficult not to be influenced by their familial and social expectations for Asians. However, the CTAs assert that they are not influenced by their parents or social expectations regardless of having

‘pushy parents’ or the Model Minority Stereotype. The dialogues in the culture circle helped them critically look into who they are and pursue the process of shaping their identity. They emphasized that they have high expectations for themselves and pursuit of ideal college/university attendance without falling into their parents’ expectations and someone else’s agenda.

As mentioned earlier, American-born Chinese (Chinese American+) group (Chinese American+) emphasized that they do not only assimilate into American culture, but they are also not like typical Chinese. However, on special occasions, Chinese American+ group sincerely want to involve themselves in the Chinese community. They connected the Chinese holiday celebration experiences to their reading of *Apple Pie, 4th of July* (Wong, 2006). The interactive dialogue is as follows:

Vivaldi: We have a community like having a huge Asian party. When I say Asians, mostly are Chinese. We have a huge Chinese party once in a while.

Handel: (looking at Myaskovsky) Yes.

Vivaldi: They are like a part inside of huge community with a little population like Chinese huge dinner party in the whole community. It’s a pretty complex situation.

Handel: Yes, the structure.

Vivaldi: It’s a pretty complex situation. It’s a complex ecosystem.

Myaskovsky: My American friend has a party once a year.

Vivaldi: We have had even holidays. (Culture Circle Meeting, W5-V1, p.16)

In the excerpt above, the participants use “we” to describe how they enjoy Chinese holiday celebrations. This represented that Chinese American+ celebrated their Chinese holidays, they are proud that they identified themselves as being part of the Chinese community. Chinese American+ group is comfortable in relating to the Chinese community when celebrating Chinese holiday events. These participants find their sense of belonging in bi-cultural contexts. This contextualization for their new identity echoed

to collective transformation (Holland, 1968). The collective identity reconstruction is developed when readers engage in book responses and contribute their interpretation to/beyond the texts based on their life experiences. Through the culture circle setting, these CTAs gathered their collective experiences to reconstruct their identity together.

Taiwanese American. Aria, as an example, identified herself as Taiwanese American (See Fig. 4.4). She gave an insight into the inter-cultural perspectives of being Taiwanese American. Through the interactive dialogue with the fellow CTAs, Aria differentiated herself from Taiwanese who were raised in Taiwan the entire life. Below is the interactive dialogue which how she negotiated her identity as Taiwanese American.

Taiwanese American	
My definition.	definition from others
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • I speak both Eng/Mand • Taiwanese in gene • Live like American and Taiwanese. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • You're Asian • Jeremy Lin (from Taiwanese & Taiwanese American)

Figure 4.4 An Excerpt from a Literacy Activity (T-chart): Taiwanese America

(Handel and Aria discussed the attributes of Taiwanese American.

Aria put 'Jeremy Lin' in the Taiwanese American category.)

Handel: Yap, Jeremy Lin.

Aria: Yeah, but Jeremy Lin was born in America.

Handel: He speaks very little Chinese.

Aria: I would say he is American.

Handel: Yap. (Culture Circle Meeting, W5-V1&V2, p. 10)

Handel: He is a basketball player.

Aria: He is American, but he has Taiwanese parents, so funny thing is... he is totally American. He learned how to play basketball in America. And then, Taiwanese is like, "We are so proud of him. He is from Taiwan." I am like...No, he is an American guy.

Handel: They (Taiwanese) consider him as Taiwanese American. I think of him.

Aria: He is American, not Taiwanese. (Culture Circle Meeting, W5-V2, p. 24)

As seen in the dialogues above, Aria and Handel talked about a well-known NBA basketball player, Jeremy Lin. Many Taiwanese who never leave the Taiwan island consider Jeremy Lin, Taiwanese. However, Jeremy Lin was born and raised in the United States. His parents are Taiwanese. According to Jeremy Lin's legal status, he is American, but considering his life experiences and ethnic background, Jeremy Lin is Taiwanese American. Due to the fact that Aria lived in the United States for several years before she and her family officially immigrated into the United States, Aria's concept of nationality is different from that of her peers who live in Taiwan. The status of diaspora allows Aria to recognize the differences of life experiences for those who are the second generation of Taiwanese living in the United States and those who are not.

On the other hand, Aria mentioned that she speaks Mandarin Chinese in Taiwan. The language issue made Handel and Vivaldi wonder if the language they speak is different from that which they have been learning in the Chinese heritage and language school. Handel's and Vivaldi's parents come from Mainland China. They use simplified Chinese characters. People who live in Taiwan use traditional Chinese characters.

However, both of them speak Mandarin Chinese. Aria explained that Taiwanese elders speak Taiwanese more often, but the official language for Taiwanese is Mandarin Chinese. Since Aria lives in the United States, she speaks English at school, whereas, she speaks Mandarin Chinese at home.

Aria: Mandarin is Chinese. It's an official name for Taiwanese. They are the same thing though.

Handel: I think they are different dialects.

Vivaldi: We use different words for different things.

Aria: I think they are the same thing (Mandarin and Chinese). There are different things for elders (Mandarin and Taiwanese). It's like from our grandparents' generation.

Aria: I go to school and I talk in English. When I go home, I talk in Chinese. It's just mixed up. (Culture Circle Meeting, W5-V2, p. 24)

From the dialogue between Aria, Handel, and Vivaldi above, they got to know more about each other, in addition to their shared their cultural background. They also learned that they have similar life experiences - speaking bilingual in the dominant culture.

Chinese. The other poster, "Chinese" category (see Fig. 4.5), was created by Vivaldi, Handel, Bach, and ShiChi. Vivaldi, Handel, and Bach were engaged in their conversation in the "Chinese" category. They then agreed upon jotting down the attributes of most Chinese people, including Chinese genetics, the game of chess, and hard studies. However, when they reported it verbally, not all of them identified themselves as Chinese. See the dialogue below.

