Defining and Negotiating Identity and Belonging: Ethnic Name Change and

Maintenance among First-Generation Chinese Immigrants

by

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Abstract

The purpose of this grounded theory study was to examine the little researched sociopsychological process behind ethnic name change and maintenance in cross-cultural transitions, including precipitating contexts, events, interpretations and motivations that led to the decision to change or maintain ethnic names, the internal and external experiences pertinent to ethnic name change and maintenance, the patterns and strategies to cope with acculturative stress and perceived barriers in respect to changing and maintaining ethnic names, and the impacts of ethnic name change and maintenance on immigrants' lives. In order to answer these research questions, ten participants comprising first-generation Chinese immigrants from Mainland China, Taiwan and Hong Kong, including two males and eight females ranging in age between 19 and 45, were interviewed.

The findings showed that although many ethnic Chinese felt compelled to adopt western names as a way of adapting to the host society due to feelings of insecurity over their ethnic identities, ethnic name change may not guarantee success in acculturation. In contrast, one's self-efficacy was much more essential in delivering desired outcomes and coping with acculturative stress. However, ethnic name change likely exerts certain influences on one's life by affecting the perceptions of an individual by themselves and by others. Based on the differences in the patterns and strategies to cope with acculturative stress between ethnic name changers and non-changers, three styles of defining and negotiating identity and belonging were proposed: *enmeshed style, restricted style,* and *open style*. Those who used the *open style* seemed to be more likely to achieve cultural integration by setting an open, dynamic yet clearly defined cultural boundary. Accordingly, the study proposed a variety of essential components to facilitate acculturation and consolidate cultural identity.

Preface

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I am indebted to my beloved husband and parents for their solid support, love and care during my studies in the M.A. Counselling Psychology program.

This research project is dedicated to all the ethnic minorities for their pursuits of self-discovery and self-actualization in the journeys of seeking identity and belonging in a cross-cultural context.

Chapter 1: Introduction

As an immigrant from China, I have witnessed many Chinese immigrants or ESL students adopt Western names or anglicize their Chinese names. I myself had used the name "Sabrina" for a brief period of time after arriving in Canada. Initially, it was exotic and fun for me to be called "Sabrina" while possessing the physical appearance of a Chinese. However, as I increasingly felt that adopting a Western name somehow disconnected me from my cultural background and personal history which were tied to my Chinese name, I came to realize that my Chinese name contained profound meanings which I felt obliged to hold dear, including my cultural heritage and the love and hope that my parents had for me in naming me. In my own experience, adopting a Western name, or abdicating it to resume the use of my original ethnic name, reflected my acculturation process and ethnic identity development.

1.1 The Context of Changing Ethnic Names for Chinese Immigrants

There is a variety of reasons why Chinese immigrants tend to adopt Western names in a cross-cultural context. One of the most common reasons is that Chinese names are generally hard to pronounce and memorize for non-Chinese speakers. Mispronouncing and misremembering a person's name may cause uneasy feelings on both sides. The person who mispronounces or misremembers an ethnic person's name may feel embarrassed, guilty and inadequate for the inability to correctly pronounce an ethnic name and may thus wittingly or unwittingly avoid ensuing encounters with the ethnic person. The ethnic person whose name is often mispronounced or misremembered by people from other ethnic groups may feel angry, ashamed and isolated for not being well received, and as a result may either seek name

change as an active effort to adapt to the host culture or disengage themselves from further contact with the host culture.

In some cases, the phonetic sounds or spelling of some Chinese names are identical to those of certain English words which contain awkward connotations. For example, the Chinese word "芳", meaning "fragrance of flowers", is spelled as *fang* in Romanized letters. It makes a pleasant feminine name in Chinese. In English, however, it refers to the long and sharp tooth of a dog or snake. The Chinese surname "戴" (*Dai*) phonetically sounds like the English word *die*. The word "朴" (*Pu*), meaning "plain", is viewed as a virtue in Chinese culture whereas it has a phonetic sound similar to that of the English word *poo*.

There are also Chinese names which may be pronounced totally different or even strange following the phonetic rules in the English language. For example, the surname "何" is spelled as *He* in Romanized letters. It sounds like *huh* in Chinese whereas in English Miss "何" sounds like Miss *He*. "施" (*Shi*), which sounds like *sheu* in Chinese, is pronounced as s*he* in English. Thus, Mr. "施" sounds like Mr. *She*. The surname "尤", which sounds like *yo* in Chinese, is spelled and pronounced as *you* in English. Hence, Miss "尤" sounds like Miss *You*. Since Chinese names can be made up of any one or two words and there exist abundant homonyms in the Chinese language, plentiful Chinese names may be spelled or sound like certain English words bearing awkward meanings. Thus, many Chinese people may feel compelled to adopt Western names and renounce the ethnic names which sound awkward in the English-speaking cultural context.

1.2   Research Problem

Despite the prevalence of ethnic name change among immigrants, little research has been done concerning this issue in the academia of counselling psychology. Moreover, neither Statistics Canada nor Vital Statistics, the agency that processes applications for legal name change in Canada, have conducted surveys or collected data with regards to ethnic name changes among immigrants. In cross-cultural transitions, however, the change of one's ethnic name, officially or unofficially, voluntarily or involuntarily, may be an implicit declaration of change in one's ethnic identity involving complex sociopsychological activities that need to be taken into consideration in cross-cultural counselling.

Theoretical Framework

A person's name serves as a symbolic representation of the individual he or she presents to society (Alford, 1987; Dion, 1983), and it is closely tied to one's personal identity or self-definition with regard to who one is and how one fits into society (Sigelman & Shaffer, 1995). An ethnic name, in cross-cultural situations, represents one's ethnic identity, a concept that does not merely refer to membership in an ethnic group which one is born into, but also the level of identification with, and attachment to, an ethnic group (Lau, 1999). Ethnic identity is a dynamic understanding of self, and one's own ethnic makeup, and is subject to change and modification over time in different contexts. In cross-cultural transitions, changes in ethnic identity are associated with acculturation referring to changes in cultural attitudes, identities, values and behaviors which result from having different cultures come into continuous first-hand contact.

Berry (1990; 1997; 1998) proposed four acculturation strategies that were defined by various levels of identification with the host culture and the home culture: integration,

assimilation, separation and marginalization. Integration refers to maintaining a positive

affinity for the new culture as well as for the original culture; assimilation represents

complete absorption into a new culture while relinquishing the original cultural identity;

separation indicates retaining the original culture while rejecting the new culture; and

marginalization involves non-adherence to either cultures. Berry's model of acculturation

modes may imply that ethnic identity can be seen as an aspect of acculturation reflecting the

individual's attitudes, feelings, values, and behaviors surrounding his or her ethnicity and

culture. Hence, an ethnic name change, as an indicator of change in ethnic self-identification

or self-label, reveals changes of the individual in cultural values, attitudes, identities, and

behaviors during acculturation. Specifically, changing or maintaining ethnic names may

embody differential acculturation strategies.

Acculturative stress is a concept coupled with acculturation. In its abundant versions

of definition, acculturative stress is defined as the psychological discomfort that new

immigrants face as they assimilate to the host culture (Kaplan & Nunes, 2003), or as stress

reactions in response to life events that are rooted in the experiences of acculturation (Wei et

al., 2007), or as stressors occurring in the process of acculturation which result in anxiety,

depression, feelings of alienation, and identity confusion (Berry et al., 1987). Rudmin (2009)

contends that these definitions of acculturative stress may confound it with other sources of

stress that are unrelated to acculturation in reference to Joiner & Walker (2002, p. 465):

"people undergoing acculturative pressures may, like everyone else, experience general life

stress." Rodriguez et al. (2002) proposed a more appropriate definition of acculturative

stress by connecting it to the definition of acculturation (Maynard-Reid, 2005):

> As individuals undergo this process of cultural change, they are likely to experience
> acculturative stress that is a direct result of this process of cultural change.

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Acculturative stress includes difficulties due to language differences, perceived cultural incompatibilities and cultural self-consciousness (p. 451).

As part of the process of cultural change, maintaining and changing ethnic names may elicit acculturative stress in individuals, specifically, identity loss or confusion, lack of a sense of belonging, uneasy feelings arising from names being mispronounced or misremembered, perceived cultural incompatibilities and ethnic self-consciousness due to ethnic names.

On the other hand, acculturative stress that individuals undergo may lead to ethnic name change in the first place as an acculturation coping strategy. Studies of acculturative stress have revealed that various modes of acculturation are associated with different levels of sociocultural adaptation and psychological adjustment (Berry, 1990; Ward & Kennedy, 1994). Studies on ethnic identity have reported positive correlations between one's ethnic identity and personal self-esteem (Crocker et al., 1994; Phinney et al., 1997). Therefore, ethnic name change, as an indication of change in ethnic identity and acculturation, and also as a potential trigger or outcome of acculturative stress, is a complex cultural and psychosocial phenomenon which needs to be brought to light in cross-cultural counseling.

Research Background

In the very limited number of studies on ethnic name change and maintenance among immigrants, researchers have discovered that ethnic name changers are more likely to show behavioral and psychological assimilation in host cultures than non-changers (Christina & Edward, 2004; Kang, 1971; Karthick & Lee, 2002; Kim, 2007), and that ethnic name change may be perceived as seeking belongings through imagination of host communities while adopting new ethnic identities (Kim, 2007). A number of other studies have shown that ethnic name change is related to sociocultural pressures from prejudice or discrimination (Edwards, 2006; Lipski, 1976; McAuliffe, 1999; Palmer, 2008), that job seekers bearing

ethnic names tend to have significant fewer callbacks for job interviews (Arai & Thourise, 2008; Bertrand & Mullainathan, 2004; Oreopoulos, 2009), and that some ethnic people including Blacks, Jews, American Indians and Hispanics whose ethnic names had been anglicized have taken new names which reflect their ethnicity due to a resurgence of ethnic pride among minority cultures (Alford, 1987). However, issues with regard to the sociopsychological process of maintaining and changing ethnic names are unknown, including individuals' internal and external experiences prior to and subsequent to a name change, and the patterns and strategies to cope with acculturative stress pertinent to ethnic name change and maintenance.

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of the study was to examine the experiences and perceptions of Chinese immigrants in maintaining and changing ethnic names during cross-cultural transitions, through which the process of ethnic name change and maintenance was delineated, including precipitating contexts, events, and interpretations that led to the decision to change or maintain ethnic names, the individuals' internal and external experiences in respect to maintaining or changing ethnic names subsequent to a name change, and the impact of ethnic name change and maintenance on immigrants' lives. Furthermore, I intended to draw a conceptual model with which to elaborate on the patterns and strategies of ethnic name changers and maintainers in coping with acculturative stress pertinent to ethnic name change and maintenance.

Research Questions

Specifically, this study attempted to address one primary research question which consisted of four sub-questions:

What is the sociopsychological process behind ethnic name change and maintenance in cross-cultural transitions?

 a) What occurred in the Chinese immigrants' lives and thinking that prompted them to adopt Western names after immigrating to Canada?

 b) What do Chinese immigrants experience internally and externally in respect to maintaining and changing ethnic names, subsequent to a name change?

 c) How do ethnic name changers and maintainers respectively cope with acculturative stress pertinent to ethnic name change and maintenance?

 d) What kind of impact do maintaining ethnic names and changing ethnic names respectively have on immigrants' lives?

In this study, the terms "host culture" and "host society" were used interchangeably and denoted mainstream Caucasian-dominant western culture.

Chapter 2: Literature Review

2.1   Names: Identity and Self-Acceptance

A plethora of studies of personal names have suggested that a personal name serves as a symbolic marker of an individual representing his or her personal identity or self-definition in respect to who one is and how one fits into society (e.g., Alford, 1987; Dion, 1983; Sigelman & Shaffer, 1995). Bugental and Zelen (1950) conducted a study in which participants were asked to give three responses to the question "Who are you?" and they found that a reference to one's own name was the most frequent type of response. Similarly, the *Twenty-Statement Test* was conducted (Kuhn & McPartland, 1954; Gordon, 1968) with adults who were asked the question "Who am I?" and the typical first response was also a reference to their names. The results of these studies reveal that there is a definite connection between one's name and personal identity.

Further studies have disclosed that the psychological connection between name and personal identity is formed in infancy (Lewis & Brooks-Gunn, 1979), develops in childhood (Guardo & Bohan, 1971), declines to some degree during adolescence, and is clearly evident again in adulthood (Montemayor & Eisen, 1977). Self-acceptance is a psychological concept that is closely tied to personal identity, referring to one's liking or disliking of whom one is based on an individual's self-definition. A person's name, as a symbol of one's identity, is found to be positively correlated to one's self-acceptance. Studies of Adelson (1957) and Strumpfer (1978) revealed that individuals who liked their names scored significantly higher on self-concept and self-attitude measures than those who disliked their names.

2.2   Names: Perceptions, Stereotypes, Desirability, and Social Achievements

Individuals like or dislike certain names for the meanings attached to the names originating from societal or individual perceptions and values. Buchanan & Bruning (1971) conducted a study to determine the range of differences in the meanings of names and the results confirmed that names were perceived differently by individuals and carried varying degrees of connotations which, in turn, may lead to expectations regarding how a person with a certain name may behave. Mehrabian (1997) studied impressions created by given names using six name desirability factors: success, morality, popularity, warmth, cheerfulness and masculine-feminine. One of the findings revealed that unconventionally spelled names created highly negative, undesirable impressions with connotations reflecting lower levels of all six desirability factors.

Likewise, Busse and Seraydarian (1978) reported that the names considered most desirable were also the most frequently occurring names. Coleman, Hargreaves and Sluckin (1980) confirmed this finding in their studies in England and Australia. They also suggested, however, that "increased familiarity leads to increased liking only up to a point, beyond which further increases in familiarity are associated with a decline in liking" (p. 116). Only those names falling in the middle on a familiarity scale were well liked and names which were either very familiar or very unfamiliar tended to be disliked.

Name stereotyping resulting from stereotyped perceptions of names may develop into self-fulfilling prophecy and have an enormous impact on individuals who bear the names. McDavid and Harari (1966) examined name stereotyping and found that children who had socially desirable names that connoted positive stereotypes received a higher popularity status than children who had rare and unusual names that connoted negative stereotypes.

They (1973) also found that teachers' stereotyped perceptions of students' first names affected their evaluation of students' academic performance. Seraydarian and Busse (1981), however, appealed for caution for this conclusion in their study in which many essay raters stated that they had not even noticed the first name on the essay sheet.

Garwood (1976) studied the effect of first-name stereotypes on self-concept and achievement and the results disclosed that children bearing desirable first names scored significantly higher than those bearing undesirable names in the areas of "variability, flexibility of self-description, conflict, personality integration, expectations and aspirations about achievement behavior, and standardized achievement" (p.482). Garwood suggested that teachers might in some way have projected their stereotyped perceptions to students which subtly affected students' self-concepts and teachers' evaluations of students' school performance. Along the same line, Willis, Willis and Gier (1982) studied the names of individuals with both high and low income and the names of professionals. Their research showed that individuals with lower income seemed to be more likely to have unusual or culture-specific names than professionals or individuals with higher income.

Nevertheless, the influences of name stereotyping seem to be much more subtle and pervasive. Erwin (1999) found that individuals with names that were rated as unattractive achieved better academic outcomes than those with more attractive names. Erwin suggested that individuals with unusual or unattractive names may be more driven for academic success as a result of the unwanted spotlight created by the negative stereotyped perceptions revolving around their names. Although ethnic names were not explicitly examined in the aforementioned studies, ethnic name holders may be subjected to undesirable stereotypes

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attached to their names and ethnicities, given that ethnic names tend to have unfamiliar or even inconvenient phonetic sounds or spelling.

2.3   Ethnic Names: Mispronunciation and Social Prejudices

Ethnic names as indicators of ethnic origin may be social factors serving to differentiate the hierarchy of social classes. Individuals holding ethnic names that reflect lower social prestige are susceptible to social disadvantages encompassing prejudices and discrimination around their ethnicities and cultures. As a result, they are often led to renounce their ethnic names and adopt names that reflect advantageous social status. Lipski (1976) suggested that reasons for ethnic name change are at least twofold: "first, the social stigma attached to a name characteristic of an ethnic group with low prestige; and second, the 'difficulty' of a name's unusual spelling or phonological structure" (p. 110).

The case of ethnic name changes of native Indians is a perfect example. In the history of the U.S., native Indians were forced to anglicize their names in order to get on the Dawes rolls for citizenship (Palmer, 2008). McAuliffe (1999), in his book on the Osage Reservation, also documented the history in which native Indian were given anglicized Christian names as part of their forced "civilizing" by authority figures including officials, priests and teachers. Burns (1996) reported in his documentary film *The West* that native Indians in Canada were forced to anglicize their names because native Indian names were too "difficult" for the Whites to pronounce.

In addressing the mispronunciation of ethnic names, Lipski (1976) contended that there were three approximations of the motives for mispronouncing ethnic names: unintentional errors, deliberate errors, and unconsciously purposeful errors. Using Polish immigrants in the U.S. as an example, Lipski suggested that prejudice against Poles,

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especially those bearing Polish names, led to a large number of name changes, and that

polish names were frequent targets of mispronunciation, both deliberate and unintentional.

He further suggested that in many cases an individual's attitude toward Poles was reflected

by his or her pronunciation of a Polish name. Lipski stated that some Americans

mispronounced Polish names because they believed that all Polish names were

"unpronounceable" although some Polish names presented little or no difficulty to average

English speakers.

      Lehiste (1975) surveyed the impact of mispronouncing ethnic names on name holders

in a group of Estonian Americans, and every participant in the study reacted emotionally

towards mispronunciation of their names. Lehiste suggested that a personal name was a

sensitive and vulnerable aspect for ethnic people, and that mispronunciation of a name was a

violation of the person's integrity because it distorted the self-image. Lehiste also indicated

that although feeling emotional, individuals reacted differently over mispronunciation: some

would renounce their ethnic names after correcting a mispronunciation several times; some

would continue to insist that others correctly pronounce their names.

      The unfamiliarity and even difficulty in the phonology of ethnic names, in a way, has

led some to hold biases against ethnic names. Betty Brown, the house representative for the

state of Texas, made a controversial comment in public suggesting that Chinese Americans

should adopt names that are easier for Americans to deal with (Los Angeles Times, 2008).

Brown's attitude towards Chinese names reflects the attitudes of a considerable number of

people towards ethnic names. Edwards (2006) addressed the classroom practices in England

where some Chinese ESL students were advised by their English teachers to adopt English

names because the teachers struggled with pronouncing or remembering the students'

Chinese names. Edwards suggested that by advising the ESL students to change their ethnic names the teachers may have inadvertently sent the ESL students a message that their culture, and, by extension, who they were, were unimportant, and that a change of name may involve a negative change in the identity in that the new name acted as a reminder that the ESL students were deemed as unattractive to the new culture.

2.4   Ethnic Names: Discrimination in the Labour Market

The social disadvantages that individuals holding ethnic names are subjected to are well exemplified in the labour market. Bertrand and Mullainathan (2004) conducted a field experiment in which randomly assigned resumes belonging to fictitious job applicants with White-sounding and African-American-sounding names were sent out to employers in Chicago and Boston. 50% of racial gaps were found in callbacks rates, in which employers significantly favored job applicants with White names on the same level of credentials, skills, and experiences. Likewise, in the study of Oreopoulos (2009) who investigated name-discrimination in the labour market of Canada, the results revealed that employers discriminated substantially by names: callbacks for a job interview were 40% lower for resumes with Indian, Chinese, or Pakistani names, compared to Canadian resumes with common English names. Arai and Thoursie (2008) studied the effects of surname change to Swedish-sounding or neutral names on earnings of immigrants from Asian, African and Slavic countries in Sweden. The results implied that there was a substantial increase in the annual earnings after a name change, as a contrast to no effects on earnings prior to name change. The three studies above have unanimously shown that ethnic names tend to elicit discriminative reactions, subtly or evidently.

2.5   Ethnic Names: Acculturation and Ethnic Identity Reconstruction

A number of studies examined how ethnic name change and maintenance indicated one's ethnic identity and acculturation. Kang (1971), at the University of Minnesota, used a stratified random sample of Chinese students who anglicized their first names to examine the sociopsychological implications of ethnic identity change through name change.   The results showed that name change represented a significant shift in social identity, and that changers displayed much more out-group-oriented attitudes and behaviors than non-changers, including more psychological and behavioral affinities toward the host society and greater access to the lines of influence and power in the host community.

A study of Latino immigrants' use of ethnic names (Karthick & Lee, 2002) revealed that ethnic name change served as a critical indicator of ethnic identity, and that Latinos holding ethnic first names scored significantly higher in valuing the retention of cultural variations, perceiving discrimination against Latinos, and believing in a linked fate among all Latinos in the U.S. in contrast to those with non-ethnic names. Studies of assimilation and naming (Christina & Edwards, 2004; Liberson, 2000) consistently found that U.S. born Latino ethnic groups were more prone to giving their children American names than foreign-born Latino immigrants, and that boys were more likely than girls to be given Hispanic names because immigrant parents tended to have a stronger urge to protect their daughters than their sons from discrimination elicited by ethnic names.

In a grounded theory study of the anglicization of Korean ESL immigrants' names, Kim (2007) suggested that ethnic name change, functioning as a buffer zone between previous Korean identity and the developing Korean-Canadian identity, could be perceived as seeking belongings through imagination of the host communities. Referring to Durkheim

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(1984), Kim contended that familiarizing with an English name and also its hypothesized western values beforehand could reduce the gravity of foreseeable anomie which might be imposed on ethnic people in a new cultural context. Kim also identified ethnic name change and maintenance as two respective modes of habitus: habitus reorganization and habitus reinforcement, suggesting that Korean immigrants' use of English names might denote intent of assimilation into Canadian society and also social detachment from Korean communities.

Thompson (2006) conducted a case study of three Korean Americans to examine how they negotiated bilingual, bicultural and binominal identities through their name choices. He concluded that personal names were part of the struggle for identity transformation that immigrants were likely to encounter, and that ethnic people were often torn in double bind: an ethic name would offer a belonging to their ethnic community while the same ethnic name might also hinder them from accessing host communities. To negotiate identity in American society with less anxiety, Thompson suggested that Korean immigrants might consider assuming names which could accommodate both Korean and English cultural contexts, allowing them to reconstruct an identity which was "American" while retaining a connection to their home culture.

2.6   Naming Practices in China

To study ethnic name changes of Chinese immigrants, a cultural review of naming practices in China is essential. Since ancient time, the word name "名" (*Ming*) has been closely associated with the word "命" (*Ming*) in China. *Dong Zhong-Su*, a major Confucian scholar in the *Han* Dynasty, said in his *Luxuriant Dew of the Spring and Autumn Annals, "*A sound made as will of heaven is called name. Name is so to speak, the sound of fate" (*Dong*

Zhong-Su, 2003 version). From the linguistic perspective, the word "名" (*Ming*) was created

with two semantic radicals: "夕" and "口". The top semantic radical "夕" signifies celestial

spirit or the power of nature; the bottom semantic radical "口" literally means mouth and it

further denotes command or order.   By combining both parts, the word "名" (*Ming*)

represents the command or order from the power of nature. Once a person is given a name,

his or her life will follow the path which the name presages. Since a personal name is

believed to contain the power of foretelling one's fate, the Chinese tend to pay a great deal of

consideration in naming their descendants.

Unlike Western names which usually come from an existing body of recognized

names, Chinese names can be made up of any one or two characters in the Chinese language.

This unique naming method allows for an unlimited range of names bearing any exacting

meaning that individuals might be seeking. In creating a given name for children, the

Chinese carefully select the characters that embody the meaning in how they expect their

children to develop as an individual. Therefore, a personal name usually reflects the values,

expectations, and beliefs of the individual's family.

In China, family names are used as sacred markers which carry on the family blood

ties and lineage and are seen as the cornerstone of social identity. In contrast to family

names, for which one has no choice, the Chinese have a free hand in given names and are

accustomed to being referred to by an assortment of names. Since ancient times, when a

child is born, he or she is given a *xiao ming* (pet name) to be called by the family's relatives

and friends with intimacy. Meanwhile, the child is given a formal name to be used as a

social identity, or "face". In ancient China, men, especially the literati, had two given names: one was "名" (*Ming*), and the other was "字" (*Zi,*). *Ming* was typically used by individuals themselves to show modesty in front of those junior to them; *Zi* was typically used by others to receive respect. The literati also liked to use a number of names titled "号" (*Hao*) to express personal ideals, interest and beliefs as individualistic markers. Although the majority of Chinese do not use *zi* or *hao* any more, the custom of having a variety of names for different occasions remains in contemporary China.

In addition, the Chinese tend to use kinship terms and social titles for naming people, not only to show the relationships but also to assent to the hierarchical structure in Chinese society (Blum, 1997). Wang & Micklin (1996) contend that Chinese given names are meaningful as a generation marker, a positive projection of personal identity, a gender indicator and a mirror of social change. As the word "名" (*Ming*) also contains a connotation of fame or reputation in Chinese language, a name is closely connected to the concept of "face" and honor characterized by social standing in Chinese culture. This implies that face and power may be negotiated through the use of the names that connote social prestige. In ancient China, for example, emperors conferred family names and titles to honor people who made contributions to the state; posthumous names were bestowed to commend those who made accomplishments or lifetime commitments to social morals.

2.7 Acquisition of Western Names among the Ethnic Chinese

Duthie (2007) contends that Western names are commonly used by Chinese business professionals working in foreign-invested corporations because Western names and English language proficiency both serve as status markers in China. Since the 1980s, the trend of

internationalization and modernization has resulted in a widespread perception that English language skills can facilitate economic mobility, which accordingly leads to a fever among the Chinese for learning English. For example, English language education is mandatory at all levels of schools; English language proficiency is a criterion for employment especially in foreign-invested companies where employees earn much higher salaries compared to those working in state-owned companies or organizations; English schools are set up offering specialized training to help those who intend to advance their career prospect to obtain certificates of proficiency in English or to excel in English language tests in order to be admitted to schools abroad.

While the status of English language is booming, elements of Western culture are permeating and subtly influencing the social ideology in China through imported commodities and media products. As a result, the Chinese are becoming more open and receptive to Western culture. Some Chinese people truly admire Western culture, particularly the younger generation. Hence, Chinese university students (Xie, 2006) and young business professionals (Duthie, 2007) are inclined to acquire Western names as secondary names to be used in English classes, at work, or on social occasions for the convenience of conversing with foreign teachers or professionals, and also as a highlight of fashion and social standing.

The high regard for Western culture among certain Chinese has its historical origins in the mid-19th century. The Opium Wars, initiated by the British Empire, saw China ultimately defeated. This commenced an era wherein the country was relentlessly invaded, seized and coerced into signing inequitable treaties with Western countries. The humiliating reality that China was being oppressed, and its sovereignty trodden upon, led intellectuals,

between the late 19th century and early 20th century, into a heated ideological debate with regards to the concepts of "westernization" and "cultural conservatism", aiming to find a solution to the nation's crisis. Some scholars, such as *Liang Qi-Chao* (1902), and *Yan Fu* (see Schwartz, 1964), advocated that China needed to absorb the essence of Western culture, and to blend it with the essence of Chinese culture for a cultural salvation. Along this line, *Chen Xu-Jing* (Chen, 1936) and *Hu Shi* (Hu, 1934) took it even further, proposing that China should be entirely westernized so that China could come out strong and fulfill its cultural restoration. Other scholars, such as *Gu Hong-Ming* (1924) and *Liang Shu-Ming* (1921), suggested that China must strive to conserve its cultural essence to prevent from being culturally colonized by Western countries. This long-lasting historical debate over nationalism was so far-reaching that it shaped miscellaneous postures of the Chinese people towards their own culture and Western culture.

Ethnic name change or maintenance, as markers of differential attitudes towards the original culture and the host culture, may spark sentiments between Chinese immigrants who have maintained or changed ethnic names. The Chinese writer *Lu Xun* (1921), in his fiction called *The True Story of Ah Q,* portrayed the westernized Chinese who were aligned with the Western colonizers in oppressing their fellow Chinese as "*Phony Foreign Devils"*, displaying a tremendous amount of contempt for them. Since then, the expression "*Phony Foreign Devil"* has been widely used in China as a derogatory term describing those who blindly worship other cultures without cultural pride. On the other hand, similar to the "*Phony Foreign Devils"* in *Lu Xun'* s story, the westernized Chinese may be condescending and contemptuous towards those who are very "Chinese". Therefore, in the present study, it is necessary to examine Chinese immigrants' attitudes towards each other in changing or

maintaining ethnic names, as a channel to understanding their pertinent acculturative stress and acculturation strategies.

2.8   Cross-cultural Contact and Adaptation

As ethnic names are symbols of ethnic identities, changing or maintaining ethnic names during cross-cultural transitions may reflect individuals' acculturation orientations and need to be examined in the lens of cross-cultural adaptation. In the literature, early studies addressing cultural adaptation focused on difficulties of adjusting to a new culture positing that transitioning to an unfamiliar culture would result in stress and emotional distress. Accordingly, the concept of "culture shock" was introduced by Oberg (1960) to describe psychological discomfort characterized by feelings of disorientation, confusion and alienation which occurs when a person leaves the home culture for an unfamiliar cultural environment. Since then, the term "culture shock" has been widely adopted in a plethora of studies of cross-cultural adjustment (e.g. Befus, 1988; Furnham & Bochner, 1982, 1986; Henderson et al., 1993; Huntley, 1993; Marx, 2001; Sun & Chen, 1997).

Although culture shock is viewed as a negative aspect of cultural adjustment for causing cognitive, emotional, and behavioural disorientation, such as a sense of loss, confusion, anxiety, and depression, it is considered as an inevitable part of the process of cultural adaptation and as an impetus for growth (Adler, 1975; Ruben, 1983). The idea that adaptation is a process entailing both stress and growth has been extensively embraced in the literature. The U-curve hypothesis which was first introduced by Lysgaard in 1955 is an example of the early studies noting that adaptation is a process. The U-curve theory believes that the dynamic process of cultural adaptation resembles the shape of U, as it begins with initial excitement and happiness about the new culture, subsequently undergoes a period of

helplessness and stress due to lacking resources to cope with difficulties, and concludes with better adjustment and satisfaction after acquiring cross-cultural competence.

Influenced by the U-curve hypothesis, many studies have indicated in their proposed stages of cultural adjustment that adaptation begins with a honeymoon stage characterized by excitement, optimism, and anticipation (e.g. Gullahorn & Gullahorn, 1963; Oberg, 1979; Trifonovitch, 1977). However, empirical studies provide little support for the U-curve hypothesis and reveal that individuals may not necessarily experience the honeymoon stage but may undergo an initial period of disorientation (Anderson, 1994; Furnham & Bochner, 1986; Ward et al., 1998). Arthur (2001) argues that the U-curve hypothesis oversimplifies the adaptation process without considering differences in individual experiences. The U-curve hypothesis was later extended to the W-curve theory which brought the concept of *reverse culture shock* positing that individuals go through the three main stages of the U-curve of adaptation once more to readapt to the home culture after having adapted to the host culture (Gaw, 2000; Gullahorn & Gullahorn, 1963).

There are several other models of cultural adaptation which have received much attention in the literature. The dialectical model (Anderson, 1994) views adaptation as an ongoing process of dichotomy: individuals encounter barriers during cultural adaptation which would prompt them to enhance cross-cultural competence and facilitate personal development. The cultural schema theory (Nishida, 1999, 2005) contends cultural schemas which are generalized collections of knowledge and perceptions formed by repeated cultural experiences are conceptual structures that enable individuals to interpret their cross-cultural experiences. Nishida (1999) identified eight primary social interaction (PSI) schemas suggesting that cultural adaptation could be viewed as a process that exercises the PSI

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schemas to interact with the host culture. The integrative theory of cross-cultural adaptation (Kim, 1995, 2001, 2005) conceives adaptation as a dialectic process of the "stress-adaptation-growth dynamic" based on three premises: (a) people have a natural drive to adapt and grow; (b) communication facilitates adaptation; and (c) adaptation is a "cumulative-progressive" process. Kim states that stress inevitably occurs when individuals attempt to adapt to a new culture and that adaptation entails both acculturation and deculturation: learning about the new culture while abandoning some old cultural traits.

The interactive acculturation model (IAM) (Bourhis et al. 1997) referenced Berry's bidimensional model of acculturation (1990) positing that the acculturation strategies of immigrants interrelate with the acculturation orientations of people from the host society. The IAM model suggests that acculturation is not a one-way process of adaption that occurs only in immigrants but a two-way process of change that occurs in both the host society and immigrant groups through cultural interactions. Thus, both sides need to assess their desires to hold onto their own cultures and the willingness accommodate the other group for cross-cultural interactions by asking themselves self-reflective questions. For example, the host population may ask if they can accept that immigrants adopt the host culture and maintain their cultural heritage, while immigrants may ask if they want to maintain their original cultural identities and have good relations with the host society.

Attempting to explore effective cross-cultural adjustment, the model of psychological and sociocultural adjustment has been developed (Searle & Ward, 1990; Ward & Kennedy, 1999) in which cultural adjustment is conceptualized as two distinctive but intertwined dimensions: psychological adjustment and sociocultural adjustment. Psychological adjustment refers to emotional well-being and satisfaction and sociocultural adjustment refers

to "the ability to fit in and to negotiate interactive aspects of the new culture" (Searle & Ward, 1990, p. 450). Psychological adjustment has been elaborated within the framework of stress and coping positing that psychological dimension of adaptation relies on how individuals cope with acculturative stress and adapt to the new culture in an emotionally balanced way. Thus, studies on psychological adjustment address the interplay of psychological factors in the process of acculturation, such as personality, sense of core self, cognitions and emotions in situations of acculturative stress, attitudes towards the host and home culture, and inner strength, while proposing acculturation strategies to help achieve psychological well-being (e.g. Ward, 1996; Ward & Kennedy, 1999).

Sociocultural adjustment has been elaborated based on the social learning model which suggests that the process of adjusting to a new culture socially and culturally entails learning and applying knowledge of the new culture (Furnham & Bochner, 1986; Searle & Ward, 1990). Hence, studies that address sociocultural adjustment tend to promote cultural learning and engaging in the contact with the host culture to gain cultural knowledge, improve cross-cultural competence and self-efficacy, enhance mutual understanding and reduce cultural stereotypes (e.g. Church, 1982; Masson & Verkuyten, 1993; Pettigrew, 1997; Toyokawa & Toyokawa, 2002; Ying & Liese, 1994). Empirical research has found that cross-cultural contact is positively related to cross-cultural self-efficacy which refers to the confidence that one has in performing certain social functions to produce desired outcomes in cross-cultural transitions (Black & Gregersen, 1991; Harrison et al., 1996). While inhibitions of cross-cultural contact may be a sign of low social self-efficacy (Fan & Mak, 1998), individuals with high cross-cultural self-efficacy appear to be more active in seeking new cultural experiences (Tsang, 2001), which enhances their cultural knowledge and competence

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for cross-cultural interactions and results in better adjustment and fewer strains than those low in self-efficacy (Harrison et al., 1996; Hechanova-Alampay et al., 2002).

2.9   Identity Negotiation in Intercultural Communication

During cross-cultural transitions, immigrants may undergo a variety of involuntary changes in different aspects of life as a result of transitioning to a dissimilar sociocultural environment, including the spoken language, lifestyle, living conditions, employment or occupation, family structure and dynamics, and social support network. As an immigrant's role and involvement in the host society are subject to being defined, the individual's identity is negotiated, constructed and recreated through cross-cultural contact. Identity negotiation, one of the basic dimensions of intercultural communication process which shapes the course of acculturation, has been a topic of exploration attracting a plethora of research over the last decade (e.g., Collier, 2000; Cupach & Imahori, 1993, 2005; Dai, 2009; Diggs & Clark, 2002; Fisher, 1997; Hecht, 2005; Jackson, 2002; Moriizumi, 2011; Palmer, 2007; Valenta, 2009; Ting-Toomey, 1993, 1999, 2005). Among various theories addressing intercultural identity negotiation, two theories have been widely employed in the literature, which are *Identity Management Theory* (IMT) (Cupach & Imahori, 1993; Imahori & Cupach, 2005) and *Identity Negotiation Theory* (INT) (Ting-Toomey, 1993, 1999, 2005).

IMT was developed by Cupach and Imahori (1993) on the basis of sociologist Erving Goffman's identity theory. Goffman (1959) believes that identity can be explained using an analogy to theatrical performances and that people play characters to "act" or "perform" for the audiences around them to present desired self-images. In other words, people take on certain social roles and create meaning in their relationships with others by managing their roles. In interpersonal interactions, people shape their identities to display a particular sense

of self. The image of self which is the public identity that we present to others is called *face*

by Cupach and Imahori who claim that one's face shows facets of an individual's identity

and that "the maintenance of face is a natural and inevitable condition of human interaction"

(1993, p. 116). Face is how people want to be perceived and treated by others by particular

means of interactions. As face is maintained through communication, the transactional

nature of communication decides that all interacting parties in an interaction have an effect

on shaping the face of each other. Cupach and Metts (1994) suggest that "face is not merely

what one individual dictates. Rather, partners negotiate who each other is with respect to one

another" (p. 96). Thus, the level of interpersonal communication competence may determine

how one's face is maintained.

Among multiple identities that an individual has, Cupach and Imahori consider

cultural and relational identities as most essential to identity management. They argue that

since individuals tend to lack in-depth understanding of other cultures, they manage face in

intercultural communication by applying stereotypes which is however face-threatening

because it is based on externally imposed identities. The capability of coping with the

resulting tensions in managing face is considered as part of intercultural communication

competence which undergoes three phases to develop intercultural relationships. The first

phase is the process of "trial and error" which is to find shared similarities in the identities of

communicators. The second phase is "mixing up" the identities of communicators to create a

"mutually acceptable and convergent relational identity, in spite of the fact that their cultural

identities are still divergent" (Cupach & Imahori, 1993, p. 125). The third phase involves

renegotiating the distinctive cultural identities by using relational identities created in the

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second phase. These three phases are described by Cupach and Imahori as "cyclical", as individuals may go through them for each aspect of their identities.

INT was formulated by Ting-Toomey who initially proposed the *Identity Validation Model* (IVM) in 1986 consisting of three dimensions: identity salience, perceived identity support, and communication. Ting-Toomey indicates that the "self" or "identity" of an individual is refined and modified through the process of verbal and nonverbal negotiation which is essentially selecting one of the identities to engage in a particular communication context. Among the three dimensions, communication is considered as most critical because it is the "actual identity-negotiation process between the self and the relevant ones" (Ting-Toomey, 1986, p. 123). Based on IVM, Ting-Toomey (1993, 1999 and 2005) subsequently developed INT to refine the theory of identity negotiation.

From the INT perspective, each individual has multiple identity images, and there are eight identity domains which are viewed as a composite self-conception of individuals constituting the nucleus of the identity negotiation framework. The eight identity domains respectively include cultural identity, ethnic identity, gender identity, personal identity, role identity, relational identity, facework identity, and symbolic interaction identity. The first four identity domains are primary identities exerting profound influences on our lives; the latter four identity domains are situation-bound varying from one situation to another. As identity negotiation is a transactional interaction process, individuals who are involved in cross-cultural contact attempt to define, assert and modify their own desired self-images while challenge or support others' identities.

In a sense, the outcome of identity negotiation is contingent upon the perceptions of the communicators according to INT. If the communicators perceive that their desired

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identities have been well understood, respected and supported, a high sense of identity satisfaction is likely to be generated. In contrast, if the communicators perceive that their desired identities have been misunderstood, disregarded and undermined, they will likely experience a low sense of identity satisfaction. Since intercultural communication competence determines the outcome of identity satisfaction during the negotiation process, Ting-Toomey suggests that "the construct of identity satisfaction acts as an essential criterion of intercultural communication competence" (1993, p.46). To enhance intercultural understanding, respect and mutual support and prevent cultural conflicts for identity negotiation, Ting-Toomey (1999) advises engaging in intercultural communication mindfully. This means that communicators need to have an open and receptive mind in cross-cultural contacts, so that they can overcome their own ethnocentrism and gain knowledge and perspectives of other cultures, by which they can acquire competence for effective cross-cultural communication and conflict resolution to break free of cultural stereotypes and build a better understanding of people from other cultures.

Inspired by Ting-Toomey's INT, the concept of cultural contracts emerged focusing primarily on the interactions between ethnic minority groups and majority groups based on three premises: (1) identities require affirmation through communication; (2) identities are constantly exchanged reflecting a dynamic process of activity; (3) identities are contractual (Hecht et al., 2003). Cultural contracts posit that each individual holds a particular set of cultural values which helps constitute an individual's identity and can be negotiated through intercultural communication as cultural contracts. This theory suggests that conflicts are inevitable during cross-cultural interactions between ethnic minority groups and majority groups due to differences in cultural values, beliefs and norms. Therefore, when people from

different cultural groups attempt to coordinate their relationships, a certain amount of negotiation needs to take place between them in respect to how much of their cultural values will be negotiated as cultural contracts.

Jackson (2002) contends that each intercultural interaction reflects a specific type of cultural contract and that there are three major cultural contracts by cultural minority identities: ready-to-sign, quasi-completed, and co-completed. Ready-to-sign cultural contracts are pre-negotiated agreements to maintain the status quo expecting others to conform to their cultural values. Ready-to-sign contracts are often used by people who are entrenched in their own worldview feeling reluctant to accept perspectives that are different than theirs with a sense of superiority. Quasi-completed cultural contracts are partly pre-negotiated and also partly open for negotiations which result in incorporating some of the cultural values of others to some of one's own cultural values. People who engage in quasi-completed contracts exhibit a certain level of willingness to negotiate which is deterred by the desire to maintain one's own cultural perspective. Co-created cultural contracts are agreements that are "fully negotiable, with the only limits being personal preferences or requirements" (Hecht et al., 2003, p.49). In co-created contracts, cultural differences of all parties involved in the intercultural communication are acknowledged and valued, reflecting an openness to embrace different cultural perspectives.

2.10 Summary of the Literature Review

Personal names may have significant influences on name holders with respect to self-acceptance, personal identity and social status due to meanings, perceptions and stereotypes that personal names hold or elicit. In a dominant western society, ethnic name holders may be susceptible to social prejudice and discrimination, because ethnic names tend to be

unconventionally pronounced or spelled and may be differentiating factors implying social classes which are tied to individuals' ethnicities. Hence, some ethnic people may be inclined to renounce their ethnic names and adopt names which reflect higher hierarchy of social class during cross-cultural transitions. In particular, ethnic Chinese people tend to acquire Western names, as they are accustomed to having an assortment of names which may be used for negotiating "face" and social status in a dominant western society.

However, little is known regarding the process of ethnic name change and maintenance and the pertinent impacts on immigrants' lives. Moreover, maintaining or changing one's ethnic name may elicit acculturative stress due to the internal struggle in how one perceives oneself, one's own culture and the host culture. Hence, it is crucial to explore immigrants' experiences of changing and maintaining ethnic names and also draw a conceptual model which delineates the process of ethnic name change and maintenance while addressing the patterns and strategies of coping with pertinent acculturative stress, so that the examined social phenomenon can be placed within the existing theoretical framework of cultural adaptation and identity negotiation.

Chapter 3: Method

Given that the present study was exploratory in nature, a qualitative method was more appropriate (Cresell, 1998; Patton, 2002), suggesting that that a preconceived hypothesis or theory was unnecessary, whereas an in-depth review of rich and complex individual experiences was needed. In particular, the study aimed to understand "why" some Chinese immigrants chose to renounce their ethnic names after arriving in Canada while others chose to maintain their ethnic names, and "how" the process of maintaining or changing ethnic names was operated during acculturation. Questions which look at "why" and "how" a phenomenon occurs are better answered by using a qualitative method with which the researcher can build abstraction, concepts, and theories from details of individual experiences (Creswell, 1998; Merriam, 1988).

Moreover, the key constructs in this study, including ethnic name change and maintenance, acculturation, acculturative stress and ethnic identity development, were extremely convoluted and multifaceted cultural and sociopsychological concepts that required more research for conceptualization in the counselling psychology field. Thus, if a quantitative method was applied, the measures of these constructs might be susceptible to errors resulting from imperfectly defined constructs and variables. Recommended by Creswell (1998), qualitative approaches need to be used for topics in which "the variables cannot be easily identified, theories are not available to explain behavior of their population of study, and theories need to be developed" (p. 17).

3.1 Grounded Theory

Grounded theory originates from symbolic interactionism which assumes that meaning is negotiated and understood through interactions with others in social processes

(Blumer, 1986; Baker et al., 1992). Grounded theory examines the "six Cs" of basic social processes in the environments in which social processes take place, including causes, contexts, contingencies, consequences, covariances and conditions, to understand the patterns and relationships among these elements and therein develop an explanatory theory (Glaser & Strauss, 1967; Glaser, 1978; Strauss & Corbin, 1998). Hence, grounded theory is used to generate theory where little is known or to further develop an existing theory out of collected data, and thus makes the theory "grounded" in the data.

During the research process, the theory evolves by itself through constant comparisons among data as part of the data analysis in which the emerging theory is tested against existing data and also is explored through more data collection until no new conceptual categories are discovered. Grounded theory differs in the work of Glaser and Strauss (1967) and the work of Strauss and Corbin (1990, 1998) in that Strauss and Corbin use the paradigm model to link subcategories to a category in a set of relationships denoting casual conditions, phenomenon, context, intervening conditions, action and interactional strategies, and consequences, whereas Glaser (1992, 1998) argues that the paradigm model forces a conceptual description of data rather than allowing the theory to emerge.

Despite the split in theory regarding coding paradigm, grounded theory is consistent in several features including (a) the persistent interplay of data collection and data analysis leading to the identification of themes and categories in the data, (b) a sampling process driven by theoretical concerns, (c) data analysis that is sparked by asking questions of the data and writing memos, and (d) theory development aimed at capturing a process or action (Charmaz, 2000, 2002). When grounded theory was applied in the study, it raised the research question, "How does the social process of ethnic name change and maintenance

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occur to immigrants in a context of cross-cultural transitions?" which exactly matched the key research question of this study. Given that little had been researched in the area of ethnic name change and maintenance, grounded theory could help generate an explanatory theory of the sociopsychological process of ethnic name change and maintenance based on the conceptual categories grounded in the data.