YuWen: Who defines yourself as Chinese?

Handel: We do both. Chinese, and Chinese American+.

Vivaldi: I just chose Chinese American+.

YuWen: Who wrote these attributes (genetically Chinese, chess, and studies) in Chinese category?

Handel: Bach.

Bach: No.

Myaskovsky: I wrote it, but I am not on there (Chinese category).

Vivaldi: (laughing) You wrote chess.

Myaskovsky: I just wrote it.

YuWen: Who wrote on Chinese American+ category?

Vivaldi, Myaskovsky, Handel, and Bach raised their hands and said, “All of us. We did.” (Culture Circle Meeting, W5-V2, p. 11)

In the example above, only Handel identified himself as both Chinese and Chinese American+. Vivaldi, Bach, and Myaskovsky would not delegate themselves to the ‘Chinese’ category even though they wrote the Chinese attributes on the ‘Chinese’ category. They prefer to identify themselves as Chinese American+. On the other hand, ShiChi identified herself as Chinese. She was not engaged in dialogue with others, but she quietly wrote the Chinese attributes she believes on the poster. She said, “I am proud of myself as a Chinese and I am proud of my country, Mainland China” (“我覺得做為中國人，我覺得為自己的國家感到驕傲” ShiChi, W5-V2, p. 24). She considers herself as Chinese because she is proud that Chinese has a long history, cultural values, and more cultures to explore.

From ShiChi's writing and reports, what she believes and what she perceived from others have similar perspectives on the Chinese attributes; therefore, she wrote her thoughts in the 'definition from others' of the Chinese category (see Fig. 4.5 below). Due to the fact that ShiChi have just lived in the U.S. for several years so far, her cultural identity and memories are obviously in China. Although she is adopted by American parents, she sees herself as Chinese. ShiChi reassures who she is because she sees insight into Chinese culture, history, and values she held.

Figure 4.5 An Excerpt from a Literacy Activity (T-chart): Chinese

Inner Identity (Re)construction

As seen above, CTAs' collective identity reconstruction resulted in receiving instant feedback from the fellows during the interactive dialogues, and collective confirmation about their identity from others. On the other hand, this section demonstrated that their inner identity (re)construction. According to Holland (1975), inner identity transformation occurs when readers transact with texts based on their existing personalities and identities which developed during their childhood and young adulthood. Meanwhile, readers think about who they are from inside and how they perceive from outside. In this study, the evidence of inner identity reconstruction revealed when CTAs responded to the book, *Dancing to Freedom: The True Story of Mao's Last Dancer* (Li, 2008) and wrote an "I Am" Poem as the results of the inner identity reconstruction in the culture circle. I deliberately selected Black's and Vivaldi's data displaying in this

dissertation study because their artifacts significantly demonstrate their voices and inner identity individually.

In response to *Dancing to Freedom: The True Story of Mao's Last Dancer* (Li, 2008), most CTAs shared what they want to be in the future, except for Black and Vivaldi. Black admired her peers for self-determination of life goals: "Isn't it great to have a goal in life?" (Black, literary response journal 6). From my understanding in the Chinese community I learned, Black is a great dancer, and she is in the local Chinese traditional dance group. I thought she would like to become a dancer one day. However, dancing is not her dream. The interactive dialogue is below,

Scarlatti: Black, you are the last one. (Black shook her head.)
 YuWen: Do you want to be a dancer?
 Black: No, I don't like dancing.
 YuWen: Why do you still dance?
 Black: My mom forces me.
 Vivaldi: It sucks.
 YuWen: How about the piano you have been learning?
 Black: After I pass level 10, I'll quit.
 YuWen: Why?
 Vivaldi: That's the skilled level. (Culture Circle Meeting, W6-V9, p. 22)

As seen in the dialogue, Black revealed that she was forced by her mother to learn about dancing and piano. It seems that she learns things not from her heart, but for fulfilling her mother's expectations. As discussed earlier, Chinese American+ do not want to fulfil others' agenda; however, it is hard for Black to choose what she wants to learn because of her mother's order. Black's "I Am" poem demonstrated her inner voices. The poem displayed below.

“I Am” Poem by Black

I am
 I am nothing
 I wonder about these there in the dark
 I hear the cries from the lonesome ones
 I see everything but what I’m not
 I wish to follow but not be seen
 I am nothing, merely a shadow

I pretend to be just like others
 I feel them but never my own heart
 I touch but cannot be detected
 I worry that I’ll be revealed too
 I cry no tears for people to see
 I am nothing, simply a presence

I understand that there’s a distance
 I speak to stay still inaudible
 I dream of a non-existing fate
 I try but never succeed. not once
 I hope for the angry to end
 I am nothing, merely an existence

Figure 4.6 An Activity of Writing “I Am” Poem by Black

In her "I Am" poem (see Fig. 4.6) above, she seems to find her voice and articulate the circumstances of her difficult situation. She feels that she has no power to change. At the beginning of the poem, she said, "I am nothing." She is vulnerable and she is unable to change her situation. Her feeling expression, "I feel them but never my own heart" seems to tell people that what she learned about dance and piano is not from her own heart. She had tried to protect her right and make an action, "I try but never succeed.

Not once." It seems that she ever tried to tell her mother of what her intention is, but her voice is invalid. Even though she fights for her passion with anger toward the end, her protest is not validated. Hence, she feels like she is "nothing." As a matter of fact, Black is a talented girl from others' eyes, and she is determined when she was performing at a stage. However, she is not sure what her life goal is. Black wants to have a dream, but it seems that she has to do what her parents tell her to do. This oppression made her reluctant to dream. Black seldom expressed her opinions during the culture circle meeting, but this poem gave her a realm to speak up for herself. At the end, she stated, "I am nothing, merely an existence." The word, 'existence' demonstrated that she could feel her ontological existence even though she does not have the power to make her own decision for now. However, the awareness of ontological existence brings her hope for the future. The future is not certain, but the hope sustains her in this season of life under her parents' arrangement. Black's inner identity reconstruction resulted from the book responses and interactive dialogues revealed that she becomes more aware of her ontological existence in the complexed situation she situates for now, and this gives her hope for the possibility of twisting her life agenda in the future.