Moreover, there was a range of experiences among the participants concerning ethnic name change and maintenance, including renouncing ethnic names to adopt western names, maintaining ethnic names while adopting western names, maintaining ethnic names without adopting western names, and resuming the use of ethnic names after having adopted western names for a while. Therefore, grounded theory well suited the study because it was most appropriate for identifying conceptual similarities and differences in the participants' experiences through constant comparisons. In conclusion, grounded theory had the capacity to identify the patterns and relationships of the conceptual categories grounded in the participants' experiences. By using grounded theory, the researcher was able to develop a theoretical framework to explain the social process of ethnic name change and maintenance including relevant coping strategies, which exactly fitted the purpose of the study.

3.2   Classical Grounded Theory

Research principles of the classical grounded theory developed by Glaser (1978, 1992, and 1998) were applied in the study. As aforementioned, Glaser mainly differs from Strauss and Corbin (1990, 1998, and 2008) in the coding procedure. In Glaser's approach (1978, 1992), data analysis consists of two types of coding: open coding and selective coding, which respectively develop two types of codes. During the open coding stage, substantive codes which form the basis of the theory are developed through inductive

identification of what is happening in the data using conceptual labels and short phrases. It is common that more than one code may be assigned to a particular data segment to capture various facets of the data. During the selective coding stage, theoretical codes which conceptualize how the substantive codes may relate to each other are developed by analyzing data through the theoretical lens of the coding families. Codes are grouped into more abstract categories and concepts to eventually form a theory explaining the study at a descriptive level. A core category is identified to explain the overall relationships among all relevant categories. Categories unrelated to the core category are eliminated.

Different than the approach of Glaser, Strauss and Corbin (1990, 1998, and 2008) propose the use of the paradigm model to guide the theoretical coding process and therefore data analysis consists of an additional step between open coding and selective coding: axial coding. As they suggest, categories and concepts which are developed during open coding are examined whether they relate to the following six items during axial coding: (a) *phenomenon* at which the actions and interactions in the domain of study are directed; (b) *casual conditions* which lead to the occurrence of the phenomena; (c) the *context* of the investigated phenomena; (d) *intervening conditions* which influence the studied phenomena; (e) *actions and interactional strategies* which are used to cope with the phenomena; and (f) the *consequences* of the actions and interactions. During axial coding, the analyst tries to discover which types of phenomena, contexts, casual and intervening conditions, strategies, and consequences are relevant to the study.

The use of the coding paradigm model is viewed by Glaser (1992), however, as "forcing" categories on the data instead of allowing the categories to "emerge" from the data. As described by Glaser, the paradigm model of Strauss and Corbin (1990) is an "interruption

of true emergence by asking many preconceived, substantive questions, which takes the analyst elsewhere from what is really going on" (Glaser, 1992, p.4). In contrast, Glaser's approach suggests that researchers have to conduct studies without any preconceived research questions or problems. According to Glaser (1978, 1992), there is even no need to review the literature on the studied area substantially, since the application of theoretical knowledge about the studied area may form preconceived notions in the researcher's mind, which could hinder the development of the grounded theory. Basically, the researcher needs to keep the research process simple if applying Glaser's approach, which is to be simply patient and willing to stay with the data, because the most salient and core features of the data will naturally emerge as the research proceeds with more and more data accumulated. This study applied Glaser's approach (1978, 1992) instead of the paradigm model of Strauss and Corbin (1990, 1998) in an attempt to follow the "true path" of grounded theory methodology, which was to allow the truth to be revealed as it was experienced by the participants.

3.3   Theoretical Sampling

As per the sampling tradition of grounded theory (Glaser & Strauss, 1967; Strauss & Corbin, 1990, 1998), theoretical sampling was employed for the study. Defined by Glaser and Strauss (1967), theoretical sampling is "the process of data collection for generating theory where the analyst jointly collects, codes, and analyses his data and decides what to collect next and where to find them, in order to develop theory as it emerges" (p. 45). Rather than being planned in advance, theoretical sampling evolves during the research process and is accumulative: each sampled data set builds from and adds to previous data collection and analysis. Hence, the number of the participants in the study and their specific demographic

features were not predetermined; the selection of participants was dictated by the evolving data obtained cumulatively as the study progressed and by the emerging theory.

The first stage of sampling, the *initial sampling*, was conducted in pursuit of openness rather than specificity, aiming to uncover as many potentially relevant categories as possible along with properties and dimensions. Initial participants were selected following the inclusion criteria of the study: (a) first-generation Chinese immigrants who were born in China, Hong Kong, or Taiwan; (b) between 19-68 years old; and (c) have or had adopted a western name, and/or have maintained the Chinese name subsequent to immigrating to Canada. During this stage, open coding was done in conjunction with sampling in an attempt to collect the most salient data for the study.

As data accumulated, the study proceeded to *relational and variational* sampling in which participants were purposefully selected to seek data that could demonstrate dimensional range or variation of a concept and also the relations among concepts. Participants with similar or different demographic features and personal experiences of ethnic name change and maintenance were sought in order to explore the same group more deeply or in different ways, or to seek out new groups for data variations. Theoretical relevance was the key to selecting participants for the development of emerging categories. A number of variations were in particular considered during this phase of sampling, including age, place of origin, the onset of adoption of a western name, years of using a western name and stay in Canada, the pronounceability of ethnic names, individual reactions and attitudes toward name mispronunciation and related coping strategies, perceptions of ethnic names, the decision-making process of ethnic name change and perceived impact, and the approaches to ethnic name maintenance.

Additionally, *discriminant sampling* was applied in search of data to maximize chances for comparative analysis to test the evolving theory which was formed by the integration of emerged categories. Data from negative instances, the individuals who adopted western names prior to immigrating to Canada, including both informal use restricted to English schools and formal adoption through legalization, were collected in order to gain a thorough understanding of the core phenomenon of ethnic name change. The sampling process did not cease until data saturation of each category was reached, abiding by the guidelines of grounded theory regarding data saturation (Glaser & Strauss, 1967) which are: (a) no new or relevant data seem to emerge regarding a category; (b) the category development is dense, insofar as all of the paradigms are accounted for, along with variations and process; and (c) the relationships between categories are well established and validated (p. 61-62). In this study, data saturation was reached after eight participants were sampled, and two additional participants were sampled to test the saturation of data.

3.4   Recruitment

To recruit participants for the study, recruitment ads were posted in the volunteer section of the two websites: Vancouver Craigslist and UBC Careers Online (Appendix A). Interested applicants responded to the ads via email at first. In the email correspondence, applicants briefly introduced themselves and their experiences of changing and maintaining Chinese names in cross-cultural transitions. In exchange, they were given detailed information of the study, including an electronic version of the approved informed consent (Appendix B), so that applicants could make sure if they indeed would like to participate. Participants were informed of the following aspects of the study: (a) the purpose and procedure of the study; (b) participation was entirely voluntary; (c) confidentiality would be

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strictly maintained; (d) the risks and benefits of the participation; and (e) the rights and responsibilities of the participants during their participation of the study. Once the participants clearly understood all these aspects and agreed to be part of the study, they were asked to sign the informed consent prior to their interviews.

Due to the nature of theoretical sampling of grounded theory, recruitment ads were sent out twice. During the phase of initial sampling, the study was open to recruiting any participants who met the inclusion criteria of the study. As data were increasingly collected from a number of participants who adopted western names due to various reasons and circumstances, the study turned to look for data from participants who never adopted western names nor intended to do so, in particular those who insisted on maintaining their ethnic names despite some perceived obstacles, such as pronunciation difficulty or perceived awkwardness. To expand variations of the core categories, the second ad was sent out to seek participants exclusively for their experiences of ethnic name maintenance, and if applicable, their strategies of coping with acculturative stress.

3.5   Participants

A total of ten ethnic Chinese immigrants were recruited for the study, in order to achieve a maximum of variation on demographic variables and personal experiences concerning ethnic name change and maintenance. The ten participants' demographic information is presented in the Table 3.1.

Table 3.1   Demographic Information of the Participants (N=10)

Participant #	Age	Gender	Place of Origin	Education	Age upon Immigration	Years in Canada
#1	35 years old	Female	Mainland China	Bachelor's Degree	25 years old	10 years
#2	40 years old	Male	Mainland China	Bachelor's Degree	34 years old	6 years
#3	44 years old	Female	Mainland China	Master's Degree	32 years old	12 years
#4	41 years old	Female	Mainland China	PhD	31 years old	10 years
#5	19 years old	Female	Mainland China	University Student	18 years old	1 year
#6	21 years old	Female	Taiwan	University Student	8 years old	13 years
#7	43 years old	Female	Taiwan	Bachelor's Degree	17 years old	26 years
#8	25 years old	Male	Mainland China	Master's Degree	22 years old	3 years
#9	29 years old	Female	Taiwan	Bachelor's Degree	14 years old	14 years
#10	23 years old	Female	Hong Kong	Bachelor's Degree	2 years old	11 years
	M=32				M=20.3	M=10.6
	SD=9.21				SD=10.03	SD=6.55

Participant #1

Duo, a 35-year-old female from Mainland China, came to Canada at the age of 25. During her first year in Canada, she considered adopting a western name, because non-Chinese people often struggled with pronouncing her Chinese name. She feared that she may be excluded from job interviews if indicating her Chinese name in the resume. However, not only did she not have problems with finding a job using her Chinese name, but her colleagues all encouraged her to keep the name and tried very hard to pronounce it correctly, making her feel enormously validated. She came to realize that names were minor in one's life as compared to the personal qualifications and internal qualities of an individual and that she should cherish a name which she had used since birth. Instead of changing her ethnic name to fit in with the host society, she decided adhere to it, as a way of respecting her parents and valuing her own cultural identity.

Participant #2

Jeff was a 40-year-old male who came from Mainland China 6 years ago. He made a quick decision to adopt a western name in his first week in Canada. As a new immigrant, he worried about being rejected in the job market due to his "awkward" and "unpronounceable" Chinese name which as he presumed would add to the language and cultural barriers that he already had. For him, adopting a western name could avoid pronunciation complications of his Chinese name, making cross-cultural communication easier and reducing the barriers to acculturation. Moreover, adopting a western name was considered by him as a gesture of adapting to the norm of the host society. Although he primarily used his western name after adopting it, he did not intend to legally adopt it due to a lack of a deep sense of connection to it. He believed that his Chinese name contained his roots, whereas the western name felt

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rootless, analogous to clothing which was replaceable despite its ability to create a desired social image.

Participant #3

Serena was a 44-year-old female from Mainland China who had lived in Canada for 12 years. When she initially came, she was studying for her master's degree in education. At that time, she felt very confident about her ethnic identity and was always intrigued by introducing her Chinese name and culture. However, after she had an alleged experience of discrimination and failed in her practicum in teaching high school English, she began to recognize the language and cultural barriers that she had to surmount. Thus, she became self-conscious and felt inferior about her ethnic identity. She believed that an ethnic identity was a barrier to her success in acculturation and that adopting a western name could hide or fade away her ethnic identity. This belief was reinforced when she heard an insider's story that job applicants having "unpronounceable" ethnic names were not called for job interviews. Since then, she began to use a western name for work, which seemed to have helped to boost her self-confidence. Nevertheless, she felt "fake" or "phony" inside that the western name was simply a mask to hide her real identity.

Participant #4

Yi, a 41-year-old female from Mainland China, immigrated to Canada 10 years ago. She never adopted a western name nor intended to do so. As her Chinese name was very pronounceable, she simply viewed it as unnecessary to adopt a western name. In addition, forsaking a name given by the parents was regarded by her as disrespectful to them, not to mention that it was a name that had been used by her since birth with special meanings. From her perspective, even if it was a name which was difficult to pronounce, it was still

unnecessary to change it or worry about being judged or rejected for having it. She believed

that one could overcome pronunciation barriers by adjusting attitudes toward

mispronunciation and taking patience to make necessary corrections and that self-assurance

was needed in the case of being discriminated against for having a Chinese name.

Participant #5

Jia-Qi (Jamie) was a 19-year-old female university student from China. As soon as

she arrived in Canada last year, she began to use a western name given by her English

teacher in the kindergarten, a name that she had used in her English classes in China ever

since. Due to her experience of using a western name in an English-speaking context, she

felt natural to use her western name in Canada, especially since her Chinese name was often

mispronounced as "Jia-Ki" rather than "Jia-Chi" which was reportedly annoying to her.

However, as her western name was increasingly used, she worried that her Chinese name was

being omitted, a name which was meaningful to her as it bonded her with her parents who

gave her the name. She felt conflicted that on one hand she must hold dear to her Chinese

name while on the other hand it was not easy for her to forsake the western name which she

was accustomed to using in an English-speaking context since kindergarten, especially since

at this point people here were already acquainted with her by her western name.

Participant #6

Tina was a 21-year-old new graduate of UBC with a bachelor's degree in social

science. When she was 8 years old, her parents immigrated to Canada with her. While in

Taiwan, she was given a western name by her parents to use in her English class. Hence, she

continued to use it at her school after she moved to Canada. As both names had been legally

adopted and used together all the time, they became part of her inseparable identity. Being

very accustomed to using both names together, Tina felt that dual naming reinforced a bicultural identity making her more adapted to both cultures. However, it also made her feel stuck in the middle as if she did not belong to either of the two cultures. In addition, she believed that having a western name protected her from being negatively affected by the cultural stereotypes, assumptions and biases.

Participant #7

Margaret was a 43-year-old female originally from Taiwan. She immigrated to Canada with her parents when she was 17 years old. The decision of adopting a western name was made by her father who ruled the family. As many other Taiwanese immigrants also adopted western names which appeared to an implicit norm for ethnic Chinese, Margaret did not realize the option of keeping her Chinese name. Thus, she adopted a western name to obey her father and also not to be different than others. Having never liked her own Chinese name for some negative associations, Margaret also did not like her western name which was suggested to her by her ex-boyfriend. Despite using a western name and marrying a Caucasian man, she felt marginalized – unable to merge to the western society while being disconnected to the Chinese cultural roots. She explained that she lacked a strong core self and that regardless of which name she used it did not change her sense of self.

Participant #8

Ning Yuan, a 25-year-old male from Mainland China, was a new graduate with a master's degree in applied science. Having lived in Canada for 3 years, he had never considered adopting a western name although his name had not been easy for people to pronounce or remember. To him, adopting a western name was identical to abandoning his Chinese cultural heritage which would result in a sense of loss of identity and rootlessness.

In social occasions, he used his driver's license or other ID cards to introduce his name. As he believed that a name was merely a symbol of identity and that human relationships were between people not between names, he considered that it was more essential to be known as a person than as a name and that developing cross-cultural competence was more crucial for acculturation. Hence, he was very tolerant when his name was mispronounced.

Participant #9

Szu-Chi immigrated to Canada with her family when she was 14 years old. Before she came, she had used a western name given by her English teacher in the English class, as part of the custom of English study in Taiwan. Seeing many other Taiwanese immigrants in the community adopt western names as if it was an implicit norm, she chose a western name for herself. After more than a decade of using a western name, Szu-Chi increasingly felt that it was incongruent with her real cultural identity. Thus, she decided to resume using her Chinese name to have a more authentic identity. From the experience of using her Chinese name, she recognized that her initial fear that her ethnic name may be perceived as odd was unfounded and that using an ethnic name in fact inspired more cultural exchange and moved forward the process of her cultural integration.

Participant #10

Jane, born in Hong Kong, was brought to Canada by her parents at the age of 2. She was given both a Chinese name and a western name by her parents as official names so that she could adapt to both cultures. Being 23 years old, Jane had been living between Canada and Hong Kong. Since she spent her early childhood in Canada and attended an international school in Hong Kong which provided her western education, she was very accustomed to using her western name. As for her Chinese name, she only used it in the Chinese-speaking

context and official documents. She held an underlying fear that she might be judged or

alienated if using her Chinese name in the white-dominant culture, while acknowledging that

her Chinese identity would stay within her regardless of which name she uses. Although she

considered her western name as simple, generic and easy to use in most cultural contexts, she

felt that having a western name as a Chinese person generates identity confusion resulting in

not knowing where she truly belonged.

3.6   Confidentiality

Confidentiality was an essential piece of the ethics of the study. Confidentiality in

this study was ensured by the following means: (a) audiotapes, computer files, hard copies of

data, and signed consent forms were all kept in a confidential area where no one had access

to the data except the researcher herself; (b) the participants' full names were neither

indicated in the transcripts nor in the final report; (c) interviews were conducted in a strictly

confidential environment with presence of only the participant and the interviewer, for

example, the psycho-educational lab of the university, or at the participant's home if

requested by the participant; and (d) transcripts were only reviewed by the researcher herself,

and if necessary, by her thesis advisor.

However, given that the study was examining the social process behind ethnic name

change and maintenance among Chinese immigrants and that their Chinese names contained

distinct phonological structures, sounds and connotative meanings which could have affected

their motivations to change or maintain these names, the study needed to indicate the first

names of the participants, both their Chinese names, and if applicable, their western names.

To maximize the level of confidentiality, the participants' Chinese names were only revealed

in *pinyin,* the Romanized spelling system in the Chinese language, and the corresponding

Chinese characters of the names were not disclosed in the study.

3.7   Data Collection

Data for the study were collected from the following sources: (a) demographic

questionnaires (Appendix C); (b) in-depth audio-taped interviews; (c) on-site observations

during interviews; and (d) follow-ups for feedback on coding analysis. Demographic

questionnaires collected basic information on the participants, including age, gender, marital

status, education level, original geographical regions, and length of stay in Canada, based on

which the profile of each participant was established. The primary source of data came from

the semi-structured interviews in which open-ended questions were asked contingent upon

the content of the conversations divulged by the participants during the interviews.

Therefore, interview questions varied from interview to interview, which provided the

interviewer the flexibility to clarify and explore all possible avenues of the discussed issues.

Meanwhile, an interview guide (Appendix D) was used to provide a similar structure for each

interview. However, due to the nature of the grounded theory method that each data set

builds from and adds to previous data collection and analysis, the interview guide was

subjected to multiple minor or major alterations, depending on the participants' different

experiences of ethnic change and maintenance, as well as the varying testing needs of

emerging categories or evolving theory arising from previous data.

Data were collected by conducting an initial interview and two follow-ups by

telephone or email with each participant. During the entire process, the participants were

encouraged to speak the language with which they felt most comfortable or expressive so that

the complexity of their experiences could be captured. Among the ten participants, seven of

them chose to be interviewed in Chinese Mandarin and three of them chose to be interviewed in English. The initial interviews were all audio-taped aiming to obtain the participants' narrations of their personal experiences in maintaining or changing ethnic names during acculturation. Each interview ranged from one hour to one and a half hours, during which the interviewer also observed the participant's non-verbal expressions and recorded corresponding memos.

Subsequent to each initial interview, the researcher immediately transcribed it verbatim and began the preliminary data analysis based on the transcripts before proceeding to the next interview. As a distinctive feature of grounded theory, data analysis in the study was simultaneously conducted with sampling, interviewing, and transcribing, so that the most salient data could be collected to ensure theoretical relevance for fostering the development of emerged categories. During the preliminary data analysis, line-by-line and paragraph-by-paragraph in-depth interpretations of the transcripts were made in colored analytic notes which were placed underneath each segment of the underlined coded texts of the transcripts, as an essential part of the memos conceptualizing and theorizing ideas about the codes and emerging categories. Meanwhile, separate sets of memos were taken to summarize and conceptualize each of the participants' experiences of ethnic name change and maintenance, in answer to the research questions of the study. Thereafter, the transcripts containing analytic notes and the summary memos were both passed to the participants by email for a review.

Shortly after the participants reviewed the interpreted transcripts and memos, the researcher arranged a follow-up with them either by telephone or email, depending on their varying needs, to verify the accuracy of the theoretical conceptualization of the analytic notes

of the transcripts and the summary memos, making sure that the researcher's interpretations truthfully represented their experiences. As further questions arose from the constant comparison within the interview data and emerged categories, clarifications were made to gain a deeper understanding of the participants' experiences. During this follow-up, the researcher also invited the participants to candidly offer feedback on the initial interviews and address their reactions to the study and further reflections on the core phenomenon. This process allowed additional time for the participants to reflect on their experiences and helped the researcher to gain more clarity and insights for the study.

Subsequently, based on the feedback from the participants on the interpreted transcripts and summary memos, the researcher engaged in the line-by-line open coding followed by the selective coding in which the categories discovered during the open coding were linked together to explain the overall relationships and the final concepts emerged to form the theory. Accordingly, the participants were sent all the emerged categories and concepts which were depicted in tables and figures, and were thereafter contacted for the second follow-up by telephone or email. During the second follow-up, the researcher invited the participants to provide their candid feedback on the emerged categories, final concepts and theory. In-depth discussions were held with some participants on the phone to uncover their deep insights on the core phenomenon while some others responded by email.

In the two follow-ups of the study, the ten participants respectively confirmed that the analytic notes of the transcripts, the summary memos, as well as the emerged categories and final concepts, all accurately represented their experiences of ethnic name change or maintenance. Additionally, they expressed great appreciation for gaining insights on themselves throughout the research process. Based on the accounts of the participants, some

minor revisions on the data analysis were made accordingly. In conclusion, data collection of the study was an ongoing process of interviewing, transcribing, coding, following up to clarify and verify the accuracy of data analysis, and also constantly comparing and testing data from one interview to another.

3.8   Data Analysis

As aforementioned, data analysis in the grounded theory study was interrelated with sampling and data collection which led to the identification of theoretical categories along with properties and dimensions (Charmaz, 2000, 2002; Glaser & Strauss, 1967; Strauss & Corbin, 1990, 1998). Constant comparisons were the cornerstone of the data analysis in the study. At the start, the researcher wrote analytic notes and summary memos for preliminary data analysis, and then coded the initial interview data into conceptual categories as part of the open coding. Subsequently, the researcher compared the emerged categories as well as relevant analytic notes and summary memos to those of other segments of the data. By constantly comparing the categories that emerged from the data, a theory began to evolve. To test the evolving theory, the researcher compared it to the new sampled data. As data collection and coding analysis proceeded, the researcher then compared the emerged theory to the literature to extend the theory, so that the theory made sense of the data from both the study and the literature.

As previously indicated, the interviews were conducted in either Chinese Mandarin or English, depending on the varying needs of the participants, to prevent from losing the complexity of the participants' experiences. In the same sense, the interviews were transcribed in the exact language that the participants chose to speak during the interviews. However, the entire process of data analysis, including the analytic notes, summary memos

and coded categories, was conducted in English in order to create consistency in the data for the convenience of constant comparison of emerged categories and to avoid subtleties being "lost in translation" during comparison. To help manage the large size of data and provide ease and facility for the data analysis, the qualitative data analysis software, ATLAS Ti 6.2 was utilized in the study.

Open Coding

Data analysis in the study consisted of two distinct yet overlapping processes: (a) open coding, (b) and selective coding. Open coding, or initial coding, refers to a process in which data are "broken down into discrete incidents, ideas, events and acts and are then given a name that represents or stands for these" (Strauss & Corbin, 1998, p. 105). In this study, open coding began with meticulous line-by-line or paragraph-by-paragraph examination of transcript data to conceptualize, abstract, and label the events, actions and ideas discussed by the participants. Open codes were framed in specific terms in the transcript texts, either by quoting the terms and words from the participants, namely, the in-vivo codes, or by constructing short phrases to capture the essence of the coded lines. Memos were written along the way, conceptualizing the transcribed data line by line and paragraph by paragraph, while summarizing and theorizing the participants' experiences and ideas in answer to the research questions of the study.

During this process, the objective was to identify as many concepts that emerged in the transcribed data as possible without considering the theoretical relevance of the concepts or their relationships. As suggested by Strauss (1987), open coding "is to open up the inquiry" (p.29) by making tentative interpretations of the events, actions, and ideas discussed in the transcripts for developing theoretical concepts and categories. Glaser (1978) provided

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three questions for the researcher to keep in mind during open coding to facilitate the

advancement of the emerging theory:

1. What is this data a study of?
2. What category does this incident indicate?
3. What is actually happening in the data? (p. 57)

Glaser (1992) emphasized that researchers should never ask these questions directly but

instead have them in the thoughts and in the data analysis. Therefore, these questions stayed

in the back of my mind and guided me in the line-by-line data analysis throughout the open

coding. Excerpts from the transcribed interviews (Table 3.2) present how open coding was

conducted in the study.

Table 3.2   Examples of How Raw Data Were Initially Coded

Tina: It's more because I've been here so long and I don't really know the culture back

there to begin with.

Open codes: *exposure to western culture*   *disconnection from cultural roots*

It's very hard for me to associate with myself.

Open code: *lack of identity and belonging*

Analytic notes: *As a result of being an ethnic Chinese growing up in Canada, the participant feels more "white" inside (culturally speaking) and somewhat disconnected from her Chinese cultural roots.*

Tina: You're kind of stuck in the middle, because you're not totally white and you're not

totally Asian.

Open codes: *stuck in the middle* (in-vivo)   *lack of a clear-cut sense of identity*

Analytic notes: *The dilemma of a bicultural identity – feeling split between the two cultures; neither of the two cultural identities is fully developed which gives rise to a feeling of being stuck in the middle.*

Tina: I think by having both it can apply to both societies, not just one. So in terms of

Open code: *apply to both societies* (in-vivo)

cultural identity, I can know more about both of them.

Open code: *better access to both cultures*

Analytic notes: *Having both names (a western name and a Chinese name) may reinforce a sense of a bicultural identity with some perceived advantages and benefits.*

Table 3.2 (Cont.)   Examples of How Raw Data Were Initially Coded

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Jane: <u>They specifically gave me an English name because they didn't want me to feel</u>

<u>secluded or different. So they thought that if I was given a western name that it would make</u>

Open code: *to be included in the host society*

<u>me feel easier to settle in and get used to the culture here and also easier for other people to</u>

<u>reference me.</u>

Open codes: *to be easily identified*   *to adapt to the mainstream society*

Analytic notes: *The participant was given an English name by her parents in an attempt to smooth the process of her acculturation and growth: (a) to identify with the dominant western culture and feel included and belonged; and (b) to be easily referenced and identified to prevent potential barriers to settlement and growth in Canada.*

Jane: <u>You're still referenced to as an ethnic minority. So that is always on my mind, even</u>

Open codes: *ethnic origin remains*   *ethnic self-consciousness*

<u>though I don't see myself, you know. I don't look at my face, right? Unless I'm in front of a</u>

<u>mirror. So having my name as a western name, like sometimes makes me feel that I don't</u>

<u>know where I belong.</u>

Open codes: *identity incongruence*   *a lack of sense of belonging*

Analytic notes: *Adopting a western name does not necessarily change an ethnic person's ethnic identity or change others' perceptions of the individual's ethnic identity. In some cases, it creates identity confusion with a lack of sense of belonging as the western name appears to be incongruent with the ethnic identity.*

In the process of open coding, open codes were clustered as patterned concepts which were then grouped to develop into categories through comparative analysis. For example, some open codes that were created in the study, including *contemplating using a simpler name, fear of causing embarrassment, not wanting to be different or excluded, afraid of being ridiculed, concerned about creating a cultural gap,* and *fear of being distanced or dissociated*, all implied a pattern of fearing that having an ethnic name and identity might lead to social rejection in the dominant western culture. Thus, these open codes were grouped together and merged into the category *fear of rejection in the host society.* In Table 3.3, excerpts from the transcribed interviews containing the open codes which were merged to form the category *fear of rejection in the host society* are examples which illustrate how conceptual categories emerged from the open codes.

Table 3.3 Examples of the Emergence of Categories

Example 1   Duo: I was thinking, hmm, maybe I should use a simpler name?

Open code: *contemplating using a simpler name*

Example 2   Duo: I just felt that people wouldn't be able to pronounce it. I was worried

that it might embarrass them. If someone always can't remember your name and don't talk

to you, I think they might be just embarrassed.

Open code: *fear of causing embarrassment*

Example 3   Szu-Chi: If I was using a Chinese name, I just had the worry that people might

say "what is this strange name?" and that they wouldn't know how to pronounce it either.

Open code: *not wanting to be different or excluded*

Example 4   Szu-Chi: There were some barriers. First of all I was afraid that I might be

laughed at and mocked by people.

Open code: *afraid of being ridiculed*

Example 5   Jane: Well I'd be afraid that I'll be laughed at.

Open code: *afraid of being ridiculed*

Example 6   Szu-Chi: I just thought it might create some gaps that distance me from

people, the white people.

Open code: *concerned about creating a cultural gap*

Example 7   Duo: I felt that people would be closer to me (if had a simpler name). I just

felt that they might not even bother to ask about my name. That's just my worry.

Open code: *fear of being distanced or dissociated*

Emergence of Category: *fear of rejection in the host society*

Selective Coding

Once the initial categories were identified, the study moved on to the process of linking all of these categories and seeking to explain the overall relationships between them through selective coding. During this process, a central category or story line of the data was sought to represent all of the emerged categories to build, integrate and refine the emerging theory until data saturation was reached. The objective was to aim for "density", meaning that "all the salient properties and dimensions of a category have been identified, thereby building in variation, giving a category precision, and increasing the explanatory power of the theory" (Strauss & Corbin, 1998, p. 158). Thus, in the course of selective coding, coding analysis used two major steps guided by theoretical relevance: (a) connecting emerged categories by defining their relationships through comparative analysis and combining them to create central categories; and (b) identifying one core category that systematically relates to all other emerged categories and accounts for the most of variation in the core phenomenon. Table 3.4 and 3.5 below show some examples of the process of data analysis comprising both open coding and selective coding: data were initially coded to create open codes which clustered and emerged as categories during open coding; categories were then grouped together in selective coding to create central categories through comparative analysis and form final concepts.

Table 3.4   Examples of How Data Were Coded (1)

Tina: You're kind of stuck in the middle, because you're not totally white and you're not totally Asian.

Open codes: *stuck in the middle* (in-vivo)   *lack of a clear-cut sense of identity*

Category: *bicultural identity dilemma*

Tina: I think by having both it can apply to both societies, not just one. So in terms of cultural identity, I can know more about both of them.

Open codes: *apply to both societies* (in-vivo)   *better access to both cultures*

Category: *advantages of having a bicultural identity*

Selective coding: *paradoxes of bicultural identity*

Final concepts: *mixed experiences of bicultural negotiation*

Table 3.4 shows that the open codes *stuck in the middle* and *lack of a clear-cut sense of identity* clustered and emerged as the category *bicultural identity dilemma* while the open codes *apply to both societies* and *better access to both cultures* clustered and emerged into the category *advantages of having a bicultural identity.*   As the two categories *bicultural identity dilemma* and *advantages of having a bicultural identity* were linked together as two contradictory sides of a bicultural identity, they were integrated to form a higher order category: *paradoxes of bicultural identity*, which pointed to a conceived concept that ethnic people may have *mixed experiences of bicultural negotiation*. While a bicultural person may feel advantaged in their capacity to access both cultures, confusion and self-doubt may arise with a sense of being stuck in the middle without knowing where to belong.

Table 3.5   Examples of How Data Were Coded (2)

Jane: You're still referenced to as an ethnic minority. So that is always on my mind….

Open codes: *ethnic identity remains   ethnic self-consciousness*

Category: *ethnic name change does not change ethnic origin*

Jane: I don't think name has much to do with biculturation or acculturation. It's the person's experiences. I mean name is an identity, who I respond to or giving someone a first impression.

Open codes: *limited impact on acculturation   an identification of an individual*

                      creating a first impression

Category: *name creates a first impression of an identity*

Margaret: So for my core self, because I basically have really weak core self, you can give me any name…I won't like it and I don't know how to integrate…an English name or a Chinese name is not going to change how I feel about myself.

Open codes: *a weak core self* (in-vivo)   *lacking self-acceptance and self-efficacy*

                      A name does not determine one's sense of core self

Category: *name change does not necessarily change one's core self*

Selective coding: *impact of name change is limited*

Final concepts: *cultivating one's core self is more essential*

Table 3.5 showed that the open codes of the three extracted pieces of the transcribed interviews respectively emerged to three categories *ethnic name change does not change ethnic origin, name creates a first impression of an identity,* and *name change does not*

necessarily change one's core self . By closely examining the similarities and relationships of the three categories, the researcher discovered a link between them during the selective coding. Therefore, a more central category, *impact of name change is limited*, emerged to relate to and account for all three categories in that a name generates the very first impression of an individual and that name change may not necessarily exert profound influences on either acculturation or the core self. This may further imply that cultivating a core sense of self is more essential, as self-acceptance and self-efficacy are necessary ingredients for acculturation and cultural identity development.

        After all categories, subcategories and their relationships were identified, the study moved on to reveal a core category that could relate all categories of the study with explanatory power of the emerged theory regarding the phenomenon of ethnic name change and maintenance. In this process, a number of hypotheses emerged. Validation was done by generating hypothetical relationships between categories and by studying the patterned behaviours shown in the data to respectively test these hypotheses. A core category, *defining and negotiating identity and belonging in a cross-cultural context*, was eventually discovered to relate to all the categories and explain the social process of ethnic name change and maintenance in cross-cultural transitions. This core category linked to and explained the two seemingly opposing behavioural patterns – changing and maintaining ethnic names, which may be viewed as two divergent approaches to define and negotiate identity and belonging in a cross-cultural context. Hence, the categories that emerged in the study seemed to form the threads that put together the social process of reevaluating and reconstructing cultural identity and belonging among Chinese immigrants.

Chapter 4: Findings

4.1 What Does a Name Mean?

Throughout the research process, questions such as "What does a name mean?" "What does a Chinese name mean?" and "What occurs to a Chinese name in a cross-cultural context?" as addressed by the participants during the interviews were explored to understand the context of ethnic name change and maintenance among Chinese immigrants. The unanimity amongst the participants as to what a name means was that a name is a symbol representing an individual's personal and social identity. When a name is given, it labels an individual so that he or she can be identified as a person. Accordingly, the name is attached to the person as a label of his or her identity. Since a name functions as a label, it does not reveal the core aspects of an individual, such as personal characteristics, personality traits, aptitude, competence, and life experience. Hence, names can be used neither as a criterion to precisely judge one's qualifications or internal qualities, nor play a determining role in communication or interpersonal relationships.

However, a name can be a meaningful label to an individual, as meanings can be attached to it by the perceptions of the name which tend to be generated in the first impressions based on people's preconceived notions or pre-established schemas. Once a first impression is created from a name, a vague image of the individual is projected, depending on the content of the perceptions, which may reinforce how others perceive the individual and also how the individual perceives himself or herself. Interestingly, several participants used the same metaphor "clothes" to describe how they perceived a name in general with two distinct types of perceptions which are described respectively as Type 1 and Type 2 in this study. Type 1, representing the group of ethnic name changers, believed that names were

similar to clothes, generating first impressions of name holders. Therefore, names could be

replaced to serve different purposes in different situations. Jeff indicated the metaphor of

"clothes" a few times to refer to his name change. One example was:

> It is like wearing clothes. You can wear different kinds of clothes. If you always
> wear blue, it might be hard to identify you from a group of people. So you wear red
> and people start to notice you…names are really just like clothes…I'm used to
> wearing them so I just wear them…

> Type 2, representing the group of ethnic name maintainers, believed that names

should not be easily changed like changing clothes, especially the names which had been

used for a long time, and that it was futile to change a name to create a desirable image if the

internal qualities of a person were not appealing. For example, Duo and Yi said as follows:

> It's a name that's been with me for so long… I don't even know what name I can
> change it for…I think names are unlike clothes – if you like it then you use it, and if
> you don't like it then you discard it. You can't do that. (Duo)

> I think an idiom is well said about it: "A person wears clothes rather than clothes
> wear a person." If a person is outstanding, then he shines the clothes that he wears.
> If a person has no depth, then he tries to wear something to make him stand out…I
> think for names, if you just change and change, and then is that you hold the name or
> that the name holds you? (Yi)

Although the two types of perceptions of names differ, they both imply that names are

meaningful symbols which create impressions of individuals.

Three other categories also stood out in the discussions with the participants

regarding general perceptions of names, which were respectively about pseudonyms,

uncommon names and name associations. Pseudonym, a name which is not somebody's

original name, appeared to be inauthentic to the participants. Considering that many Chinese

immigrants merely adopt western names as pseudonyms without going through the legal

procedure, their perceptions of pseudonyms may impact their reactions to and experiences of

ethnic name change. As a result, some of them may feel fake, phony and rootless for using western pseudonyms.

Uncommon names seemed to be a double-edged sword with both perceived advantages and disadvantages, correlating to the level of self-confidence of the name holders. Margaret addressed her embarrassment for having an uncommon name:

> I thought nobody had this name. It's too weird…umm, embarrassment. Like there were so few immigrants back then. I got stood out already, and if I had a weird name, and it's just too weird.

Margaret's remarks disclosed a feeling of insecurity over her ethnic identity which resonated with some other participants who feared that their ethnic names may be negatively perceived for being different in an English-speaking context. Nevertheless, Duo revealed her sense of pride for standing out with an uncommon name as being unique:

> After I grew up I realize that my name has many benefits. People can immediately remember my name. They rarely need to ask me twice about what my name is, especially if I spend time spelling it for them. It is unique. Few people have such a name even in China.

In perceiving a name, people may also attach meanings by making various associations, such as previous experiences of the name, or people with the same name or similar names. While negative experiences likely evoke unpleasant feelings toward the name, positive associations may reinforce a sense of pride and confidence. Tina and Margaret both indicated that they disliked their Chinese names because they had been yelled at by their family relatives or teachers in the past. Jeff took pride in his Chinese name in childhood for its similarity to the name of a Chinese political power figure, whereas Margaret resented her Chinese name as it was taken from a fictional character that lived a tragic life. Whether positive or negative, experiences of names affect name holders' self-perceptions and their reactions to their names which impact their decisions of name change.

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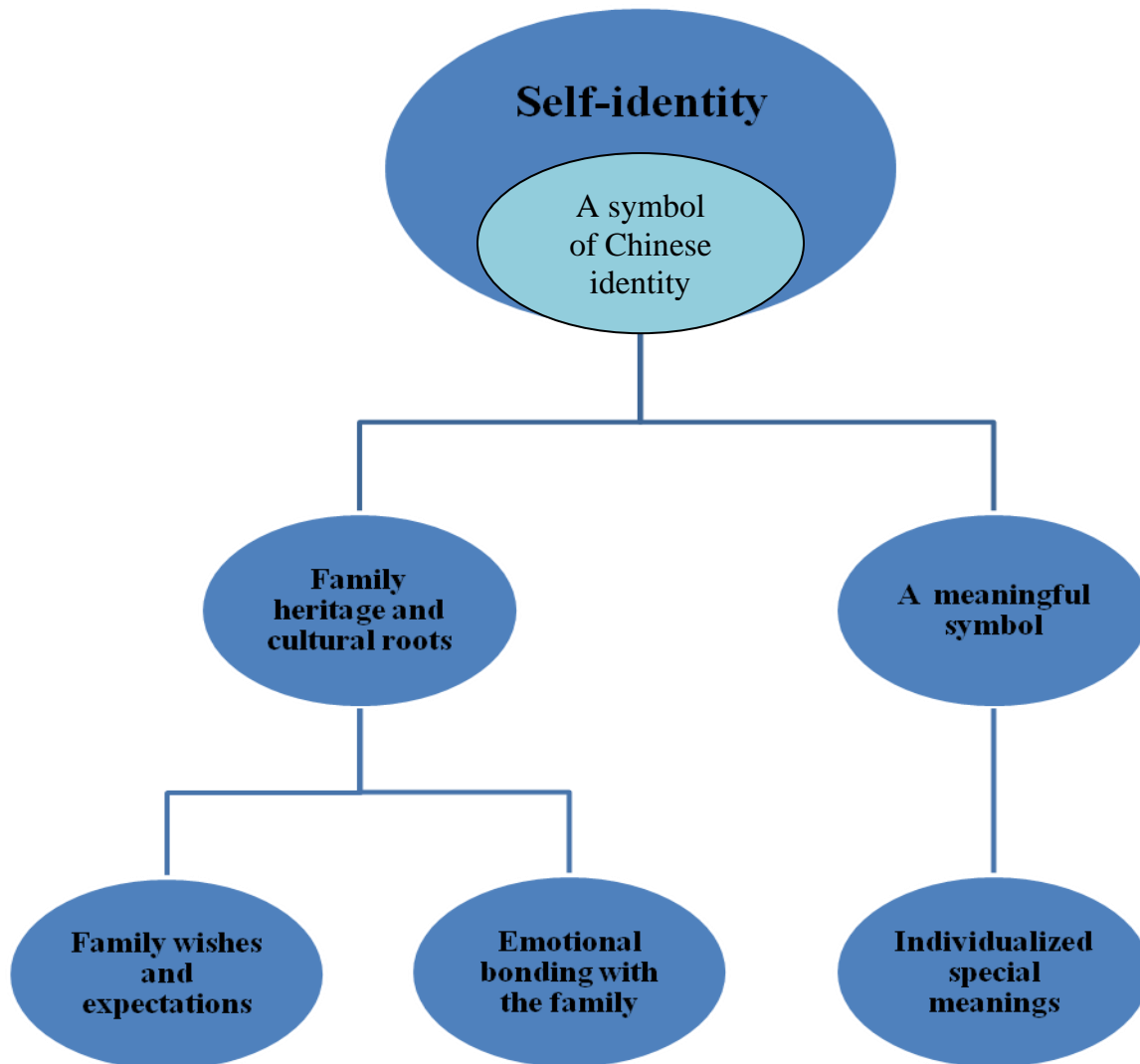## 4.2 What Does a Chinese Name Mean?

Figure 4.1   Meanings of Chinese Names

It is noted that all the participants maintained their Chinese names to a varying degree, including those who adopted western names, which suggests that the Chinese names may have some special meanings for them to hold onto. A Chinese name is first a symbol of a Chinese identity which may be highlighted in an English-speaking context as a distinct contrast to western names. One of the most distinctive aspects of Chinese names is that a Chinese name can be made of any word or two words to create a particular meaning, which indicates that each Chinese name is individually created with unique meanings. Since each Chinese name is specially created for each individual, the name itself merits being specially cherished, not to mention that the name is given by parents or grandparents with special meanings holding their best wishes, hopes and expectations for the individual. Hence, a Chinese name is also a symbol that bonds the individual with family members, particularly those who named the individual.

One emerged category to explain why ethnic Chinese intend to keep their Chinese names even after having adopted western names was *to respect parents.* Many of them felt obliged to keep their Chinese names to respect parents who named them. Yi spoke of her intention to adhere to her Chinese name as below:

> One reason why I don't change my Chinese name is because I respect my parents' choice of names for me. It was their decision. For them, they had an innate sense of obligation to name their children. So if I suddenly change my name just because I don't like it, I feel I'm disappointing them and letting them down.

While the sense of obligation could be an indication of abiding by Chinese cultural values, it may suggest that Chinese names are a symbol of a bond with parents which cannot simply be forsaken. Moreover, it is also a symbol of connection to Chinese cultural heritage and roots, which explains why Chinese immigrants tend to give their children Chinese names in

addition to western names even after a few generations, hoping that their children can still

maintain the Chinese cultural roots.

Regardless of what meanings a Chinese name holds for an ethnic Chinese, it is deeply

embedded in the individual's self-identity as a meaningful symbol. Duo described her name

as an integral part of herself as follows:

> It's a part of me, a part of my self-identity. Just like I won't pull off my hair, it's
> definitely a part of my integral self.

Jia-Qi felt incredibly sad and wept twice when thinking of the prospect that her Chinese

identity was fading away as a result of using a western name. She felt a sense of a loss as if

she was losing part of her self-identity and a symbol of the bond with her parents:

> That's a name given by my parents. Abandoning it means being disrespectful to
> them, making me want to cry…I don't think of its meaning all the time but I know the
> meaning always stays. The main reason for keeping it is because it was given by my
> parents. No matter what name they give me, I'm happy to take it…I think they won't
> just pick a name on the road for me. Even if they did pick the name on the road for
> me, it must be that the name was good and that's why they picked it…. (Interviewer:
> What do you feel you've lost?) It's a symbol, a part of self.

4.3   Chinese Names in a Cross-cultural Context

Two aspects of Chinese names must be taken into account in a cross-cultural context

as they relate to Chinese immigrants' decisions of adopting western names. First of all,

Chinese names are subjected to a number of automatic changes in an English-speaking

context. The most apparent change may be that their literal meanings are naturally lost in an

entirely different language context. What contributes to the loss of literal meanings is also

the fact that Chinese names are spelled in Romanized letters instead of being written in

ideographic characters and that they are pronounced following the phonological system of

the English language without the four pitched tones of Chinese language. In addition,

Chinese names are written and spoken in an entirely different sequence in English. Instead

of having the family names placed before the given names as in Chinese, the given names are located before the family names in an English context.

All of these indicated changes in Chinese names may be discomforting for some immigrants, making them feel maladjusted and reluctant to adapt to these changes. Serena commented on these changes, implying that insisting on using Chinese names in an English context was meaningless to her:

> Although my Chinese name has a nice meaning, I can only introduce it in a specific context [Chinese-speaking context]. Also, as my Chinese name cannot be written in Chinese characters any more, even though it looks beautiful with the ideographic characters, you only see the words spelled in *pinyin*. So in a way half of its meanings are actually lost, you know… when you see a Chinese name in an English newspaper, it doesn't make any difference to you. It's just a Chinese name. That's all.

Jia-Qi revealed her discomfort over the changes:

> The name is already twisted when it becomes Jia-Qi J. [vs. J. Jia-Qi]. And, I have Chinese characters for my name, but now it is reduced to only *pinyin* which makes it even more twisted... to an extent it makes me feel very uncomfortable.

Given that some Chinese immigrants decline to compromise and adapt to these changes, adopting a western name to use in an English context while maintaining their Chinese names to use within the Chinese circle seems to be a prime choice for them.

As previously stated in the introduction, due to differences in phonology of the Chinese language, Chinese names are spelled and pronounced very differently than western names which give rise to pronunciation complications for non-Chinese speakers and cause name mispronunciation. As names can be something very personal, mispronouncing a name may instigate some emotions in both sides. On the part of the name holders, they may feel misidentified and frustrated, while on the part of those who mispronounce the names they may feel embarrassed and awkward. In this study, eight of the ten participants had the experience that their Chinese names could not be accurately pronounced by non-Chinese

speakers, and seven of them divulged their discomfort in having their names mispronounced, whether their first names or last names. Compared to some of the participants who often had their last names mispronounced, the participants who had hard-to-pronounce Chinese first names appeared to be more disturbed by name mispronunciation, as in general their first names were used more often than their last names.