Vivaldi is another example of showing inner identity reconstruction I selected to display in this study. (See Fig. 4.7).

“I Am” Poem by Vivaldi

I am dynamic and changing
 I wonder who I will be in the future/ I wonder if there are other universes
 I hear music everywhere I go/I hear a falcon’s hunting cry
 As I see it swoop down

I want to be happy

I am dynamic and changing./ I am thoughtful and curious

I pretend I know what I want when I grow up, but I don’t
 I feel the sky’s tears
 I touch an eagle’s feather
 I worry about hate
 I cry over sadness
 I am thoughtful and curious

I understand that people are different
 I say that we can see past those differences
 I dream of a time with peace
 I try to understand all perspectives
 I hope for happiness
 I am dynamic and changing/ I am thoughtful and curious

Figure 4.7 An Activity of Writing “I Am” Poem by Vivaldi

Vivaldi does not know what she wants to be yet, but this uncertainty does not come from the pressure of her parents as Black’s. Vivaldi responded, “I don’t know what I want, to be successful. A better person than I am now.” In Vivaldi’s “I Am” Poem above (see Fig. 4.7), she stated that she is not sure of her future and career but hopes the world can be peaceful given all the differences that people have. The first line, “I’m

dynamic and changing” showed that she is still undergoing a process of constructing and reconstructing her identity. That is why she portrayed herself, "I try to understand all perspectives." in the journey of search for her identity. In the meantime, Vivaldi has an open heart to embrace multicultural diversity in this society. She wrote, "I understand people are different." Because of understanding the differences, she hopes for "peace" and "happiness." Even though Vivaldi has not determined her career yet, her continual search and growth are the current assignments they have been eager to do.

Conclusion

In conclusion, the stage two (the process of identity transformation) responds to the research question 2 (How do CTAs use their cultural knowledge to reconstruct their identities through responding to multicultural children's books and literacy activities in a culture circle?). The psychoanalytic response of DEFT model (Holland, 1975) and literacy activities are medium for CTAs to use their cultural knowledge to reconstruct their identities. With the psychoanalytic response, CTAs were involved in the collective and inner identity reconstruction. In this study, CTAs of the culture circles consisted of three groups: American born Chinese, Chinese and Taiwanese current immigrants, and one Chinese adopted adolescent. Because of the diversity of inter-cultural group, CTAs' bilingual language proficiency is varied, and their personal backgrounds are different. Nevertheless, CTAs had been learning each other's stories and perspectives through critical inquiries and responses to multicultural children's literature. They use their cultural knowledge, life experiences, and cultural value they hold from a bi-culture to interpret the texts and respond to others. By doing so, CTAs' growing mutual understanding of each other helped them to see what each individual's needs, during the

culture circle meetings. As a result, they formed their collective identity reconstruction as Chinese American+, Taiwanese American, and Chinese. As the collective identity reconstruction established, CTAs not only take their personal stance, but also prove that the social stigma they perceived from the society is wrong. As for the inner identity reconstruction, the examples of Vivaldi's and Black's poem showed that they become aware of their ontological existence in the complex world. They understand that they do not have the capacity to change the circumstance they situate for now; moreover, they are not sure of what their future would be like. However, they came to understand that as long as they continue to explore their identity, they will find who they are in different aspects of life.

CHAPTER 5: DISCUSSION AND APPLICATIONS

I think every person has their own identity and beauty. Everyone being different is what is really beautiful. If we were all the same, it would be boring.

- Tila Tequila

In this study, I examined how CTAs negotiate their identity based on their cultural knowledge and experiences through book discussion within a Freirean “culture circle” setting (Freire, 2000, p. 120). Within the culture circles, they responded to selected topics of multicultural children’s literature which represents Chinese immigrants’ stories in the United States. This study is based on the interweaving of Rosenblatt’s reader response theory (Rosenblatt, 2005), Holland’s Defense, Expect, Fantasy, Transformation (DEFT) model (Holland, 1975), and Bleich’s literacy community formation (Bleich, 1986) in the culture circle. Furthermore, various literacy activities (i.e., literary responses, group discussion, graphic organizers, and videos, etc.) were utilized to investigate how CTAs construct their identity through a critical lens. The following are research questions:

1. How do CTAs build their understanding of the Chinese immigrant history, family values, and Chinese cultural practices in a culture circle?
2. How do CTAs use their cultural knowledge to reconstruct their identities through responding to multicultural children's books and literacy activities in a culture circle?

In this chapter, I discuss the results of the study and major findings in relation to the empirical studies on multicultural children’s literature response and Freire’s

culture circle practices in different fields, and identity examination through literacy engagement. Next, this chapter provides the pedagogical implications of the study, determines remaining gaps and further gives recommendations for future research.

The findings of this study extend existing research on critical literacy application in Freirean culture circle (Souto-Manning, 2010; Lee, 2003) and reader response theory (Rosenblatt, 2005; Holland, 1975; Bleich, 1986). Based on reader response theory, readers' cultural and personal background and personality has an impact on how they interpret the texts. Hence, each reader's response to the texts is varied. When readers gather together to respond to the texts and exchange their thoughts in a group, the literacy community is established (Bleich, 1986). In this study, I utilize Freirean culture circle as a form of literacy community in order to enrich readers' reading responses in an inclusive environment. In this study, I found that CTAs built a unique literacy community at the stage of invitation. CTAs firstly took a personal stance to respond to the texts regarding their cultural and family backgrounds in a bi-cultural context. These relevant responses helped them co-construct their understanding of Chinese immigrant history, family values, and Chinese cultural practices and further build a trust community. Also, the study revealed that they were motivated to understand their intercultural assets with the fellow CTAs. Moreover, I found that when a trustworthy community is established among CTAs, they become comfortable talking about the extension to the texts on sensitive issues of concerns in relationships with their identity. The process of identity negotiation allowed CTAs to reconstruct their self-identity and build their collective identity in the culture circle. The following paragraphs respond to the research questions for this study and related studies' discussion.