Hence, to some of them, using a western name in an English-speaking context seemed to be a solution to avoiding name mispronunciation and incurring embarrassment and frustration, whereas to some others, mispronunciation could be tolerated and handled with some coping strategies. Interestingly, among the eight participants whose Chinese names were often mispronounced, four of them were using western names, including two people who were given western names at a young age by parents or the teacher prior to immigration, and two people who adopted western names in their 30s after immigration. Nevertheless, the other four participants were using Chinese names exclusively, including a person who resumed using her Chinese name three years ago after having used a western name for twelve years. For the two participants whose Chinese names were relatively more pronounceable, they were primarily using their western names, although they had no experience of name mispronunciation.

4.4   Two Types of Perceptions of Chinese Names: Negative vs. Positive

Given that Chinese names are subjected to a number of automatic changes generating pronunciation complications in an English-speaking context, Chinese immigrants may undergo perceptual changes in perceiving Chinese names when the context alters. Amongst the participants, there were two opposite types of perceptions which corresponded to two different attitudes towards Chinese names: changing vs. maintaining. Those who negatively

perceived Chinese names seemed to be more inclined to adopt western names, whereas those who held positive perceptions of Chinese names appeared to prefer to adhere to their names and oppose adopting western names. However, it must be noted that the process of ethnic name change and maintenance is complex and that there is no clear-cut distinction between the two choices of action. Chinese immigrants may have mixed perceptions of their Chinese names and may use both western names and Chinese names in different situations.

Negative Perceptions

Amongst a variety of negative perceptions, four major categories were discovered in the study. The first category is that Chinese names are unappealing as they are uncommon and non-mainstream in a white-dominant culture. Serena commented as follows:

> I felt my Chinese name [Hong-Lian] didn't sound so "appealing". I regret for being too honest and disclosing my real name. Why didn't I just tell them a fake name and then I may sound more appealing…although my name is real, it is not that "beautiful"…I don't have any particular sense of pride in its pronunciation.

Serena basically identified with the dominant English context and negatively perceived that her Chinese name did not fit in as it appeared to be phonetically awkward and difficult to pronounce and remember for non-Chinese speakers.

Serena was certainly not alone in thinking this way, especially because many Chinese immigrants themselves may not adjust to the automatic changes in the Chinese names in an English context with a perception that the Romanized Chinese names appeared to be strange and foreign. Szu-Chi revealed that she felt awkward about her Romanized Chinese name perceiving it as odd in both spelling and pronunciation:

> One of the technical reasons [for adopting a western name] was that I felt my Chinese name being translated into English was odd – the spelling of my name "Szu-Chi" looked really strange to me… I didn't like it at all.

Since some immigrants themselves cannot accept and adapt to Romanized Chinese names, their perceptions that Chinese names are awkward and odd likely grow stronger when their Chinese names are placed in a dominant English context in contrast to western names.

The second category is that Chinese names are perceived as inconvenient to use in a cross-cultural context. As Chinese names are generally hard to pronounce and remember for non-Chinese speakers, they may create mutual inconvenience in cross-cultural communication. For the name holders, they may have to often make corrections in the pronunciation of others, while for non-Chinese speakers, they may have to work hard to learn and remember the pronunciation and spelling of the Chinese names. Correcting pronunciation consumes both energy and time, not to mention the potential emotional impact of mispronunciation on both parties. Thus, the sense of inconvenience seems to weigh heavily in the mind of many immigrants in contemplating changing their Chinese names, with a common perception amongst them that it is nearly impossible for non-Chinese speakers to accurately pronounce Chinese names. For example, Jeff preconceived this notion before he immigrated which prompted him to adopt a western name in his first week in Canada without even trialing his Chinese name with people.

A lack of English proficiency may be a major factor for some immigrants perceiving Chinese names as inconvenient to use, as introducing a Chinese name may be very daunting if the person is unable to speak fluent English. Margaret mentioned:

> Of course back then I didn't speak English properly. Nobody could even understand me when I tried to introduce myself with that name. So I just tried not to [use it].

However, this was not the case for Serena who, as a teacher, had plenty of fruitful experience in teaching people how to pronounce her Chinese name with fluent English. Even so, she

used the word "unpronounceable" repeatedly to describe Chinese names as the top barrier to

using them, saying that she disliked to often correct mispronunciation in her life:

> I was very patient to teach people how to pronounce my name, but I only have the patience in the class. If I'm not in the class, I don't have that patience, because everyone lives a fast-paced life. It's just really inconvenient. Who has the time to spend on practicing pronunciation…It's just troublesome and energy consuming…I really came up with a lot of techniques to teach people how to pronounce my name, but I don't want to teach everyone this way, because it's too difficult for them. I'm a considerate person and like to bring convenience to others. I don't like to see people take too much trouble when they communicate with me.

As pronunciation seems to be a major concern of many Chinese immigrants regarding

their ethnic names, the "inconvenience" generated from the pronunciation complications may

be a central aspect of the negative perceptions of Chinese names. Since Chinese names are

perceived as inconvenient to use in a cross-cultural and cross-language context, it extends to

two other categories of negative perceptions which intererlate and overlap with each other:

posing barriers to employment and *leading to social rejection*, indicating that Chinese names

may be an impediment to employment and social acceptance during acculturation. For new

immigrants, finding employment and being socially and culturally accepted by the host

society would be the most essential part of settlement. Therefore, any perceived barriers to

employment and social acceptance may be viewed as their worst fears.

A number of participants repeatedly addressed their perceptions that using an

"unpronounceable" Chinese name would lead to social rejection especially when seeking

employment. Examples of their thoughts are as follows:

1. In terms of looking for a job, based on the experiences that I had in China, sometimes if a name is too complicated, I think it's better to change it a little bit and make it simpler and easier to remember. When people are looking through your resume, they first quickly scan your name, and if they think your name is too complicated they just put your resume aside. (Jeff)

2. I think it's troublesome, and I have the feeling that people won't want to use my name because of it ["unpronounceable"] (Serena)

3. I just felt that people couldn't pronounce my name. I was concerned that they might be embarrassed, because from my perspective, they may wonder if I want them to quickly remember my name. But if they always can't remember my name and don't talk to me, I would be very embarrassed. (Duo)

Although some of these thoughts were merely presumptions and concerns, it is a reality that cultural biases and discrimination exist to some extent in our society. Serena disclosed a real life example that led to her perception that an "unpronounceable" Chinese name would be a barrier to her settlement:

Now I'm pretty sure I have to use the name Serena, because one of my friends told me from her insider's note that her principal wouldn't want to hire any teacher whose name looks unpronounceable to him. He wouldn't even consider it. This is a reality issue. Name is not a determining factor, but it is one of the factors that can have influences. If a name is really unpronounceable, for example, if I meet an East Indian man and I can't pronounce his name, I would find it inconvenient.

To some others, the "barrier" due to a Chinese name was not its pronounceability, but the cultural assumptions and biases associated with an ethnic identity. Tina, who basically grew up in Canada, believed that if she used her Chinese name alone she could be subjected to some cultural assumptions and biases, which could cost her some job opportunities depiste her education and qualifications:

When it comes to names or whatever, there are still some cultural biases in the society. I think I do it [to use a western name] for that kind of purpose, right?… It would be harder for you to kind of get through, cause people are biased. I know for sure people are biased…especially in Canada, from what I've experienced in Canada, I feel that's the case. People still have biased opinions especially in Vancouver. I feel like with Vancouver, there are so many Asians now. It's kind of like perceived that, oh my god, 50% of them probably don't speak English. You know what I mean? It's very easy for them to say, okay, well, you have a Chinese name, you're from a Chinese culture, or you are from whatever. You probably don't speak English, They just autoamatically think that.

Positive Perceptions

Despite the perceived negative aspect of having a Chinese name, there is also a perceived positive aspect of it. As aforementioned, Chinese names contain special meanings to ethnic Chinese as meaningful symbols of connection to Chinese cultural roots, emotional bond with family members, and embodiment of family wishes and expectations. Therefore, many Chinse immigrants, even those adopting western names, not only maintain their Chinese names to varying extents, but also tend to give their children Chinese names hoping to deliver them some special meanings that can be realized in their lives. Jeff, who adamantly adopted a western name in the first week of landing, deeply cherished his Chinese name as part of his roots:

> To preserve my root, I make a record of both my Chinese name and my daughter's Chinese name in the genealogy book of my family. My family is a big family, and our genealogy book is as thick as putting a few books together. I think this is my deepest root, the root of the Chinese culture and my family culture. To connect to my root, I always use my Chinese name in our genealogy book.

Another element of the perceived positive aspect is that having a Chinese name may be considered as more unique and thus more identifiable in the dominant white culture than having a common mainstream western name. Serena revealed that she gave her son both a Chinese name and a western name, intending to make his name stand out in the crowd:

> When I was naming my son who was born here, I definitely wanted to give him both a Chinese name and an English name. He must have an English name as his first name and that's for sure, and his Chinese name is his middle name. I've noticed that lots of Chinese people here all have English names, names like Joshua for example, and the last name is Li, so you see lots of Joshua Li come out. I definitely don't want my son to be a child without an identity, so I must give him a Chinese middle name to make him stand out more.

Duo also mentioned that her Chinese name brought her some benefits at work since it could create a deep first impression as being unique and noticeable and that people could easily

remember her name and quickly associate her with her name.

In addition, using a Chinese name may potentially inspire cross-cultural exchange with people from other ethnic groups, for example, exploring the differences in the naming customs between the Chinese culture and the western culture. Since Chinese names are very different than western names in pronunciation and the use of ideograms, it may intrigue certain people who have the curiosity and interest in learning about different cultures, and therefore bring about a better cultural understanding of each other and build a deeper and a more genuine connection in cross-cultural communciation. Serena mentioned that whenever she introduced the meaning and ideographic writing of her Chinese name, whether when studying at UBC or when teaching Chinese Mandarin, she always saw people as very intrigued and appreciative. Szu-Chi talked about her change of perception of her Chinese name after she resumed using it:

> Contrary to what I intially thought, I actually think that using a Chinese name can intrigue people and make them ask about the meaning of the name. Then, they would learn that, oh, there is such a name in the world, and they would appreciate it…when people hear that your name is Chinese, it can bring about more cultural exchange.

Similarly, although Jia-Qi introduces herself as Jamie to people, she intends to let people know of her Chinese name after she becomes familiar with them, which she considers as a necessary step to have people get to know about her:

> Just to know me more. You have known the surface of me [the western name], and now you can know about me more in-depth and learn about my culture.

As a Chinese name is a symbol of a Chinese identity connecting one to Chinese cultural roots, some immigrants may believe that using Chinese names can promote cultural integration during the process of acculturation. Szu-Chi elucidated her thoughts on seeking to be culturally integrated by reusing her Chinese name:

I went through a process to reach the stage of cultural integration – integrating my original cultural background with the knowledge and experience that I had in the western society. I need to integrate my learning of the western culture with the Chinese cultural values that I grew up with. So I think resuming the use of my Chinese name at that time had a meaning of cultural integration.

4.5   Two Types of Perceptions of Western Names: Negative vs. Positive

Similar to the perceptions of Chinese names, there are also roughly two divergent types of perception of western names which stand for two opposite attitudes towards ethnic name change and maintenance. Overall, the negative type of perception seems to be based on a belief that western names are unnecessary for cultural adaptation, whereas the positive type of perception suggests that western names are necessary and beneficial for cultural adaptation. Nevertheless, since a Chinese immigrant may feel conflicted toward ethnic name change, it indicates that different elements of the two seemingly opposing types may be blended together and coexist in the same individual.

Negative Perceptions

Among all of the negative perceptions of using a western name, the most notable cateogory may be that western names are perceived as incongruent with the ethnic Chinese identity. As one's ethnicity remains an attribute of the individual since birth, adopting a western name does not alter one's ethnic origin, but may, on the contrary, make the ethnic person feel incongruent or inauthentic. Hence, some participants chose to adhere to their Chinese names and did not intend to adopt western names. Duo had considered adopting a western name when she worried that her Chinese name might appear to be odd and set obstacles to gaining employment. When she was searching through a list of western names, however, she felt none of them fit her ethnic identity. To her, it would be awkward to be called by a western name. She said, "If I used a western name, it would not be me any

more." Likewise, Ning Yuan, when asked about how he might feel if he was called by a western name such as Steven, he said: " Who is Steven? I don't know this person."

The sense of incongruence also applies to those who are well adapted to the host society. Szu-Chi felt uncomfortable with using her western name after more than a decade of using it, as it seemed to mismatch her Chinese identity in her perception:

> After a long while I began to feel like "Who is Lydia?" I felt like it was just a western name, after all. The connection was only built there after you continuously used it for a while and then you knew that people were calling you. But the fact that you have an oriental face makes you feel that it doesn't match you.

Jane shared the same perception when speaking of her experience of having a western name while appearing Chinese, although she basically grew up in Canada using her western name nearly the entire time. To Serena, however, it was more than just incongruence. For a while, she hesitated to use her western name without disclosing her Chinese name, as the western name appeared to be a "fake" identity according to her:

> If I only use the name Serena, it creates a sense as if I am deceitful, and it feels fake as if I am an imposter.

Since a western name may be pereived as incongruent with the Chinese identity or even "fake" or "phony", it extends to another category of negative perceptions revealing that western names give rise to a sense of rootlessness. Ning Yuan, when asked how he might feel if he used a western name, answered:

> Then who am I? It feels like rootless...like drifting, a sense of drifting...as if something is lost. It feels empty inside.

The sense of rootlessness of western names may be due to a lack of deep understanding of western culture and the meanings of western names, as explained by Jeff:

> Chinese names have profound meanings. Western names may have some profound meanings too, but we don't know…For us, a western name is just a combination of a couple of Roman letters…Because we lack a deep understanding of western culture,

we don't know what the name Jeff really means or its origin…So for Chinese people, western names feel rootless, really rootless, because you don't understand the culture here. What doe the name Jeff really mean? It feels like clothes. I can wear red, or yellow or blue. So today I use Jeff, then tomorrow I use Frank, and the day after tomorrow I use Patrick. What I'm trying to say is, it just feels rootless.

Jeff revealed a significant aspect which is representative of many Chinese immigrants. Even Jane, who immigrated to Canada when she was 2 years old, admitted that she had no understanding of what the name Jane meant:

I don't know what Jane means. It's just something that people identify me with. I don't know that western names had a meaning.

Since western names are unlike Chinese names which are made of meaningful Chinese characters, using a western name that is made of Roman letters without knowing its meaning and origin may make some Chinese immigrants feel rootless.

Moreover, as Chinese names embody a connection to Chinese cultural roots, using western names may be thus perceived as disconnecting cultural roots and generating a sense of rootlessness, which implies that western names may be deemed as less meaningful as Chinese names by ethnic Chinese in the bottom of their hearts. For some of them, Chinese names are part of the root, while western names are made-up identities for creating convenience during cross-cultural communication. Nevertheless, for those who decline to adopt western names, the perceived convenience of western names is simply superficial and short-lived, as human relationships are essentially built between people, not between names. Ning Yuan addressed the "convenience" as follows:

I'm usually slow to remember someone's name, because I remember a person's face first. That's why I'm not too fussy about names. It's the face first and then the name…You mostly get in touch with a person, so the name is not used that frequently, if you think about it. In a conversation, maybe you'd use a name 10 times, but you'd spend much more time on the person… It doesn't have that much more convenience. It's probably just a 5-second convenience. That's all. Eventually the communication relies on the stuff like knowledge, personality, and common interests.

Ning Yuan's statement echoed other participants who pronounced their perceptions that the

idea of adopting a western name to better acculturate is superficial, because in their

perceptions western names cannot essentially facilitate acculturation.

Positive Perceptions

Pronunciation is a major concern for many Chinese immigrants in maintaining their

Chinese names. As a contrast, the most notable difference in western names is their relative

pronounceability for non-Chinese people which may save the nuisance of correcting name

mispronunciation for Chinese name holders. Moreover, western names are regarded as more

generic and simple to use in English-speaking contexts. Jeff revealed his content with his

western name for its simpleness and commonness, "Look, Jeff, just four letters and the name

comes out. People would know it right away." Jane made similar comments on her name,

"Like my name is so short…very generic, short and simple." Hence, in their perceptions,

western names are easy to identify and remember in a cross-cultural context. Margaret

addressed the benefit of having a western name for its easiness to remember:

> That would be more helpful than having a Chinese name I think…easier for people to
> remember to call me by my name. Even for myself, I find it harder to remember
> other people's names which are not English, like from other cultures, right? … if you
> have an English name, and I can usually remember that better.

Jeff referred to the easiness of his western name:

> It is hard to forget and easy to identify. When I send my resume, people can quickly
> find me, okay, this is Jeff…For work, at least it is very simple to call me by the name
> if people call me or communicate with me. It's really easy and simple.

As western names are perceived as more pronounceable and easier to identify and remember,

they seem to provide desired convenience for cross-cultural communication. For instance,

Jeff said that he could quickly get acquainted with people by using his western name; Jia-Qi

mentioned that using her western name Jamie provided convenience for people and herself; Margaret indicated that her western name was helpful in communiciating with others especially when she initially struggled with speaking fluent English.

Interestingly, several participants also perceived western names as a means of protecting them against potential disadvantages using different metaphors. Jeff described his western name as a firewall that protected him by providing convenience in cross-cultural communication while on the other hand creating a safe distance for privacy. As his western name was not legally adopted, using a western psyseudonym semi-formally could bring him double benefits in his perception:

> It's a combination of two sides of consideration. While I'm getting close to people I'm also protecting myself and not letting them get too close to me…when people are getting close to me, I have a shield that can separate them from me and protect me from getting hurt…It's a firewall.

This "firewall" or "shield" comes into effect by not disclosing the "real" identity or the entire self. Using a western name seems to conceal part of oneself, such as individual history, family upbringing, and cultural roots that are associated with the Chinese name. A new immigrant who feels insecure about settling down in the new culture may worry about being rejected due to an "unpronounceable" and "awkward" ethnic identity and worry about being exposed without knowing how to protect private personal information. Thus, western names appear to provide the paradoxical benefit of getting easy acceess to the host society while saving some space for privacy and self-protection.

Similarly, Serena used a metaphor "mask" to describe her western name. She once had the experience of being labeled as fake for using a western name by a Caucasian person who initially got to know her by her Chinese name. She explained her understanding of the

"mask":

> I felt really embarrassed. This name is virtually a mask, and you just insisted on taking my mask off to expose me and saying that it's a fake name… [Interviewer: What kind of mask is it?] As soon as you go to a new place you get a new identity. Just like studying English, it is also like wearing a mask because it's not your mother tongue. So if you have a new name, you can probably create a new self, an ideal self…[Interviewer: An ideal self is different than the real self, isn't it?] Yes, but to remind you that you're in an English-speaking country, I think.

Therefore, the "mask" is an ideal image that is created or shaped by using a western name to adapt to the dominant English-speaking host society, which may represent the motive of many Chinese immigrants for adopting western names.

4.6   The Internal Process that Prompts Ethnic Name Change

As previous indicated, Chinese names may be negatively perceived by ethnic Chinese in a cross-cultural context which heightens their innate sense of insecurity about being a new immigrant or a visible ethnic minority. Jeff spoke of the state of mind and the sense of vulnerability as a new immigrant:

> From a perspective, we are a baby whether in terms of the language or in terms of the culture. Because we are a baby in learning a new language and a new culture, we are like an alien landing on a new planet. On the other hand, I have gathered many years of work experience and lived through the complexity of life. I'm an adult. As an adult baby living in a brand-new country, the state of mind is very complicated… New immigrants like us have the language barrier. Without English fluency, we don't have any confidence, and because of the language barrier, we have to try very hard to adapt to the new culture. Under such a condition, if you also have a Chinese name, then when people know that you're from China, they put your resume aside. Having such thinking reflects a lack of self-confidence…but you know how hard it is for a new immigrant? All your previous experience has come to nothing. You have to start from scratch. It's brutal. You were an engineer before but when you come here you have become nothing to begin with.

In Jeff's statement, he described the hardship that he went through as a new immigrant which mirrors the experience of many others. When new immigrants land in Canada, they may have daunting obstacles to overcome, given that they have to build everything from scratch

to acculturate, including learning the new language and culture, acquiring new skill sets, and establishing new social networks. As newcomers, they may be disadvantaged, lacking access to certain resources, and therefore may be unable to exert their full potential, which leads to a sense of incompetence and a lack of self-confidence.

The innate sense of insecurity over ethnic identity would likely be substantiated by the arising negative perceptions of Chinese names as compared to western names in an English-speaking context, making immigrants concerned that their "unpronounceable" and "awkward" Chinese names may add more barriers to their acculturation. As previously stated, there were three types of fear among the participants relating to Chinese names: fear of being perceived as odd, fear of encountering employment barriers, and fear of being socially rejected or alienated. Despite the variations, the three types of fear shared one commonality: fear of being judged and rejected due to an ethnic identity. Behind the fear, there was an underlying desire of seeking an identity and belonging to acculturate into the host society. Szu-Chi stated her intention of seeking a socially accepted identity by adopting a western name out of peer pressure during her adolescence:

> One main reason why I adopted a western name was because I was a teen when I came here. I wanted to acculturate to the western society, and didn't want to be odd or different than other people. If I used a Chinese name, I feared that people might say something like "What is this name? So strange", and that they might not know how to pronounce it either…a teenager may be more vulnerable because of peer pressure. So you want to be the same as your friends and classmates.

To Szu-Chi and many others, a socially accepted identity is an identity that fits in with the mainstream culture rather than being "different". In a white-dominant society, as western names are viewed as the mainstream, adopting a western name seems to be a way to create a socially accepted identity and seek belonging in the host society, whereas using a "different"

non-mainstream Chinese name presumably may be subject to judgment and rejection which may be detrimental to acculturation, leading to a lack of sense of belonging.

Jane spoke of her preference to use a western name to avoid the discomfort of being questioned, judged and discriminated against due to her ethnic identity which she claimed that she had real life experience of:

> When I was called Hoi Ting my whole life, in here and in Hong Kong, English-speaking people might say something like, oh what kind of name is that? How do I say it? Why don't you have an English name? Like they're just being open, but it would make me feel uncomfortable, because I'm being othered…I don't think they assume that we have to adopt an English name. Sometimes it's out of curiosity; sometimes it's just being very discriminating like you're different. Your name is different. It's Chinese. So why are you here and why don't you have an English name? It would make me feel like I don't belong, like to have people question my identity, like to have people question me why is your name like that? Like why are you not normal? It would make me feel that way.

As Jane indicated, having a "different" ethnic identity may evoke undesirable attention and judgment from others and make the ethnic person feel a lack of sense of belonging. Driven by the fear of being rejected and discriminated against, some immigrants are motivated to use a western name to avoid perceived obstacles due to an ethnic identity, in particular potential barriers to gaining employment.

To those who feel compelled to adopt western names, the worry about being unemployed for using "inconvenient" and "awkward" Chinese names may be their most explicit fear, since employment is an essential part of immigrant settlement and is vital for survival in the host society. Among the six participants who were primarily using western names, four of them disclosed that fear of encountering barriers to employment was the top reason for them to use western names while the other two were a housewife and a first-year university student who did not need to consider employment any time soon. Tina verified her use of a western name by addressing her presumption of cultural assumptions and biases

that might negatively affect her employment opportunities if she did not include a western

name in the resume:

> I know for sure people are biased, so I'm trying to eliminate any kind of obstacles that might be in the way…That's the fear though. I feel in the first step they may not want to meet you just by looking at your resume. There might be like, you know how people have first impressions? It takes 5 seconds or something, You know, it's the very first impression kind of thing. I don't want to lose the chance if I don't have to.