Response to Research Question 1. CTAs learn about their intercultural and interpersonal stories with their fellows in the culture circle by sharing their bi-cultural experiences.

CTAs built their understanding of the Chinese immigrant history, family values, and Chinese cultural practice through generating different themes of discussion in the culture circle. The data revealed five themes which CTAs generated in the culture circle through multicultural children's literature responses and literacy activities, including (1) share communal experiences, (2) build knowledge together, (3) recognize living in a bi-cultural context (4) connect to cultural origins, and (5) re-connect to cultural heritage. Despite these five themes generated in the culture circle, the other distinguished finding in response to research question 1 is that CTAs and I have been building an inclusive and safe community in the culture circle along the way. CTAs engaged in fruitful and critical dialogues among these five themes which are shown in chapter 4 Results. They are comfortable to share their family and personal backgrounds and issues of which they were not previously aware. As the interactive dialogues flowed, CTAs had a deeper connection to their fellow participants with trust and mutual understanding of each other in a bi-cultural context. This trend was aligned with Souto-Manning's (2010) studies on pedagogical practice for cultural circles with different groups of population (i.e. an American first-grade classroom, a Brazilian adult education program, pre-service teacher education, and in-service teacher education) by utilizing selected multicultural children's literature and other texts (i.e. pictures) and Lee's (2003) dissertation on her cultural work with a group of Taiwanese junior high school in-service teachers. Both Lee's and Souto-Manning's findings in working with different groups of people revealed that participants

have become comfortable to express their thoughts and have critical dialogues about the texts. They created a safe and trusting community in the culture circle.

Regarding a democratic and safe place, Leung (2002) and E.J. Kim (2010) suggested the teachers/researchers create a 'third' space in order to offer readers a comfortable space for responding to books and discussion. Souto-Manning's studies and this study exemplified a safe and inclusive space for participants to feel a sense of belonging. This physical space is what we called a culture circle setting. Souto-Manning (2010) explained that the culture circle setting is not the traditional seating arrangement (i.e. rows/columns) with hierarchical power, but the teacher as a facilitator and students sit in a circle with equal opportunity to share their opinions. The power relationship decreases with a non-threatening physical space and it helps participants to open their hearts to the community. On the other hand, many previous studies conducted critical literacy in classroom practice in order to help students' academic performance and develop their critical thinking (Philpot & Smith, 2018; Rolander 2018; Weninger, 2018). However, it was hard to determine if participants feel really comfortable to share their thoughts on the critical issues with researchers and teachers under the critical literacy instruction. Wink (2011) suggested that critical literacy plus various literacy approaches should be grounded in critical pedagogy. By utilizing this tenet, it is more feasible to establish a literacy community among participants and a facilitator. Souto-Manning (2010) and Lee (2003) exemplified this kind of approach as Wink's notion. They created a culture circle with a physical setting as a gateway for participants to build their inclusive literacy community and liberate students to speak up for themselves.

In terms of group participants' selection, I could not find any studies on Chinese transnational adolescents' (American-born Chinese, recent Chinese/Taiwanese immigrants, a Chinese adopted teenager) or children's multicultural literature responses framed in the culture circle setting. Some empirical studies focused on Asian and Asian American readers with multiple levels of English language proficiency responses to the Asian and Asian American Literature (Liaw, 1995; Son, 2009; Leu, 2010; E.-H. Kim, 2010; H.-J. Kim, 2013), but in this study, the participants read individually rather than having interactions with others in a created community. These researchers also suggested that when participants responded to books, they need to shift from monologue to dialogue for the enrichment for reader responses (E.J. Kim, 2010; Souto-Manning, 2010; Leung, 2002). In this study, I purposefully gathered CTAs from a local community and further formed them into a group (which I rarely find other empirical studies as this study has done). This is a unique formation of particular teenage participants who come from different schools in the local community in order to establish a literacy community. Lee (1996) mentioned that Asian American adolescents have suffered from the model minority stereotype in a public school and American dominant society. These Asian American students have not had a chance to speak up for themselves. Both Leu (2010) and Leung (2003) also found, in their studies on Asian American students, that readers response showed that they have dual identity conflict negotiating between their Chinese ethnic family and American society. However, the studies did not find that these students have a better understanding of their intercultural experiences in a bi-cultural context. This study proposes that participants have a better understanding of their intercultural experiences with other fellows in a bi-cultural context. Communal experiences sharing is

especially a starter for CTAs to evolve into a deeper level of discussion about the bi-cultural context in which they live. These include the issues they encounter, the values they extract from bi-culture counterparts. Therefore, while responding to the picture books representing Chinese immigrants' stories and history, participants contributed what they have experienced and what they have learned in a bi-culture environment. Each of them contributed a single perspective in the culture circle allowing each to gain multiple perspectives during the interactive dialogues and literacy activities. This is how CTAs build their understanding of the Chinese immigrant history, family values, and Chinese cultural practices together. With the deeper understanding of Chinese immigrant history and bi-cultural matters, CTA recognize the bi-cultural assets they possess.

Response to Research Question 2. CTAs reconstruct their inner and collective identities by engaging in literacy activities and multicultural children's books responses in a culture circle.

According to Holland's psychoanalytic response (1975), readers are involved in inner and collective identity reconstruction through the defense, expectation, fantasy, and transformation (DEFT) model. Inner identity reconstruction is the self-identity oriented in response to the texts. On the other hand, collective identity reconstruction is based on the conclusion of responses from readers. Elsherief (2017) suggested that applying reader's response theory into Freire's culture circle setting gives participants an opportunity to interact with each other and better understand the concept of a literacy community. Moreover, the scholarship *Upstream in the Mainstream* written by Bahruth & Steiner (2000) mentioned that building a community of learners should undergo an evolving of self-identity and build a sense of community in a culture circle. This study, therefore, was

the first example I encountered, based on Holland's model and praxis of Freire's culture circle. I investigated how CTAs utilize their cultural knowledge to reconstruct their identities through responding to selected multicultural children's books and literacy activities in a culture circle. Holland (1986) emphasized that when readers gave each other feedback for their interpretation to texts, the intersubjectivity allows them to re-create their identity through the defense, expectation, fantasy, and transformation (DEFT) model of psychoanalytic response. However, in this study, I found that the literacy activities, (incorporated with selected theme of multicultural children's literature in the culture circle) helped intercultural group of CTAs comfortably reconstruct their inner and collective identity. Janks (2018) suggested a variety of designed literacy activities of critical pedagogy engagement to assist students develop their interactive dialogue and cultural sharing experiences. Due to the literacy activities, I also found that the selected theme of the books was related to the research participants' cultural and life experiences. This method made possible for CTAs to enrich their dialogues and negotiate their identity in the culture circle.

Keller & Franzak (2016) examined children's books depicting minority children's names as their identity. They found that these books are designed to empower immigrant and minority children, but they are not often appropriately utilized in schools. Bennett et. al. (2018) further mentioned that utilizing multicultural literature, with a culturally responsive teaching (CRT) approach, helps students examine the stories in multiple areas, such as "the historical, sociopolitical, and economic contexts" (p. 245). Upon investigating the readers' identity construction in responses to multicultural children's literature, I could not find any studies. I wanted to examine how intercultural group

readers discuss identities in response to multicultural children's books framed in multiple themes (history, names, family bonds, and a bi-cultural life experiences). Therefore, this study particularly selected children's books related to the immigrants' cultures and life experiences and incorporated literacy activities, which had an impact on CTAs' identity negotiation.

Within the culture circle, the readers' response does certainly meet the DEFT model. Also, the dynamic of interactive dialogues allowed CTAs to make critical inquiries and responses to the texts. These responses followed judgement, historical facts, family bonds, story development, and a character's decision based on the text responses. CTAs also go beyond just the text responses and further examine social perception, and parents' expectations. The process of socialization in the literacy community helps CTAs know more about their fellows and intercultural understanding. The creation of this welcoming community validates the inclusive literary community (Bleich, 1986). I found that the sense of community helped readers reconstruct their identity. As a matter of fact, the group is composed of different primary backgrounds (American-born Chinese, Chinese/Taiwanese immigrants, and Chinese adopted adolescent). In the process of the collective identity reconstruction, CTAs gave feedback to each other. The mutual feedback and confirmation from the CTAs in their intercultural community reinforce their identity as Chinese American+, Taiwanese American, and Chinese. As for the inner identity reconstruction, I found that CTAs found clarity of who they are in the dynamic world. They recognize that searching for their identity is not a one-time means to an end, but an ongoing process in the journey of life. Take Bach's final thoughts about the participation in this study as an example, "Over these six weeks, I have learned that life

isn't as bad as it seems. Hopefully, I think like this throughout my life" (Bach, literary response journal, Final).

Pedagogical Implications

The findings of this study offer several pedagogical implications for educators and community stakeholders, including how to (1) better serve immigrant/linguistically and culturally diverse students, (2) better equip classroom practices in teacher education, and (3) partner with a local community (i.e. community centers or libraries).

Better Serve Immigrant/Linguistically and Culturally Diverse Students

As seen in this study, the CTAs reconstruct their particular identity and give opinions about the books they read and values they hold from a bi-cultural context. CTAs' cultural backgrounds (their personal and family stories) seems to be both similar in some respects and diverse in others. For example, Chinese and Taiwanese immigrant students may have different socio-political experiences even though they have Chinese ethnic backgrounds. These current lifestyles are varied and different from American-born Chinese and Chinese adopted students. The current Chinese immigrant students may be struggling with the English language and life adjustment to an American school. Whereas, American-born Chinese may struggle with the bi-cultural contexts of identity confusion because their parents are the first generation of Chinese or Taiwanese. With this in mind, educators and community members should view students as unique individuals even though they are from the same ethnic group. The generalization of the ethnicity is problematic because it denies the importance of seeing differences in the individual. When we value each individual, we have insight into who they are and their personal stories. When they are understood, we would know what they need and what

they can contribute based on the cultural heritage assets they can contribute to the classroom and community.

On the other hand, more and more immigrant students attend mainstream classrooms. Teachers not only need to understand the inter-cultural group of students and valuing individual differences, they also need to include multi-racial students who come from different cultures. In this way, each individual of linguistically and culturally diverse students can contribute their own cultural assets to the classrooms and further build an inclusive literacy community.

Better Equip Classroom Practices in Teacher Education

Mosley (2010) promoted a plan that prepares pre-service teachers for critical literacy instruction in teacher education and will help them better serve minority, that is linguistically, and culturally diverse students in a classroom community. She found that these pre-service teachers constantly construct their identities in the process of making meaning of the texts and feedback with others during the practicum. Bahruth & Steiner (2000) mentioned that teachers' early personal experiences had shaped their identity. It is important for teachers to understand who they are and to critically evaluate the type of education they received in the past and further think critically about what educational method will best serve their multicultural student population. That is to say, teachers need to constantly verify their positioning in the process of their teaching career. Identity awareness helps teachers find who they are in the dynamic world. Further, teachers need to engage in the critical literacy responses prior to classroom instruction (Shanahan & Dallacqua, 2018). When teachers understand who they are and what role they serve for students, this realization helps them complete their teaching goals. By doing so, teachers

will expand their sensitivity for students' diverse backgrounds and value multicultural assets. Moreover, teachers will be better equipped to help their students build critical thinking and to create a vibrant literacy classroom community.