As Tina intended to have a career in teaching English, she was concerned that using a

Chinese name in her resume might convey a first impression in an assumption that she was

too "Chinese" to teach English, although she basically grew up in Canada. Likewise, Serena

ascribed her lack of success in the teaching practicum trying to become a high school English

teacher to her Chinese identity:

> I failed perhaps because I was too Chinese. [Interviewer: So you wanted to adopt a western name to make you less Chinese?] That's right, to be less Chinese. [Interviewer: To erase your Chinese identity?] In some situations, maybe. It's like the assimilation that you said. It is concealing your Chinese identity, or hiding it, fading it away. [Interviewer: Is this "hiding" like a firewall, to some extent?] I think so. I think it's a firewall. After that, I was thinking it might have been better had I used the name Serena …not until that event happened did I realize that I had that experience which might have been discrimination because of my Chinese identity. It's when I failed my teaching practicum for the first time. That's entirely because you're an immigrant and that's why you get unfair treatment, no matter how hard you try. My experience is basically from one failure to another…I used my name Hong-Lian, so the whole thing was a failure…I regretted not using the name Serena, and I began to dislike my Chinese name Hong-Lian because it didn't sound appealing. It's not that I dislike it personally. It's just that I think the name Serena is more suitable in business situations.

In Serena's case, she allegedly experienced discrimination and did not succeed in her

two attempts to become an English teacher. Therefore, she concluded that her Chinese

identity was the sole roadblock that hindered her from succeeding, without reviewing her

own drawbacks and areas that she could improve in teaching. As her way of redemption, she

chose to use her western name Serena since then. To her, the name Serena was both a

"mask" to conceal her Chinese identity and a "firewall" that could protect her from potential

negativities relating to her ethnic identity.

The motivation of Chinese immigrants to adopt western names is not only driven by

fear, but also by the underlying desire to acculturate to the host society. Basically, all of

the participants who were using or had used western names revealed that their western names

were adopted by their parents or by themselves in order to adapt to the host culture without

feeling excluded. Jeff commented on his perception of cultural adaptation:

> I can quickly adapt to any new environment. Even if it's not English-speaking but
> French-speaking, a completely strange French-speaking environment, if I have to
> adapt to it, I'll try to find some common grounds to adapt to it…to adapt to it by the
> name, to merge into the life of the host society…If I can't change an environment, I
> change myself to adapt to it.

According to Jeff, one needs to merge into a new cultural environment by finding common

ground which refers to existing commonalities between the two cultures that one can relate to

and cultural adaptations that one can make in terms of cultural values, norms, customs and

lifestyles. If one can find existing commonalities and develop new areas of common ground,

the person can well adapt to the new culture. To many immigrants, adopting a western name

to assume an English-speaking identity is a way of building common ground for

acculturation.

Moreover, adopting western names creates perceived convenience in social

communication for those who have hard-to-pronounce Chinese names. It is perceived that

adopting western names not only saves the trouble of dealing with the pronunciation

complications of Chinese names, but also prevents causing embarrassment to both parties.

Jeff indicated a few times that using a western name seemed to have created some

convenience for him in social situations. At the very least, his western name was simple and

easy to identify and remember without needing to explain twice when introducing himself.

When asked about what if he used his Chinese name Guo-Feng, he said:

> They can't pronounce it. [Interviewer: How about you explain to people how to pronounce it?] But I don't have to take that trouble. [Interviewer: Because it creates a sense of distance?] It's not the sense of distance, but a way of communciation. I think the best way is to merge into the environment for communication as quickly as possible, just some foreigners who are learning the Chinese language would take on a Chinese name. It's the same thing.

Jeff's comments mirror many other immigrants' thinking. The "convenience" which is created by using a western name is not just the easiness to identify and remember, but also the common ground which is allegedly built to draw people closer to each other by sharing the same kind of name.

4.7   Sociocultural, Family, and Personal Factors of Ethnic Name Change

It was found in the study that there were various sociocultural, family and individual factors that affected the Chinese immigrants' decisions to adopt western names. Among all of the discovered factors, the most prominent one is the deeply embedded Chinese cultural norm that as a new comer one needs to conform to the customs of the new culture. A well-known Chinese idiom, "入乡随俗" (*Ru Xiang Sui Su*), has been correspondingly carried on for thousands of years in China, comparable to the English idiom *when in Rome, do as the Romans do*. Due to this norm, a presumption is widely embraced among ethnic Chinese that adopting a western name is required for acculturation. Moreover, seeing many Chinese immigrants adopt western names to assume a western-sounding identity confirms the perception that adopting western names in an English-speaking context is an implicitly endorsed norm that ethnic Chinese all need to adhere to.

Basically, nearly all the participants who used western names revealed that adopting a western name was a presumed norm in their automatic thoughts for the purpose of generating a sense of acculturation. Examples of their convictions are as follows:

If I go to a different country, it's not that I'm forced to accept their culture but that I naturally feel that I need to adapt to the new culture. So you'll have to find a way to adapt to it and changing a name might be the beginning of it. When you arrive in the new place and accept its culture, you might think, hmm, if I have such a name, I can feel more acculturated, and that name will have a new meaning for you… I just felt really natural to do that. Perhaps it is the context. (Jia-Qi Jamie)

It's kind of like the concept of conforming to the customs of the new culture…the majority of the people in my school were white, so it was just felt that using a western name could acculturate better…I just took for granted that I was supposed to use a western name. Actually everyone chose a western name to use for school, as if we ought to use western names in a foreign country. We didn't even think about using our Chinese names. (Szu-Chi)

That's our belief…So they thought we came to this culture and we should just kind of merge into this culture. So we all took on English names…when we came here, you know, they [the parents] didn't even know what to do. They just come up with the new English name. That's what you're supposed to do. (Margaret)

I wasn't thinking more about like why I am changing my name for them. I was probably thinking more of like, maybe I should just go along with the flow. (Tina)

In addition, witnessing other immigrants use western names verified the perception that adopting a western name in a cross-cultural context was an implicitly endorsed norm for ethnic Chinese to abide by. Examples of their comments are selected as below:

It's also because I remember there were a few other Asian kids there and probably they already had English names too. So I probably just thought it was like norm of society you know like to have the same kind of name and stuff. (Tina)

Back then, there weren't many immigrants. So we just met a few families here and they were all using English names. So we just thought we needed to do that. So we just all gave ourselves names, yeah. (Margaret)

Another reason [of adopting a western name] was to conform to the customs of the new culture. Other ethnic Chinese are also doing it. For example, in my community, and in my company, my boss and my colleagues all use western names. We're doing this even among our Chinese people. (Serena)

Because there are so many Chinese people here and they all have an English name. Then I'll have one too. It's just that. (Jeff)

On one hand, the collective nature of the Chinese culture may urge ethnic Chinese to follow the trend of the majority, since anything endorsed by the majority appears to be the norm for one to conform to. Hence, the perception arises: as adopting western names is endorsed by the majority of Chinese immigrants, it is better to go along with the norm.

On the other hand, the phenomenon of ethnic name change among ethnic Chinese may reflect their tendency to yield to the dominant society, as many of them have been indoctrinated to obey authority as they grow up. Both Szu-Chi and Duo addressed this inclination when commenting on the Chinese's tendency to adopt western names:

Some people are unaware of the option [making individual choices]as they grow up which reflects the culture of the environment where they grow up. If a person is growing up in an oriental culture, maybe they have never had the space to be themselves. Everything that we do follows what is said by the teachers. We have to wear school uniforms. We can't make any noise in the school. There are things that we have no choices for under such an environment. So when we go to a foreign country, this kind of thinking pattern remains in our unconsciousness. It relates to the environment where we grow up. (Szu-Chi)

The Chinese are indoctrinated to cater to others, cater to the society, cater to the whole environment around them, and to be molded exactly the same as others. If you're different, or if you don't do as the authority says, you are grouped in a bad category…I think we never had a space for developing individuality in childhood. We are confined to a frame and we just go along with it. I was never given the right to consider my own choices...now I'd like to do something that I want to do. (Duo)

Szu-Chi and Duo indicated that the lack of individuality fostered in the Chinese culture might have made some ethnic Chinese feel compelled to adopt western names to conform to their presumed norm of the dominant western society without considering executing their individual choices. This tendency merits particular attention, as it likely relates to

immigrants' attitudes and means in making cultural adaptations including their strategies to cope with acculturative stress which may determine the acculturation outcome.

Shaped by the collective culture in which individuality is not encouraged, individuals blindly adopting western names without examining personal preferences may be considered as lacking a strong self-identity. Margaret described her parents accordingly:

> I think our parents didn't have a very strong identity of being themselves…So we just never even thought about having the option of keeping our Chinese names. We all took an English name, the whole family…When we came here, you know, they didn't even know what to do. They just come up with the new English name. That's what you are supposed to do. They didn't have their identity either.

Margaret also divulged her lack of a strong self-identity due to her family upbringing which according to her influenced her experience of ethnic name change as well as her acculturation status and cultural identity development. Undeniably, family influences can affect a Chinese immigrant's attitude toward western names and the decision of ethnic name change. In fact, half of participants were influenced by their families in adopting western names, whether the decisions were made by the families, or encouraged by the family members.

In addition, there were personal factors that affected the decision of adopting western names, and one of them was cultural pride. In the study, six participants who expressed their pride in Chinese culture and identity asserted their intentions to maintain their Chinese names by whichever means necessary, and three of them revealed their strong objection to adopting western names. In contrast, four other participants who displayed a lower level of pride or enthusiasm toward the Chinese culture were more prone to adopting western names. For example, Serena who reportedly used her western name to conceal her Chinese identity spoke about her shame of the Chinese culture:

> I never had a sense of pride in my home culture, even when I was teaching Chinese Mandarin. I was probably just talking about Chinese Kong Fu etc. There was no

particular pride in Chinese culture. Do you know what those Chinese teachers teach? A whole bunch of things that can't represent Chinese culture, like the clothing during the Cultural Revolution which I think should be left behind forever. I really feel ashamed of my own culture.

On the contrary, Ning Yuan insisted on using his Chinese name to preserve the Chinese cultural roots out of a strong sense of Chinese nationalism which he described as "dying for the home country". Other personal factors of ethnic name change include previous exposure to western culture, liking of English language and English-sounding names, validating experience of using western names, personal dissatisfaction with Chinese given names, negative perceptions of anglicized pronunciation of Chinese names, and passive attitudes toward name mispronunciation.

4.8   The Internal Process that Prompts Ethnic Name Maintenance

Although the participants who did not adopt western names may not differ much from those who adopted western names in acknowledging the special meanings of Chinese names, they reacted very differently to their Chinese names in respect to perceptions, feelings and attitudes. In contrast to the ethnic name changers who perceived the "unpronounceability" of Chinese names as the biggest obstacle, those who declined to adopt western names seemed to feel more secure with their ethnic identity: they did not consider pronunciation complications of Chinese names as a barrier to acculturation or hold any fear of using them in a cross-cultural context. In these cases, name mispronunciation was perceived as inevitable and tolerable in a multicultural context due to language differences. The following are the extracted comments from the four participants who were using Chinese names:

It [Mispronunciation] really doesn't matter. I know the person and the person knows me. In fact, I can't pronounce some people's names either. I also mispronounced some names…It [Mispronunciation] will happen all the time for sure. So I don't really care. It's still good. At least the name is pronounced. (Ning Yuan)

People pronounce my name as Dou, but I don't think it's a big deal. You can try the best you can to have people pronounce your name in the right way. But some people just can't do it, just like I can't pronounce some English words, so I don't find it [mispronunciation] laughable. If they call me, I'll just respond. I don't really mind. (Duo)

I think it's the language limitations. So even if I spend time correcting it hundreds of time, they still may not be able to pronounce it correctly. Also, I can understand that they're calling me. It's not a malicious mistake. It's just a language problem. Why should I be so finicky and picky about it? It's unnecessary. (Yi)

They can't pronounce my name in an exact Chinese way. They make it sound like Tsu-Chi which is different than the Chinese pronunciation, but I am not too fussy. I don't demand people to pronounce my name in a Chinese way. I allow them to anglicize the pronunciation. (Szu-Chi)

As indicated in the comments above, the four participants did not demand an exact pronunciation of their Chinese names because they were aware that the pronunciation of these Chinese names by non-Chinese speakers differed from the original Chinese pronunciation due to phonetic variations in different languages. Hence, they were less self-conscious about how their Chinese names might be pronounced or perceived and did not fear that they might be judged or rejected as a result of the pronunciation complications of their names. They did not take name mispronunciation personally or react to it irrationally, but looked at it from a more objective perspective, recognizing that name mispronunciation inevitably occurred in a multicultural context in which a diversity of languages coexisted. They also seemed to be more self-assured in making corrections of mispronunciation and more capable of applying pronunciation adjustment strategies that varied among individuals. In addition, they were less concerned about experiencing perceived discrimination and cultural biases involving an ethnic identity, and appeared to have more confidence to cope with acculturative stress utilizing rational thinking and internal strength.

As some participants felt secure with their ethnic identities, they did not feel any desire or urge to adopt western names. In particular, their perceptions that a name was more minor or superficial than an individual's internal qualities with respect to the influences in one's actual life, such as employment, or social communication, led to a belief that adopting western names was unnecessary and would not bring any practical benefits to acculturation. As an example, Ning Yuan said, "I tend to believe in the practical stuff more, not the superficial stuff." For him, as well as for other participants who declined to adopt western names, the "superficial stuff" referred to changing one's name to create a desired identity which was identical to putting on brand clothing to elevate one's social image and would change oneself essentially, as if putting on the emperor's new clothes. The "practical stuff" referred to building efficacy to deliver effective changes during acculturation, including improving English proficiency, developing cross-cultural competence and acquiring more qualifications. Since ethnic name change may not necessarily result in any essential changes, it was regarded as unnecessary and superficial by these participants.

Although some participants perceived that names would have minor influences on one's actual life, their Chinese names remained as meaningful symbols to them holding special meanings that they declined to forsake. There were three major motivations for them to preserve their Chinese names: to have an authentic cultural identity, to hold connections to the family and cultural roots for identity and belonging, and to become culturally integrated. Based on the accounts of the participants, having an authentic cultural identity means displaying one's original cultural identity without attempting to conceal it or erase it. As an ethnic name is a symbol of ethnic identity, using an ethnic name that explicitly reflects one's ethnic identity would be considered as having an authentic cultural identity. While some

participants embraced this concept in the first place, some other participants did not realize it until they had used a western name for a while.

As indicated previously, a number of participants experienced feelings of incongruence for having a western name while looking Asian even after years of acculturation. To seek an authentic identity, Szu-Chi resumed using her Chinese name:

> The intention of resuming using my Chinese name was to be more authentic…Before I was trying to do that, I had been more engaged in the white community. I was more in touch with white people and stayed with a circle of whites. In that environment, I felt that my Chinese name reflected my cultural identity…I became more mature and had gone through the period when I wanted to adapt to others to seek acceptance as a teenager, so I didn't feel like using a western name to hide my real cultural identity any more…I intended to return to my real self and resume using my Chinese name, after so many years of using a western name.

In Szu-Chi's case, she came to realize the cultural distinctions between the Chinese culture and the western culture, as she acculturated and matured in her cultural identity development. Accordingly, she reclaimed her ethnic Chinese identity.

For many Chinese immigrants including those adopting western names, maintaining their Chinese names seems to hold a connection to their family and cultural roots making them feel protected and grounded in the host society like a safe nest. When asked why he had maintained his Chinese name, Ning Yuan said:

> I don't know. Maybe there's something that I don't want to abandon. [Interviewer: What is that?] How do I put into words? I stayed in China for more than twenty years. I don't want to throw away some stuff. [Interviewer: What stuff?] Like the education, the experience, and the Chinese culture etc. It also includes the part that relates to my parents although they don't mind it so much. I don't want to abandon the Chinese culture and changing my name feels like abandoning it. [Interviewer: What if you abandoned it?] Then who am I? I don't have any roots any more. I'll be feeling lost and drifting. I'm not a native-born person here. So no matter how much I acculturate and how long I stay, my roots are not here… My twenty years in China definitely outweigh my three years here. Although those years might be a small part of my entire life, it's the most critical period of my life. After all, it's the period that laid the foundation for my life.

Ning Yuan raised a significant point in his remarks, suggesting that his Chinese roots would always remain regardless of many years of acculturation and that renouncing his Chinese name which was viewed as part of his roots would make him feel lost and rootless as if losing his identity and sense of belonging. His viewpoint was basically echoed by nearly all other participants and this could explain why they kept their Chinese names and intended to give their children Chinese names, even those who adopted western names.

As for Duo, using her original Chinese name helped to connect the present to the past, storing the memories associating with the name and making her life integrated. She said:

> Their [parents'] expectations were placed on it [the name]. I don't want to just abandon those things so easily…If you change a name, it's like abandoning the memories associating with the name, or at least hiding them. If you don't want to take them out, then you'll never touch them again. If you're always called by this name, you're reminded of these memories of yourself. I think it feels pretty good.

For the two participants who resumed using their Chinese names, using a Chinese name could help them become more culturally integrated. Szu-Chi spoke of her intention of seeking cultural integration by reusing her Chinese name:

> Like I said earlier, I was more in touch with the western culture and mostly communciating with people from the western society. Then when I began to seek my life direction, I came to realize that I had to acknowlege the attributes and elements of my culture of origin…As I gradually matured, I began to realize that I needed to integrate.

According to Szu-Chi, she went through a progressive process of acculturation, gradually adjusting herself from marginizalition to assimilation. As she became well adapted to the dominant western culture, she began to acknowledge that the cultural aspects within her differed from those in the western culture and recognize that certain attributes of her originating from her home culture were deeply ingained in her, such as the Chinese cultural values. Therefore, she decided to culturally integrate, embracing her cultural distinctions

while also making cultural adapations. To her, resuming the use of her Chinese name was part of her cultural integration, as it was not only a gresture to be more authentic with her cultural identity, but also a means of reconnecting to her Chinese roots.

4.9   Sociocultural and Personal Factors for Ethnic Name Maintenance

This section describes a variety of sociocultural and personal factors that facilitate maintaining the Chinese names for the participants, including the following four major categories: culturally diverse and validating environment, self-acceptance, inner strength, and settlement.

Culturally Diverse and Validating Environment

Culturally diverse and validating environment refers to an environment which accepts and appreciates cultural diversity. Provided a culturally diverse and validating environment, ethnic minorities are more likely to feel accepted and validated, which helps to generate a sense of security with their ethnic identities. For example, Duo had the experience of validation by her colleagues which dissipated the sense of insecurity over her ethnic identity:

> My boss is a Romanian who's been here for more than 20 years. He once said to me that he was happy to see me keep my Chinese name. He was very candid about it. He said that he couldn't understand why so many Chinese people all adopted western names and didn't keep their Chinese names. He said that he was very happy to see me keep my Chinese name. I realized then that someone was thinking of the same thing as me. I felt really encouraged. My colleagues were from all over the world and they didn't think it was a good thing to change my name either. They tried their best to pronounce my name. They discussed together how to pronounce it and then asked me which one sounded better. Since they accepted me, it made me believe that my name could be accepted. It wasn't as hard as I thought.

In Jane's case, she rarely used her Chinese name with an underlying fear that she might be ridiculed or mocked for having a "different" name. However, witnessing that cultural diversity was respected and appreciated where she was volunteering dissolved the shame of using her Chinese name and brought her a sense of pride in her cultural heritage:

When I volunteered at the BC Crisis Center, there's one day when we were learning about the differences, and there are so many ways that people can be different, and we each all said one thing about ourselves. And we get to choose like something unique about your culture and if you have an ethnic name, what does that mean? I really appreciated that they were interested and asking all of us. It was interesting like I'm not ashamed of it. It was interesting that you actually put characters together and that has the meaning. I am actually proud that we have that culture, so our names mean something.

Likewise, Ning Yuan and Szu-Chi addressed that the widespread acceptance of multiculturalism in Canada firmed their intentions of maintaining their Chinese names:

When I used my Chinese name, people were more intrigued and asked me about its meaning. They seemed to appreciate that there was a name with such a meaning. I never had any bad experience of using my Chinese name. They were all good experiences. Canada is actually very multicultural accepting different cultures. I also didn't have problems looking for work, like job interviews. When people heard my Chinese name, it actually brought more cultural exchange. Everyone is so friendly. They all acknowledge and respect my culture. (Szu-Chi)

I have the trust in Canada for its openness to cultural diversity. I really believe it. [Interviewer: What makes you trust it?] I don't know. It's just a feeling. I have never been discriminated or least not been openly discriminated because of my name. So I trust the justice here by far. (Ning Yuan)

Interestingly, when asked if having an ethnic name would affect his chance of being employed, Ning Yuan said:

I won't change my name if it only reduces 10% -20% of my chance. It won't affect me that much. But if it's 50%, then I'll have to think about it. When it reaches that point, maybe I can't hold onto it any more. I have to survive. [Interviewer: What if you just go to an open culture?] It's already an open culture here. If I have to leave here, I don't think I can find a place that has a more open culture… If a place causes me to lose 50% of my chance of employment because of my name, then apparently it is not a place where people should stay.

Although Ning Yuan was merely stating his hypothesis, his statement implied the significant impact of an environment on an ethnic person's decision to maintain or change their ethnic name. Serena is a good illustration. Prior to adopting her western name, she had

validating experiences of using her Chinese name making her proud of her Chinese identity.

She spoke of her experience at UBC:

> Using a Chinese name was more convenient at that time, because my class was very international and everybody kept his or her original ethnic name…I didn't feel the necessity of adopting a western name, because you're Hong-Lian and that's your identity. There's no problem with it, just like a Japanese person is called Fumiko. I had a strong sense of pride then…When I was introducing my name Hong-Lian, I said Hong means red and Lian means lotus, and the teachers were all looking at me with appreciation. So I was very proud and confident. I remember a Chinese girl introduced herself as Lucy. I looked at her and wondered why she wanted a fake name, so unnecessary.

During that time, she sensed the respect for her culture and ethnic identity from many

people, including the students whom she was teaching Chinese at a college, or her neighbors

who made efforts to speak in Chinese to congratulate her on the Chinese New Year. Thus,

she adhered to her Chinese name without feeling the need to adopt a western name.

However, as indicated previously, after Serena failed in her teaching practicum twice and

experienced alleged discrimination, she entirely changed her perception. She believed that

her ethnic identity and the "unpronounceable" Chinese name were the major barrier to her

lack of success, regardless of how hard she tried. Accordingly, she adopted a western name

to conceal her Chinese identity.

Self-acceptance

Among all the factors, self-acceptance may be most essential for ethnic name

maintenance. Compared to those who felt compelled to adopt western names due to a sense

of insecurity with an ethnic identity in the dominant western culture, those who felt more

secure and content with their ethnic identities apparently had more self-acceptance. One

aspect of self-acceptance is shown in accepting and taking pride in one's cultural background

and ethnic identity which are integral components of one's self-identity. Several participants

who adhered to their Chinese names seemed to love and accept their Chinese identities, as revealed in their shared pride in and allegiance to their home culture. Ning Yuan spoke of his sentiment for the Chinese culture:

> I don't feel like abandoning Chinese culture. Adopting a western name feels like abandoning Chinese culture…I still like some stuff of Chinese. Sometimes I read books in ancient Chinese language…and even write some stuff in Chinese…I think the main difference is the sense of pride in Chinese culture [compared to ethnic name changers]… Maybe it sounds a bit exaggerating, but if necessary, I can die for my home country. I just have this in me – dying for the home country.

Another aspect of self-acceptance is reflected in liking and appreciating one's own personal name which represents one's self-identity. The participants who adhered to their Chinese names seemed to appreciate their names more despite the change of context. For instance, Duo thought that her name was unique with special meanings making it stand out and easy to identify and remember; Ning Yuan was very pleased with his name and intended to use it in the rest of his life. Yi also made comments on her name with great appreciation:

> I think my name is a great one. Maybe it sounds more like a man's name in Chinese, but since I'm a woman it makes it cool. It's unique…"Yi" has another meaning besides "perseverance'. I'm a Shanghainese. The word "Yi" sounds like "Ni" in Shanghai dialect, identical to the pronunciation of the word "two". I'm the second child of the family, so they blended the two meanings together. I think it's really interesting. It's well-done. The name is given cleverly, so it fits me perfectly.

Some participants who adopted western names, however, did not seem to appreciate their Chinese names very much which might indicate a lower level of self-acceptance. Serena revealed that she was not very impressed with her Chinese name and that she would never choose it for herself if she was given a choice; Tina indicated that she felt indifferent to her Chinese name as it did not appeal to her that much. As for Margaret, she had never liked her Chinese name which she perceived as too weird and uncommon.

Inner Strength

One's internal strength is extremely decisive in ethnic name maintenance. It was discovered that participants who used their Chinese names despite various perceived obstacles appeared to have more inner strength, including a higher level of self-efficacy, self-assurance, capability of rational thinking, and resilience to external negativities without being swayed. Self-efficacy refers to the confidence and capacity in oneself to deliver effective changes in one's life (Bandura, 1993). In maintaining Chinese names in a dominant English-speaking context, a high level of self-efficacy would make individuals feel confident and capable of coping effectively with perceived obstacles, such as pronunciation difficulties or potential cultural biases. Therefore, individuals with high perceived self-efficacy likely feel more secure with their ethnic identities.

In the study, a few participants appeared to have high self-efficacy as they could effectively apply a variety of adjustment strategies to cope with pronunciation complications of their Chinese names, including adjusting expectations and attitudes toward name mispronunciation, correcting mispronunciation with patience and techniques, and modifying pronunciation of the Chinese names to create a middle ground. In addition, they appeared to have more self-assurance in coping with perceived cultural biases and discrimination relating to their Chinese names. When asked about how she might react if encountering rejection in employment due to her Chinese name, Yi answered:

> If I was in such a situation, I would think: do I have to work for you? If you judge me based on my name, then what's the prospect of working for you? It's a mutual selection, regardless of work or school. If it's a place that doesn't hire you just because they can't pronounce your name, then you shouldn't work there anyway. [Interviewer: Because of a lack of respect?] Not just that. It's not just discrimination. Apparently the potential and possibility provided there are too limited. What else can you expect from them? If a place makes decisions on hiring based on names without even looking at resumes, it shows fallacy in its value system. They'll miss talented

people. It's a two-way selection, not one-way. You can find a job elsewhere. [Interviewer: Some people may think that they have no choice because they are in the dominant culture] Then I'll go to an open culture that allows a two-way selection.

Yi seemed to have a higher level of self-efficacy, in contrast to many others who either surrendered to perceived external pressures or complied with the presumed norm without considering their own needs and preferences, believing that adopting a western name was the only choice for them. Yi had the confidence in her capability to make adaptive changes and cope with acculturative stress during acculturation, such as situations of discrimination, rather than forgoing her internal needs to passively submit to external forces.

Moreover, given that individuals having "different" and "unpronounceable" Chinese names may be subjected to undesirable attention, questioning, and even cultural biases and discrimination, self-assurance may be necessary for maintaining Chinese names. Self-assurance would help an individual to assert one's ethnic identity without self-doubt or feelings of insecurity in a cross-cultural context. As an example, Yi and Ning Yuan often signed their Chinese names using ideographic characters instead of Romanized letters. When asked what if they were forced to sign their Chinese names using letters instead of characters, they both displayed self-assurance and asserted their rights to sign in the way they chose to, as it did not violate the law or negatively affect others. In fact, Yi was once demanded by an officer to sign her name in English letters for her driver's license and she asserted herself. At one point, she even considered filing a complaint to defend her choice of signing in Chinese characters, and at last she was respected for her choice.

As Chinese names may be negatively perceived by some people for being uncommon and difficult to pronounce, having the strength to be unswayed by external negativities could be essential for maintaining Chinese names in a cross-cultural context. Duo and Jane cited

their friends as examples to indicate that individuals holding onto their ethnic names without being swayed by perceived obstacles likely had high levels of internal strength:

> I have a friend whose name is *Yong Bo*. He's never changed his name although it's hard for non-Chinese people to pronounce it. People can't pronounce *Yong* correctly and they often sound out the letter *g*. So they pronounce his name *Yong Bo* as *Young Ge Bo*, which has been a major joke among friends. Even that he has never changed it. Instead he has been trying all the time to have people pronounce it correctly. This friend is a person who's really strong inside. He adheres to his pursuit and ideas, and does not easily get swayed by what happens around him. (Duo)

> One of my ex coworkers, she is from Afghanistan. So she has her ethnic name from that and she's never changed it, although I think she was born here or came here when she was very young. You can really tell she feels very confident, because you know how people perceive Afghans or that ethnicity is going to impede them from getting into university or something. It's just stereotype. But she told me that the top doctors who are in UBC and VGH are Afghans. So you know, she kept listing out her qualifications and I was like good for you, and she said race has nothing to do with it. So I definitely think that holding onto your identity there and then proving other people that you can do it really speak a lot about self-esteem. (Jane)

As stated in the two examples above, adhering to one's ethnic name without being swayed by external negativities may indicate one's internal strength.

In addition, capability of rational thinking is also included as part of the internal strength that helps to maintain ethnic names. It is noted that the majority of the participants who adopted western names presumed that if using a Chinese name they would be judged, rejected or even discriminated against. While cultural stereotypes, biases and discrimination exist in society to some extent, it cannot be generalized that everyone with an ethnic name would inevitably be judged, alienated or discriminated against. On the contrary, some participants who used their Chinese names seemed to think more rationally. They did not take name mispronunciation personally or misperceive that an ethnic name which was difficult to pronounce was faulty or awkward. They did not believe that changing a name would necessarily change oneself essentially, such as changing one's qualifications or

internal qualities. Moreover, they acknowledged that cultural stereotypes and biases might

limit their potential for development to a certain degree but not substantially, as it was also

up to them to make adaptive changes and create opportunities for themselves. An example of

exercising rational thinking is:

> I personally have never had such experiences [being judged based on the name for employment] [Interviewer: What if you just don't know even if you had it? When you are excluded from job interviews, how could you find out about it?] Since I can't find out the exact reason, then why should I worry about it? If you put some thoughts into it, you would know that these things can't decide your employment. Your experience is already there. How can a person manufacture the experience by changing a name? (Ning Yuan)

Settlement

It was noted in the study that immigration settlement appeared to positively reinforce

the maintenance of ethnic names, which might explain why some immigrants who adopted

western names would like to resume using their Chinese names after years of acculturation.

Settlement is a long-term dynamic process through which immigrants achieve full equality

and freedom of participation in the host society. To many immigrants, settlement first and

foremost means finding employment to survive. Duo mentioned the contrast of her feelings

about her Chinese name before and after her settlement:

> I felt as if I was suddenly isolated from people without a sense of belonging. That was the time when I just came. But after I settled down, that feeling was gone.

As Duo explained, her fear of using her Chinese name disappeared after she found a job

making her realize the fallacy in her presumption that having a difficult-to-pronounce

Chinese name would negatively affect her employment opportunities. Since then, she gained

confidence and learned to think more rationally about this issue.

Similarly, Jeff spoke of his increase of confidence as he settled down in the host society which reduced his fear of being excluded from job interviews if indicating his Chinese name in the resume:

> As for now, my English has improved and I have learned about the culture here. So in many aspects I'm more confident. I know how to protect myself, unlike in the past I didn't even speak much English. When people phoned me then, I could only say yes and yes. But now I know what's happening around me. At least I can understand it and exercise my judgment.

If an immigrant finds an employment and gradually settles down in the host society, it first provides a sense of security, competence and confidence which can help dissolve an innate sense of insecurity as a new immigrant. Furthermore, settlement may help an immigrant find a sense of self-worth as well as an identity and belonging in the host society.

Duo indicated a concept of finding one's "position" which she believed was most fundamental during acculturation:

> I realize that it has nothing to do with your name, whether it's Chinese or English. It's about you as a person. How much importance of you to people decides if they can remember your name. For example, people who need to get in touch with me on a project definitely remember my name, because they have to. They can't just say "Hi" whenever they see me…It has a lot to do with your status, your position...Once you find your position, the name doesn't matter much anymore, and because of it you grow stronger. You don't care if people like your name or not, since you have found your own self-value. You can do something valuable to people. You realize that you are needed by people and that you have the capacity to provide what they need.

It was suggested by Duo that finding one's position meant establishing one's social identity and self- worth through the settlement process which she described as "a process of gaining internal strength". Once an immigrant locates a "position" that reflects his or her desired self-value in the host society, the individual may establish a solid self-identity and find a sense of security, fulfillment and belonging which would build more internal strength and dispel the innate sense of insecurity over ethnic identity.

4.10 Pronunciation Adjustment Strategies for Ethnic Name Maintenance

Reported by most of the participants who adopted western names, pronunciation complications were considered as the major barrier to maintaining Chinese names. Comparing to those who adopted western names to avoid using their "unpronounceable" Chinese names, the participants who adhered to their Chinese names appeared to cope better with pronunciation complications by employing various pronunciation adjustment strategies, including adjusting expectations and attitudes toward name mispronunciation, correcting mispronunciation with patience and techniques, and modifying pronunciation of the Chinese names to create a middle ground. These strategies may vary among individuals, and may be either used separately or mixed together in different situations.

Adjusting expectations and attitudes toward name mispronunciation implies lowering the expectations of how Chinese names will be pronounced without taking name mispronunciation personally. Participants who coped better with pronunciation obstacles of Chinese names accepted the fact that mispronouncing Chinese names would inevitably occur in a cross-cultural context due to distinctive differences in Chinese languange as compared to many other languanges in terms of the pitched tones, ideograms, and phonological system. Hence, these participants did not take mispronunciation personally or react to it irrationally, such as perceiving the name as faulty or odd or feeling self-conscious or frustrated. As they believed that a name would not reflect an individual's inherent values despite being a meaningful symbol of one's personal identity, they considered it unncessary to attach personal meanings to name mispronunciation or feel insecure with ethnic identity. In addition, they did not demand pronunciation to be precise, since they realized that it might be unrealistic for non-Chinese speakers to achieve which could eventually turn out to be

frustrating. On the contrary, accepting the language distinctions of individuals from diverse cultures was viewed as essential in a multicultural context.

Given that teaching non-Chinese speakers to accurately pronounce and remember a Chinese name may take time and persistent effort to accomplish, patience and persistence are certainly required. Otherwise, correcting mispronunciation may be considered as frustrating since it can be difficult and time-consuming. Meanwhile, techniques are also required. As Chinese names are pronounced and spelled in a very different phonological system which may be not understood by people who speak other languages, using the phonetic rules in English, for example, may be helpful to explain how certain Chinese names are pronounced in an English-speaking context. Serena had some successful experience of teaching people how to pronounce her Chinese name by using a variety of techniques:

> Teaching them how to spell the name is needed. I remember when I used to teach people how to pronounce my Chinese name [Hong-Lian] I would say Hong is like Hong Kong, and Lian is like the French word "bien" but sounds like "lien". I really tried different techniques to teach them…

Indicated in Serena's statement, spelling the Chinese name could help people to pronounce it better. Similarly, Ning Yuan always took out his driver's license or other personal identity cards whenever he introduced himself; Jia-Qi created a name card to use when making a self-introduction. They both tried to create visual cues to display the spelling of their Chinese names so that people can pronounce and remember them more easily.

Despite effort in making corrections, some Chinese names may be nearly impossible for non-Chinese speakers to precisely pronounce due to language distinctions. After all, the pitched tones and certain vowels in Chinese may be too intricate for them to command. Therefore, certain compromises may be needed on the part of ethnic Chinese, meaning that the pronunciation of a Chinese name can be slightly modified within the level of tolerance, so

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that non-Chinese speakers can grasp it more easily. In some cases, it means to somewhat anglicize the pronunciation using the phonetic rules in English. Duo explained her decision of creating a middle ground after realizing that expecting the exact Chinese pronunciation of her Chinese name was basically unrealistic:

> At the beginning, I was trying to introduce myself in the Chinese way of pronouncing it. Gradually I realized that it was too difficult for them. Nobody could really do it. So I found a pronunciation which was close enough to the Chinese one and which I was comfortable with, then I tried to introduce it to people…[Interviewer: A pronunciation which you are comfortable with and which others can accept] Yeah, they can't grasp the exact Chinese pronunciation. I can't accept their pronunciation which sounds like *Dou*, so strange and different. I don't like it. So it is better to find a middle ground – something that others and I can both accept. I can accept the slightly twisted pronunciation which should not be too difficult for them. So I decide to take the middle ground and not to make a big fuss.

As for Ning Yuan, he allowed people to pronounce his name in the way they could and took whatever pronunciation was convenient for them. He did not mind being called by any parts of his name either, or even breaking down his first name as Ning or as Yuan, only if it was necessary and convenient for people. For him, being remembered as a person was much more essential than being remembered by the name.

4.11   The Experiences of Ethnic Name Change

Despite variations in individual experiences of ethnic name change, there were general commonalities that could be summarized from the experiences of the participants adopting western names. Overall, most of the them reported that they did not feel that adopting a Western name made a big difference to their life. Nevertheless, there was a mixture of both positive and negative experiences in each individual. On a positive note, first of all, these participants felt that they benefited from perceived convenience in employment and social interactions, as their western names were easy for people to identify and be acquainted with.

Moreover, assuming an English-speaking identity generated a sense of acculturation for them and made them feel included as part of the host society, in particular in the early stage of acculturation. Therefore, the participants who initially felt insecure about their ethnic names and identities felt more self-assured after using western names. For example, Serena addressed her experience as below:

> The name Serena sounds really good. I like the consonants in this name. It's just so typical English-sounding which makes it easy for me to feel acculturated…This name has no pronunciation problems. Basically everyone can pronounce it correctly. The name itself also sounds good. So after I used it bit by bit, I became to like it more and more. It also felt natural to be called by friends, and I felt kind of proud of it too. It feels like I've acculturated to the host society.

On the other hand, there were also negative experiences involving using western names, since assuming a new identity especially an identity which was entirely distinct than the previous one might take a process of adaptation. One of the most noticeable problems was that those who adopted western names felt incongruent or inauthentic for using the names which did not seem to match or represent their ethnic identities. Certainly, as all of them were first-generation immigrants with Chinese upbringing deeply embedded in them, they seemed to have a deep-rooted sense of identification with the Chinese culture. Therefore, discontinuing the original ethnic names to use the names which were not representative of their ethnic identities created identity confusion making them feel unadjusted, despite perceived convenience and benefits. Before Serena decided to use her western name, she experienced a long period of hesitation, uncertainty and confusion because she perceived her western name as a "fake" name and that using it was basically misleading people. She explained it as follows:

> I had been in a state of uncertainly for a long while. Maybe I wanted to keep my original name, because I felt it was a legal name after all. It felt like my real identity.

If I only used the name Serena, it felt like I was deceiving people, as if it was a fake name or I was an imposter.

Comparatively, those who had used western names for more than a decade or even two decades, such as Jane, Tina, Szu-Chi and Margaret, might have experienced a stronger sense of identity confusion, as they seemed to be more aware of the unbridgeable cultural distinctions owing to the Chinese upbringing deeply embedded in them despite years of acculturation. Interestingly, Szu-Chi and Margaret who adopted western names during adolescence resumed using their Chinese names, whereas Jane and Tina who were given western names by their parents prior to school age kept using their western names since they were accustomed to using them. Their sense of cultural identity incongruence and confusion was also due to a lack of deep cultural connection to the western names which gave rise to a sense of rootlessness and lack of belonging, especially for those who adopted western names without going through the legal procedure for various reasons.

As a result, some participants, such as Jeff, may have been tempted to use different western names to experiment, as none of the names seemed to truly resonate with them. It is noted that the participants who chose not to legally adopt their western names appeared to experience a stronger sense of rootlessness after a long while of using their western names. It might be that they did not legally adopt western names in the first place due to a lack of a deep cultural connection to western names and the reluctance to give up their Chinese names which they considered as part of their roots. However, as they did not legally adopt their western names, it reinforced the perception that western names were not their roots which might have intensified the sense of rootless and a lack of sense of belonging.

4.12   The Experiences of Ethnic Name Maintenance

There was a diversity of individual experiences of maintaining Chinese names among the participants which consisted of various reactions and strategies. The experience of maintaining an ethnic name can be elaborated as three progressive phases: pre-adjustment phase, adjustment phase, and post-adjustment phase, and each of the three phases includes four different steps. However, it should be noted that the three phases are not strictly linear and that the participants might not experience all of the phases or all of the steps in each phase. Instead, there were individual variations as to what phases and steps the participants went through in maintaining their Chinese names, depending on the differences in their life experiences, reactions and corresponding coping strategies.

The pre-adjustment phase describes a phase in which Chinese immigrants experience discomfort in maintaining their Chinese names. Due to the change of cultural context, Chinese names cannot be pronounced or written in an English-speaking context as precisely as they are in China. Therefore, many of the immigrants may feel unaccustomed to the anglicized pronunciation of their Chinese names following the phonetic rules in English which they tend to describe as "mispronunciation". As they cannot recognize the anglicized pronunciation and cannot associate the mispronounced names with themselves, they often feel misidentified or mistaken which brings them a sense of awkwardness and embarrassment. Accordingly, a sense of self-doubt and insecurity over ethnic identity may be generated with a fear of potential judgment and rejection for having "awkward" and "unpronounceable" Chinese names. Therefore, they may have doubts about adhering to Chinese names and contemplate adopting western names.

The adjustment phase refers to a phase in which Chinese immigrants make active and tentative efforts in order to adapt to the discomforting experiences of using Chinese names in a cross-cultural context. Initially, they may insist on making corrections on mispronunciation as much as they can, hoping that people from the host society can soon be acquainted with them and their names. From the experience of correcting mispronunciation, they can acquire a variety of techniques that help people to correctly pronounce their names. Once they realize that mispronouncing one's name is inevitable in a multicultural context and that demanding an exact pronunciation may be unrealistic, they will learn to adjust their expectations and attitudes to tolerate and adapt to name mispronunciation without taking it personally. To create a middle ground which is acceptable for oneself and achievable for others, they may need to modify the pronunciation and make certain compromises, such as anglicizing the pronunciation, allowing people to pronounce their names as much as they can, and taking any parts of the names which are more pronounceable.

The post-adjustment phase denotes a phase during which Chinese immigrants become adjusted to using their Chinese names in a cross-cultural context after going through some perceived obstacles. First of all, they become accustomed to the anglicized pronunciation of their Chinese names which they no longer describe as "mispronunciation". They are intrigued by the idea of introducing the Chinese language and culture to people from other cultures and enjoy teaching them various things about their Chinese names such as pronunciation, meanings, phonetic rules, and ideographic characters. Through experiences of sharing and exchanging cultures with people from diverse cultural backgrounds, they have come to appreciate cultural diversity and the variety of ethnic names which helps to cultivate their self-acceptance. Since they have cultivated more self-acceptance, they become more

capable of building a deeper and more genuine connection with people without feeling compelled to conceal their ethnic identities.

Figure 4.2 outlines the three phases of the experiences of maintaining Chinese names in a cross-cultural context.

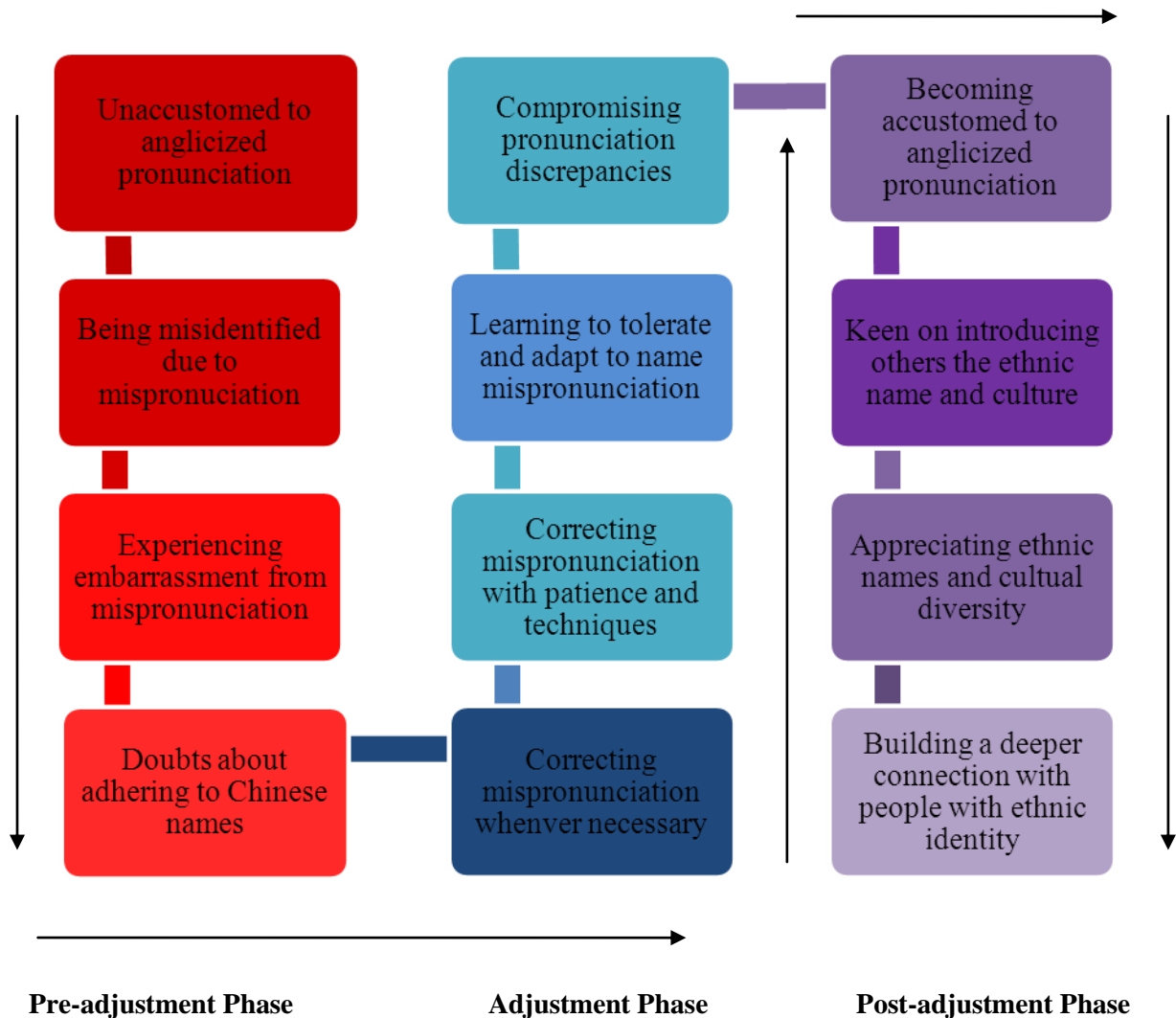| Pre-adjustment Phase | Adjustment Phase | Post-adjustment Phase |

Figure 4.2   The Experiences of Maintaining Chinese Names

Note: The three phases are not strictly linear and there are individual variations in the experiences of maintaining ethnic names. Specifically, individuals may not experience all of the three phases or all of the steps in each phase.