Understanding students' background is an essential stage prior to classroom practice and material selection for them. I would suggest that investing time with students before the official class starts is important. For example, home visits would be especially valuable. Prior to this study, I did home visits at several students' location. Other times, I observed students' extracurricular activities and talked to them in the local community. The observation and visitation allowed me to formulate the cultural circle ideas and select appropriate multicultural children's literature for my research participants. Likewise, if educators are willing to invest their time to meet and know their students beforehand, this would help them gain more sensitivity to their students' needs. Getting to know more about students personally helps educators better construct their lessons and build a sense of classroom community. Moreover, educators could be more flexible to adjust their class activity agenda in a dynamic classroom because they know how to make the atmosphere more comfortable based on their understanding about their students' needs. When teachers have a solid understanding of their students and the classroom dynamics, it will help them narrow down the study content and further select appropriate multicultural children's literature for their students. I suggest that incorporating the multicultural children's literature with different reading levels into the content area literacy instruction is necessary. Literacy should not be separated from other subjects. Each subject should involve literacy activities. It will be hard for students to learn content knowledge by memorizing and listing concepts. For example, content area teachers of Language Arts

and Social Studies can collaborate to design unit lessons with themes. Further, if they integrate multicultural children's literature into the content area instruction, it will help students whose English language proficiency are varied improve their comprehension and connections to life experiences.

Partner with a Local Community

Students' life is not only involved in family and school. Community is another essential context for students to explore and prepare for responsible citizenship in the social contexts. School teachers and community stakeholders of a local community center and library should build partnerships. The local community is an extension to the sense of belonging in the larger contexts. For example, teachers can assign students to do a project as a final assessment. The project is a result of learning in the classroom community they build. Students demonstrate their projects by role playing or presenting in public. They invite community members and families to see their performance. The local libraries can offer a series of book reading themes through communicating with the schoolteachers about the units they facilitate in classrooms. Once students finish certain themes of books, they are invited to share their responses at story time in local libraries with a variety of community members. Then, in order to motivate students to get involved in the local communities, book response sharing can be counted to their community service hours. During story time, students discuss different areas that matter to them, including identity, education, cultural issues, and historical events. This collaboration will help students build a sense of belonging in larger contexts. Furthermore, the partnerships with communities help immigrant students shape their identity in a new culture and foster positive relations for all.

Directions for Future Research

This study drew on Chinese transnational adolescents' literary responses and how they use their cultural knowledge to negotiate their identities in culture circles. The findings of this study offer a significant contribution which previous studies have not done. This paper incorporated reader response theory and Freire's culture circle. In order to deepen this route of the research, three primary concerns give me direction for future research: (1) extend the timeframe, (2) select more broad variety of multicultural literature, and (3) include participants who are not from researcher's country of origin.

First of all, due to the fact of the timeframe restriction in this study, I only offered a six-week course of meetings. Originally, I had planned to facilitate an online discussion forum as a follow-up activity after each culture circle meeting. Unfortunately, CTAs were not interested in the online discussion forum because they needed to have more time to spend on their studies. CTAs have a hectic schedule; therefore, the six-week meeting commitment for them was already generous. A longitudinal or continuous study would help me examine how their identities develop across time and further schooling experiences. Since these participants may be separated and likely attend different colleges within a few years, it will be unlikely for me to bring them together again. Hence, I will invite them to join an online discussion forum as a follow-up and likely suggest young adult novels related to the topic of identity with them. I believe that the trust and inclusivity CTAs and I had built in this study allows us to have a deeper discussion in response to the young adult novels plans for any follow up studies.

Second, the selected literature in this study is about Chinese culture. Also, all participants have Chinese ethnic backgrounds. This intercultural group responded to the

children's literature representing Chinese culture. This context deepens their understanding of their cultural heritage and assets. In further studies, I will provide more diversity of multicultural children's literature with diverse groups of participants. In this way, participants can contribute their responses in the culture circle, and they will learn multiple perspectives from others because of their diverse backgrounds.

Lastly, this study has one recent immigrant participating. Aria is from Taiwan, which is the country where I grew up. In the process of the data collection, Aria communicated with me in our shared native language how her Taiwanese friends suffered from the entrance examination pressure in Taiwan and had less time for leisure activities and to explore this world. I can relate to these Taiwanese students' turmoil because I grew up under this kind of pressure in the test-based educational system. Obtaining higher education in the United States equips me to become a better teacher educator. I plan to conduct an action research program by creating a series of workshops using culture circles. The program will be designed to meet the Taiwanese culture and educational needs in order to develop Taiwanese teachers' literacy instruction in English. Wu (2017) led Taiwanese university students to engage in multicultural picture books. As a result, students developed their critical discussions and appreciate diverse cultures in Taiwan. To extend a welcome to culturally diverse immigrants, I propose that there is a need to provide professional development for Taiwanese teachers. This will extend their understanding of how new immigrant children adjust to a mainstream school system and culture. Incorporating multicultural children's literature into the culture circles will help Taiwanese teachers spark their consciousness about inclusion for all. By doing so,

students increase their reading comprehension and embrace a multicultural diverse world view for the future.

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APPENDIX A

Literacy Activity: “I Am” Poem (Example)

Writing an "I Am" Poem

MODEL

FIRST STANZA

I am (2 special characteristics you have)
 I wonder (something of curiosity)
 I hear (an imaginary sound)
 I see (an imaginary sight)
 I want (an actual desire)
 I am (the first line of the poem repeated)

SECOND STANZA

I pretend (something you actually pretend to do)
 I feel (a feeling about something imaginary)
 I touch (an imaginary touch)
 I worry (something that bothers you)
 I cry (something that makes you sad)
 I am (the first line of the poem repeated)

THIRD STANZA

I understand (something that is true)
 I say (something you believe in)
 I dream (something you dream about)
 I try (something you really make an effort about)
 I hope (something you actually hope for)
 I am (the first line of the poem repeated)

EXAMPLE

I am polite and kind
 I wonder about my kids' future
 I hear a unicorn's cry
 I see Atlantis
 I want to do it all over again
 I am polite and kind

I pretend I am a princess
 I feel an angel's wings
 I touch a summer's cloud
 I worry about violence
 I cry for my Gram
 I am polite and kind

I understand your love for me
 I say children are our future
 I dream for a quiet day
 I try to do my best
 I hope the success of my children
 I am polite and kind.

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Resource: <http://www.readwritethink.org/classroom-resources/student-interactives/theme-poems-30044.html>

APPENDIX B

Final Thoughts

(Participants responded their final thoughts by the end of the culture circle meeting.)

Final Thoughts

1. What did you think about the meeting within these six weeks? How did our meetings influence you?
2. In the past weeks, we talked about a variety of books with different topics, including names, relationships with the extended family, Chinese immigrants' history, holiday celebrations in the U.S., and dream pursuits.
 - (1) Which topic did you like the most? Why?
 - (2) Which topic did you like the least? Why?
3. What was your favorite activity within our meetings?
4. Is there anything else you would like to share with me?
5. Is there something we did not talk about during our meetings?

APPENDIX C

Guardian Parents' Consent Forms of Institutional Review Board (IRB)

INFORMED CONSENT

Study Title: Chinese Transnational Teenagers' Responses to the Multicultural Literature in Cultural Circles

Principal Investigator: YuWen Chen

Co-Principal Investigator/Faculty Adviser:
Dr. Eun Hye Son

Sponsor: N/A

Dear Parent/Guardian:

My name is YuWen Chen and I am a doctoral student in the Curriculum and Instruction program at Boise State University. I am asking for your permission to include your child in my research. This consent form will give you the information you will need to understand why this study is being done and why your child is being invited to join this study. It will also describe what your child will need to do as well as any known risks, inconveniences or discomforts that your child may have while participating. I encourage you to ask questions at any time. If you decide to allow your child to participate, you will be asked to sign this form and it will be a record of your agreement to participate. Even if you agree to have your child participate in this study, you have the right to decline at any time for any reasons. You will be given a copy of this form to keep.

PURPOSE AND BACKGROUND

The purpose of the study is to hear your child's voice through reading Chinese American books, creating projects, discussing ideas as a group in a safe and inclusive community. Teens in the group will be recent Chinese immigrants, American-born Chinese, and Chinese adoptees. Because your child has experiences in both Chinese and American cultures, I would like to learn how she/he thinks about books through interactive conversation. This study will help teachers understand different cultural backgrounds of teenagers' perspectives and create an inclusive classroom community.

PROCEDURES

The main part of this study will be a six-week cultural circle. The purpose of the cultural circle is to get people together and discuss books. Because participants have mixed-levels of bilingual proficiency (Mandarin Chinese and English), I will use half Mandarin Chinese and half English in the cultural circles. Each meeting will last an hour and a half to two hours and your

child will be videotaped for data analysis. Before reading at the beginning of the meeting, students will reflect on their past experience with a topic. Next, I will provide students with a silent reading time. Students can choose to read alone or read with a partner. After this, they can write down their thoughts in their journals. Then, they can share what they wrote and talk about the book. After that, we will make projects; for example, writing poem, making calligraphy, etc. and students can explain what the projects mean to them. I will also take photographs of your child's projects for data analysis. At home, your child will have access to an online discussion forum where she/he can go on with the conversation. ~~She/He~~ is free to write however she/he like using either Mandarin Chinese or English.

After the six-week of the cultural circle, I will schedule an interview with your child. She/He can choose the interview location. The individual interview may last about an hour and a half. Learning about your child's life experiences and thoughts about participating in the cultural circles will help me to get to know more about her/him. Therefore, I will ask your child about her/his school learning, life experience, or immigrant experience both in China/Taiwan and the United States and experience in the cultural circles. Also, I will record audio to help me write down what happens during the interview.

In order to know more about your child, I will also join her/his class at the Modern Chinese school. If your child does not attend the Modern Chinese school, I will visit her/his afterschool extracurricular activities. Each visit will last forty-five minutes to two hours.

RISKS/DISCOMFORTS

If you or your child feels uncomfortable with the interview questions and audio record, you have the right not to answer or to stop the interview at any time. During the cultural circle meetings, the camera will be placed in a location that should not distract them. I will also take photographs for your child's projects she/he made from the cultural circle for my research data analysis. Your child may ask to leave or reject at any time if she/he feels uncomfortable. In addition, students will have group discussion in-person and online. If your child does not want to respond to peers, she/he does not have to respond at any time. Also, if your child changes her/his mind not to join in this study, I will not use her/his data.

EXTENT OF CONFIDENTIALITY

I will try to keep your personal information private and confidential in this study. Any information that might show who you and your child are will remain confidential and secret. If I need any information shown in the educational conferences or articles, I will ask for permission. In the meantime, only my faculty advisor and I can have access to the data. Data will be kept for three years (per federal regulations) after the study is complete and then destroyed. Also, names will be changed in the study report to protect your child. Therefore, your child will be asked to choose what name is used in the study.

BENEFITS

Your child may find her/his voice and share her/his experience while she/he talked about the book. This may help your child to gain different perspectives living in different cultural circumstances. Moreover, this study may help teachers better understand teenagers who have different cultural backgrounds.

PAYMENT

There will be no payment to you or your child as a result of your child taking part in this study.

QUESTIONS

If you have any questions or concerns about this study, you should first talk with me, YuWen Chen at (208) 488-9232 or talk to my dissertation co-chair, Dr. Eun Hye Son at (208)-426-2823.

If you have questions about your rights, you may talk to the Boise State University Institutional Review Board (IRB), which protects volunteers. You may visit the board office between 8:00 AM and 5:00 PM, Monday through Friday, or call (208) 426-5401 or send a letter to Institutional Review Board, Office of Research Compliance, Boise State University, 1910 University Dr., Boise, ID 83725-1138.

DOCUMENTATION OF CONSENT

I have read this form and decided that my child will participate in the project described above. Its general purposes, the particulars of involvement and possible risks have been explained to my satisfaction. I will discuss this research study with my child and explain the procedures that will take place. I understand I can withdraw my child at any time.

 Printed Name of Child

Printed Name of Parent/Guardian

Signature of Parent/Guardian

 Date

 Signature of Person Obtaining Consent

 Date

APPENDIX D

Gallery Walk Activity

They look pore.

crowded

A lot of chinese weathings trying to get a job in the
"land of the free" due to the Opium Wars

Lots of stuff on the ship along with the passengers.

How ~~does~~ does disease not spread??

A group of Chinese
prepare to leave the
ship at Honolulu. A
1850, merchants from
the United States
brought Chinese to
work on the islands'
sugar plantations.

A6

Picture A.1. "A group of Chinese prepare to leave their ship at Honolulu. After 1850, merchants from the United States brought Chinese to work on the islands' sugar plantations." Hoobler & Hoobler (1994, p. 25).

AG 2

An officer in the U.S. Army drew this picture of the Rock Springs massacre. Afterward, some Chinese returned to Rock Springs, with federal troops assigned to guard them.

Nice guards.

People died

Terrible!

At least there
is protection...

Hoobler for the
Massacre!

Sad people

Picture A.2. "An officer in the U.S. Army drew this picture of the Rock Springs massacre. Afterward, some Chinese returned to Rock Springs, with federal troops assigned to guard them." Hoobler & Hoobler (1994, p. 67).

AG3

They are just jealous of the chinese.

Chinese work hard - r

They look pore.

He, we're rich

They look enlightened

Are the Chinese just harder workers?

Innovative

they were smarter

AG3

Scenes like this one, showing Chinese and non-Chinese prospectors together, were rare. Other miners often resented the Chinese for their ability to find gold where others had failed.

这些人看起来像民国时代的人，也像是干金一样。
但是我不太明白他们作这些是因什么而起的？

AG3

Picture A.3. “Scenes like this one, showing Chinese and non-Chinese prospectors together, were rare. Other miners often resented the Chinese for their ability to find gold where others had failed.” (Hoobler & Hoobler (1994, p. 52).

AG4

not all saw them

😊 yay!

Isn't the majority of the mostly Chinese built railroads no longer in use?

Nice Work, Chinese!!

Good job

They built the Great Wall Slowly

Charles Crocker's partners protested that Chinese were too weak to endure the hardships of constructing a railroad over the high mountains of the Sierra Nevada. Crocker replied that "any race that could build the Great Wall of China could build a railroad."

Sixty-two miles east of Sacramento, the Chinese reached the foothills of the Sierra Nevada. They filled in valleys like this one to provide a base for the trestle that would carry the trains. Working only with picks, shovels, and hand-pulled carts, the Chinese won the respect of all who saw them.

59

Picture A.4. "Sixty-two miles east of Sacramento, the Chinese reached the foothills of the Sierra Nevada. They filled in valleys like this one to provide a base for the trestle that would carry the trains. Working only with picks, shovels, and hand-pulled carts, the Chinese won the respect of all who saw them. (Hoobler & Hoobler (1994, p. 59).

Picture A.5. “Around 1855, Chinese tended their vegetable gardens in San Francisco. The site of this photo is Union and Pierce Streets, today a fashionable area of the modern city.” Hoobler & Hoobler (1994, p. 57).

AGG
AGG

A Chinese tea-carrier brings the freshly brewed drink that the Chinese workers insisted on having. Boiling the water to make tea saved the Chinese from the diseases that afflicted other workers.

The hope that one could gain a fortune in a short time drew thousands of people to California from all over the world. Even in this multinational crowd, the Chinese stood out with their distinctive clothing, headgear, and queues.

Carrying his equipment on his back, this man was a "placer" miner. He would shovel sand from the bottom of a stream into his wooden cradle, rocking it back and forth to wash away the sand, while the heavier flakes of gold sank to the bottom.

Skinny Fat
Smart

Too much workers makes crowded. space.

Chinese are being bullied too much!

How does tea protect people from disease?

Picture A.6. a). (Left) "A Chinese tea-carrier brings the freshly brewed drink that the Chinese workers insisted on having. Boiling the water to make tea saved the Chinese from the diseases that afflicted other workers." Hoobler & Hoobler (1994, p. 58). b). (Upper right) "The hope that one could gain a fortune in a short time drew thousands of people to California from all over the world. Even in this multinational crowd, the Chinese stood out with their distinctive clothing, headgear, and queues." Hoobler & Hoobler (1994, p. 53). c). (Lower right) "Carrying his equipment on his back, this man was a 'placer' miner. He would shovel sand from the bottom of a stream into his wooden cradle, rocking it back and forth to wash away the sand, while the heavier flakes of gold sank to the bottom." Hoobler & Hoobler (1994, p. 53).

Picture A.7. "This advertisement for a washing-machine company promised that its invention would drive Chinese laundry workers out of San Francisco and back to China." Hoobler & Hoobler (1994, p. 63).