4.13 Dual Naming and Bicultural Identity

As previously indicated, all of the participants who adopted western names had maintained their Chinese names to a varying degree. While some of them might only use their Chinese names when filling out official documents, some others were still using their Chinese names actively with their families and in the Chinese community. For those who intended to maintain both their Chinese names and western names evenly so that they could have an identity with which they could adapt to the host society while holding another identity which connected them to their Chinese cultural heritage and roots, they might need to go through a process of adjustment to dual naming. First of all, some of them could be unaccustomed to using both names concurrently despite the desire to maintain both, especially those who newly adopted their western names. One major concern was that the entire name might sound too long which would be perceived as odd during self-introduction and make it more difficult for people to remember. Jane and Jia-Qi revealed the discomfort of using their both names concurrently:

> If I use both names at the same time, it might be inconvenient. What would you say to people when you introduce yourself? It makes the self-introduction sound too long, and people might end up remembering none of them…If it's me, I'll use my English name as the middle name, but I don't think I'll add it officially in my passport because it is just too long. (Jia-Qi)

> Now I just say Hoi Ting as my middle name, because I guess if I'm using both at the same time, it would be too long just because of that. It would be embarrassing but I think of convenience as well…I'm afraid that I'll be laughed at. (Jane)

Since using both names concurrently appeared to be awkward in most situations except when filling out official documents, they had to use one of them primarily or use each of them correspondingly in different situations, which gave rise to two questions for them: (a) which identity should be primarily used? (b) how to differentiate when and where to use

either identity? To some people, these questions would have clear-cut answers, for example, using the western name primarily in a cross-cultural context while using the Chinese name primarily in a Chinese-speaking context. However, to some others, these questions might be confusing as they felt conflicted about the priority of two names. On one hand, they were concerned that their Chinese names might be too inconvenient to use in a cross-cultural context. On the other hand, they were concerned that primarily using a western name will eventually fade away their Chinese identities. Therefore, they were unsure of how to maintain both names in a way consistent with the priority sequence and felt conflicted or torn with respect to balancing the two identities.

Prior to settling on using the western name, Serena experienced a long period of hesitation, uncertainty and confusion, as she was unsure of which name should be primarily used and which name might be more likely to be accepted by others:

> I was very indecisive and unsure which name I better use. When I was writing my resume, I wasn't sure which name should be put in the bracket, the name Serena or Hong-Lian? I always gave people two names at the same time, saying "You can call me Hong-Lian, or Serena." Then people would ask me, "What do you prefer?" I always didn't know what to say. Because of that, it was confusing for people too. I was just confused about the two identities… I really didn't know which name should be the primary one. When I wrote my resume, I had the name Hong-Lian outside the bracket and the name Serena inside it, meaning that I was Hong-Lian but I could be called as Serena. [Interviewer: Were you unsure at that time because you were attached to the name Hong-Lian?] I think so. I was very used to using it. I gave people two choices because I was being considerate.

Serena's statement divulged her fear of rejection which urged her to use both names whereas using both also led her to the confusion about the two identities.

In the case of Jia-Qi, her dilemma arose from the paradox between the perceived significance of her Chinese name to her and the primary use of her western name in daily life which was contrary to her preferred priority sequence of the two names. Initially, she used

her nickname Jamie only for the sake of convenience, because her Chinese name was often mispronounced as "Jia-Ki" instead of "Jia-Chi" by non-Chinese people following the English phonetic rules. As she was gradually known by her nickname Jamie, she felt increasingly unbalanced sensing that her Chinese identity was fading away. To her, the Chinese name given by her parents was something precious that merited being introduced to people as an integral part of her. However, since her social network had been established primarily based on her nickname Jamie, she felt conflicted about what next step she needed to take to resolve her dilemma. On one hand, if she decided to primarily use her Chinese name, she felt torn about how to keep her nickname Jamie at the same time, without either omitting it or overbearing her Chinese name, as it was also an integral part of her. On the other hand, if both her names were used, she was unsure of how to balance the two identities or how to introduce herself by both names.

In contrast to Jia-Qi, Tina, who had been accustomed to using both her names and being called Man-Ting Tina since early childhood, apparently had no concerns or conflicts if her two identities were not balanced, nor did she consider using a long name as awkward. She explained that many Taiwanese immigrants that she knew of had a long name consisting of both a Chinese name and a western name which made it acceptable to her to be called by her both names at the same time. She discussed how adapted she was to using both her names instead of using either of them:

> So I've had both since I was like three or four years old. So I'm using both for dual. And then, also like once you come to Canada, it's a lot easier for you to like have both names because I'm used to both of them. So it doesn't really matter which one I use, and then sometimes I just use all three of them, so it becomes like Man Ting Tina instead of just Tina or Man Ting, which is really interesting…I have been really used to it by now, just cause like I've been using it for so long, when people call me Man-Ting Tina, I just assume that's me. I don't think about it anymore, cause I'm used to

both, cause that's the formal kind of greeting I guess, cause I'm used to both, right? I don't really have a preference which one I want to use more.

As indicated in Tina's statement, both of her names were equally regarded and integrated as two inseparable parts of her self-identity after a long process of adaptation, which had helped to shape her bicultural identity.

Interestingly, the participants who were dual named tended to believe that dual naming had helped them with cultural integration which would be harder to achieve if only having either of the two names. For instance, Tina commented:

> I think for me it is integration, right? Because I'm using both of them, and then I'm so used to having both, and I don't feel like I have the pressure of having one way or the other. So it's more like an integrated version for me, I guess. Have both cultures, like more of integration, not more of assimilation. I think my parents felt it too when they first applied for the document. They didn't want me to have just the Chinese name or the English name.

Meanwhile, they also felt advantaged for easily accessing both cultures and developing a bicultural identity as a result of dual naming. Tina and Jane respectively addressed the benefits of dual naming in their acculturation:

> I think by having both it can apply to both societies, not just one. So in terms of cultural identity, I can know more about both cultures. I can know the Canadian culture way of doing stuff, like food, movies or whatever. I can also know other Chinese things that I'm interested in, their food, fashion and whatever. (Tina)

> Having both names, say if I go to China, then I can use my Chinese name, and if I go to other English speaking countries, I know maybe English is limited in Brazil, I can still use my English name. So I do feel that I have an advantage that way. (Jane)

As suggested in the statements above, dual naming would make individuals feel that they have the advantage to be acquainted with both cultures and thus have a better capacity to integrate culturally, rather than merely assimilating to the host culture without maintaining cultural distinctions, or isolating themselves from the host society by adhering to

the home culture without making adaptive cultural changes. However, the perceived

advantages of dual naming may be paradoxically blended with identity confusions, making

the individuals feel that they belong to neither of the two cultures although sometimes

conversely feel that they have the best of both cultures. The following excerpts from Jane

and Tina reveal their mixed feelings about dual naming:

> Because when I go back to Hong Kong, I still use my Chinese name. So in that way,
> I feel like I can call this place my home, and having an English name I can also call
> Vancouver my home. But also with calling two places my home, I do feel that I kind
> of don't know where I belong because maybe both places don't like me or both place
> like me…Because I have both names, I can go to both places, but also because of it
> I've been so confused, where should I live? Before I felt like I had the best of both
> worlds, because I can change my identity, like if I lived in Asia, I can say my Chinese
> name. (Jane)

> But at the same time I feel it's not. I feel I don't belong to both of them sometimes.
> You're kind of like stuck in the middle, because you're not totally white and you're
> not totally Asian. It's kind of like a problem then, because you're kind of like this
> identity or this other social group that's kind of like in the middle. (Tina)

Certainly, either perceived advantages or confusions associated with a bicultural identity do

not solely arise from dual naming but are largely owing to an individual's process of

acculturation and cultural identity development. Nevertheless, dual naming may reinforce

one's perception of a bicultural identity.

4.14 Impact of Ethnic Name Change on Acculturation

Despite numerous efforts in changing ethnic names in attempts to provide perceived

convenience to facilitate acculturation, ethnic name change may not necessarily change one's

core self or exert fundamental impact on acculturation. As revealed by the participants,

adopting western names cannot guarantee success in acculturation, which suggests that ethnic

name change does not necessarily determine the course of acculturation although in some

cases it may influence one's life by changing the individual's self-perception or others'

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impressions of the individual. The conclusion that ethnic name change may not warrant desired outcomes in acculturation roughly consists of three aspects: name change may not necessarily exert decisive influences on settlement; name change cannot change one's ethnic origin or precisely reflect change in ethnic identity; and name change does not ensure positive and rewarding cross-cultural communication.

In this study, the participants unanimously agreed that ethnic name change may not necessarily exert decisive influences on settlement, as one's efficacy and competence were considered as more essential for settlement, including work experience, level of education, skills and knowledge, English proficiency, and also inner strength that facilitates one's capacity to cope with acculturative stress and adversity. Following are excerpts from five participants commenting that names are relatively less significant to settlement as compared to individual qualifications and experiences:

1. The name was too minor compared to other stuff I needed to consider. Its influences on me were so insignificant which didn't merit much of my attention. In terms of looking for employment, your work experience and education are required much more. Compared to those, the name is much more minor. (Duo)

2. When a school enrolls students or when a place hires people, qualifications definitely outweigh names, because names are just symbols. They have to check if the candidates meet the required qualifications, right? (Yi)

3. Anyone who puts some thoughts into it would think that they can't depend on these things [names]. After all, your experiences are already there. You can't change them. How can I manufacture my experiences by changing a name? It [name] has some influences, but not essential. It is like you wear something nice. It may make a little difference but not a huge difference. (Ning Yuan)

4. It depends on how you define "help". Actually, you may say it helps because it's convenient and easy to use and remember. But if you ask whether it provides any practical help, it doesn't. It doesn't help you fundamentally. It's just like clothes, really like clothes. (Jeff)

5. The name is just the initial impression I think. I'm going to call you by your name and I'm not going to call you by your qualifications. So it's just something

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> to identify someone with, but you know they have all these qualities about them: they're caring; they're kind; they have long hair. That has nothing to do with your name. (Jane)

As mentioned above, the participants believed that names would not necessarily have profound influences on settlement. However, it was also implied in these statements that names might have certain influences even though the influences might not be necessarily essential or enormous. In this regard, a name is comparable to clothing which likewise makes some differences to one's appearance or image whereas it may not precisely reflect the inherent values or internal qualities of an individual.

The influences that names likely have on an individual arise from providing others a first impression. As a symbol of ethnic identity, an ethnic name may highlight one's ethnic identity in a dominant western culture. Due to existing cultural stereotypes, assumptions and biases, individuals with ethnic names may be subjected to certain social disadvantages in some cases. However, the initial impressions of an individual arising from his or her ethnic name, such as ethnic identity and cultural background, cannot be used as a criterion to judge one's internal qualities or personal qualifications. Jane had a clear description of how an ethnic name may negatively affect one's employment opportunities through initial assumptions which would nevertheless dissipate over time after people gradually get to know about the person:

> The first impression is what makes that change so important, and by that, I mean like if I'm talking to you and I'm referring to my friend Jian Yu, like that's a Chinese pronunciation name, you would think that oh, is this person fluent in English? And if you're sending out a resume if you're writing English very well but if you're referred to as a Chinese name, they haven't met you yet right? They don't know what you look like. You may be like Asian and Caucasian mix. But they don't know that. They just have your name. They might assume that oh, they're not fluent in English or they have a strong Chinese accent. So that might affect the work there. So I think the name is very important in first impressions but if someone gets to know you then it's not important in determining who you are.

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Since first impressions are important but do not necessarily determine one's life, some ethnic people may be prompted to adopt western names to avoid potential disadvantages due to negative initial impressions arising from their ethnic names, such as perceiving the name as "unpronounceable" and "awkward", making an assumption that the ethnic person lacks English fluency, and holding some cultural stereotypes. Even so, ethnic name change cannot alter one's ethnic origin, as one's ethnic identity and cultural background will always remain the same regardless of which name is used. Thus, some participants deemed adopting western names as an attempt in vain to change one's ethnic identity. Accordingly, Duo made the following comments:

> Whether or not you change your first name, you can't hide the fact that you're not a native Canadian. People can also tell from your last name that you're an ethnic Chinese, unless you change your last name too. But even if you change your entire name, people can also tell from your resume about your background and where you previously worked. You just can't hide it.

Similarly, Jane stated that her name was irrelevant to her acculturation or cultural identity development:

> I don't think name has much to do with biculturation or acculturation. It's the person's experiences. Name is an identity, who I respond to or giving someone a first impression…I don't think my name will make any part in balancing out those my confusion. It's more of my experiences. So at that level, I think it's more of what do I feel about living here, what am I doing here, what am I doing in Hong Kong, what language am I speaking, who am I interacting with, yeah, my experiences, rather than using names to balance out those.

As indicated by Jane, it is the acculturation experience rather than a name that would affect a person's level of acculturation or cultural identity development. In a cross-cultural context, changes in one's cultural identity can be revealed in the changes in cultural values, beliefs, attitudes, and behaviors which result from one's acculturation experiences through continuous cross-cultural interactions. Therefore, an individual's ethnic identity cannot be

simply categorized based on the name that the individual holds, although maintaining an ethnic name may presumably highlight one's ethnic identity while changing an ethnic name may indicate an attempt to make adaptations in one's ethnic identity.

For instance, some ethnic Chinese immigrants may adopt western names while living in an exclusively Chinese community without making any cultural adaptations; on the contrary, some ethnic Chinese immigrants may maintain their ethnic Chinese names while being well adapted and acculturated into the host society. This again verifies that regardless of changing or maintaining an ethnic name, a name may not necessarily exert significant influences on one's acculturation, or precisely reflect the individual's cultural identity. Instead, the level of acculturation may largely depend on the immigrant's acculturative experience which would shape the dynamic interplay between adapting to the host society and preserving the cultural roots and drive the process of the person's cultural identity development.

In addition, ethnic name change may not necessarily have decisive influences on acculturation because name change cannot ensure positive and rewarding cross-cultural communication, which seems to be contrary to the initial intentions of some participants who adopted western names: creating convenience to facilitate social interactions in a cross-cultural context. The perceived convenience basically means free of embarrassment caused by name mispronunciation and free of the painstaking effort to constantly correct mispronunciation which is considered as hurdles to communication. However, whether a name is convenient to use or not, it cannot be the core of communication, since communication is between people not between names, even though names may be essential for interpersonal interactions as a symbol of a personal identity. As communication is the

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exchange of information between people through means of interactions, a name may be relatively more minor as compared to one's efficacy and competence in cross-cultural communication, including English fluency, cross-cultural competency, and the capacity to build and share common ground, knowledge, interests, and personal qualities.

Ning Yuan indicated that he was more inclined to remember a person's face than name and that a name actually would not be used very often during communication. Indeed, social communication is more of the interactions with people rather than with their names, although names are necessary for identifying people. During communication, people can form their interpersonal connections by exchanging information, intelligence, knowledge and emotion with each other, while names as abstract symbols of personal identities tend to be placed in the back of the mind except when their names need to be indicated. The following are the comments made by Ning Yuan on the role of names in communication:

> If they can't pronounce my name, you can't force it. It's enough if they can at least remember me as a person, since a person is more important than a name. Interpersonal relationships are between people, not between people and names. Without common ground, it is pointless to change a name. The sense of acculturation comes from the common ground, not from names… I usually remember a face first before I remember the name. Actually when we communicate, we are more in touch with the person, so the name is not used that often if you really think about it.

Figure 4.3 outlines the effects of ethnic name change on acculturation, in respect of settlement, ethnic identity, and cross-cultural communication.
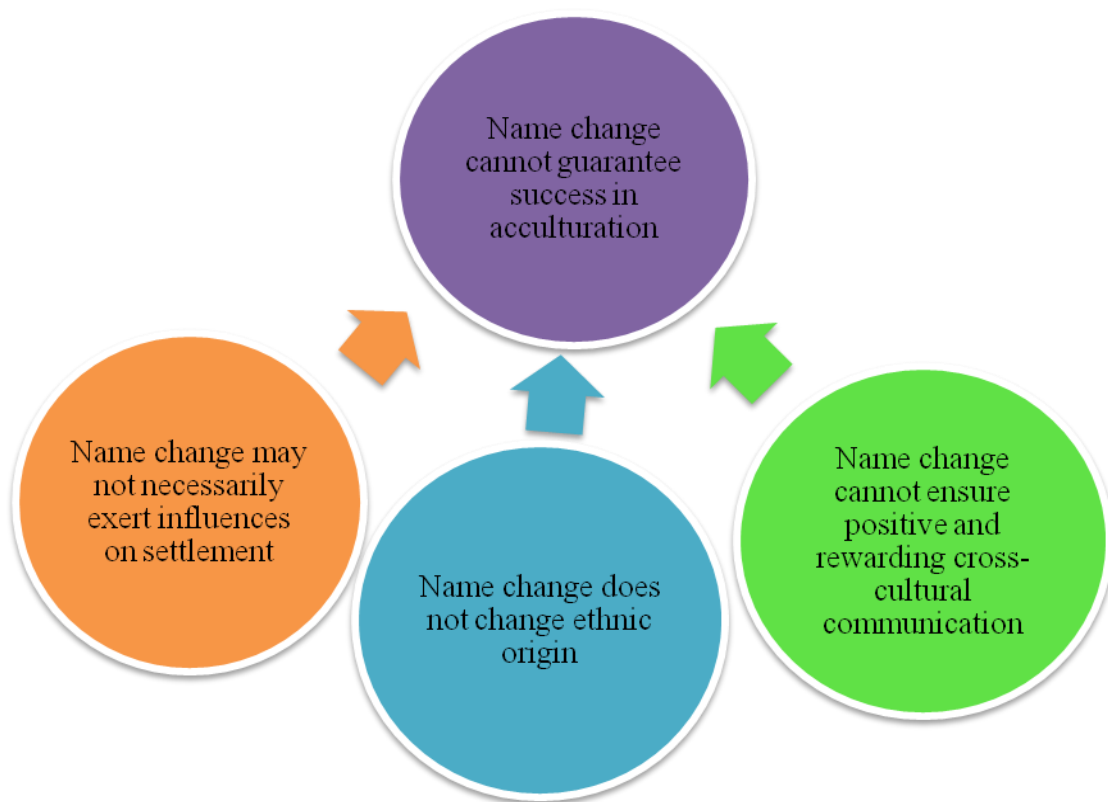

Figure 4.3   The Impacts of Ethnic Name Change on Acculturation

4.15 Dynamics between Name and Self-identity

As a symbol of one's self-identity, a personal name may not necessarily have significant influences on one's life course. On the whole, how one identifies or perceives oneself, namely, an individual's self-identity or self-perception, is much more essential and profound in one's life. In contrast, a name is less influential in that it does not either determine one's destiny or reflect one's internal qualities. In any case, a name in and of itself does not necessarily reflect the inherent value of an individual. However, as aforementioned, a name may have certain influences on one's life by affecting the perceptions of a person by themselves and by others. On one hand, how one perceives oneself may affect the individual's perception of his or her name; on the other hand, how one perceives his or her name may affect the individual's self-identity or self-perception. Moreover, how others perceive a person and a person's name, especially those in a significant relationship with the person, may affect the person's self-perception and perception of his or her own name. Therefore, how a name is perceived by oneself and others may impact one's life by affecting the dynamics of one's self-identity.

Changing or maintaining an ethnic name, which commonly results from one's perception of his or her ethnic identity with the intent to identify with either the host society or the ethnic group of origin for a sense of self-validation and belonging, may reinforce the individual's self-perceived ethnic identity. For example, adopting an English name may make a new immigrant who desires to merge into the host society feel more acculturated than using the original Chinese name; vice versa, maintaining a Chinese name may help cultivate a stronger sense of connection to the Chinese cultural roots for those who intend to preserve their Chinese heritages. On the other hand, however, if a new immigrant feels insecure about

his or her ethnic identity in a cross-cultural context, using an ethnic name would intensify the individual's innate sense of insecurity and fear of rejection, owing to a presumption that the ethnic name would be perceived as "odd" or "unpronounceable". As immigrants gradually recognize that there exist some unbridgeable cultural distinctions between their culture of origin and the host society despite efforts to acculturate, they may perceive the adopted western names as incongruent with their ethnic identities with a sense of rootlessness and may thus want to resume using their ethnic names.

To better illustrate, the dynamics between a name and one's self-identity can be generally divided into six sequential and circular steps: (a) a name creates a first impression; (b) a name affects how one is perceived by others; (c) how one is perceived by people affects one's self-identity or self-perception; (d) one's self-perception affects the perception of one's own name; (e) perceptual changes in one's self-identity induces name change; and (f) name change brings changes in one's social identity (Figure 4.4). At first, when a name is used, people who perceive the name automatically generate a very first impression about it, based on some preconceived notions or schemas. Accordingly, a vague image of the individual holding the name is projected, arising from the initial impressions of the name, such as gender, ethnicity, and certain features. In most cases, a name can affect how a person is perceived. As an example, an uncommon name may arouse curiosity and appreciation in some people while it may also evoke undesirable attention and judgment in others; a name that sounds pleasant and rhythmical may add some appeal to the name holder while a name that sounds awkward may induce negative impressions of the person by others.

Regardless of what external perceptions of a person may arise from a name, once a perception is generated, it may affect the name holder's self-perception through the responses

from others during interpersonal interactions. For example, the experience of being ridiculed or mocked in childhood due to having an "awkward" name may give rise to a poor self-image making the person feel negatively toward oneself; on the contrary, being previously praised or positively commented on due to the name may reinforce pride and confidence in oneself. Meanwhile, as a name is a symbol of one's self-identity, a person's perception of his or her own name may be shaped accordingly: positive self-perception reinforces a positive perception of one's own name and vice versa. If people persistently view his or her own name negatively, especially if the negative perception is also confirmed by the perceptions of others, the person may consider the idea of changing the name in order to create a new identity and personal image. Once a new name is created, it brings out a new impression of the person which may initiate changes in one's self-perception and begin the new dynamics between the person's name and the person's self-identity.

It is important to note that the six sequential and circular steps of the dynamics between a name and self-identity are not absolute. After all, a name is merely a symbol which may not reflect the inherent values or internal qualities of an individual. The impact of a name on one's self-identity takes effect by the meanings attached to the name arising from the perceptions of themselves and others. As meanings can be created by oneself, a person with a strong self-identity may be conditioned with inner strength to be immune to the negative perceptions of the name by others without taking them personally while maintaining a positive regard towards one's self-identity through constructive self-talk. Therefore, in experiencing cultural stereotypes, biases and prejudices, it is ultimately up to the ethnic people themselves to review and adjust their perceptions of and attitudes toward their names, rather than ascribe the fault to their ethnic names and identities.

Figure 4.4 outlines the six sequential and circular steps of the dynamics between name and self-identity.
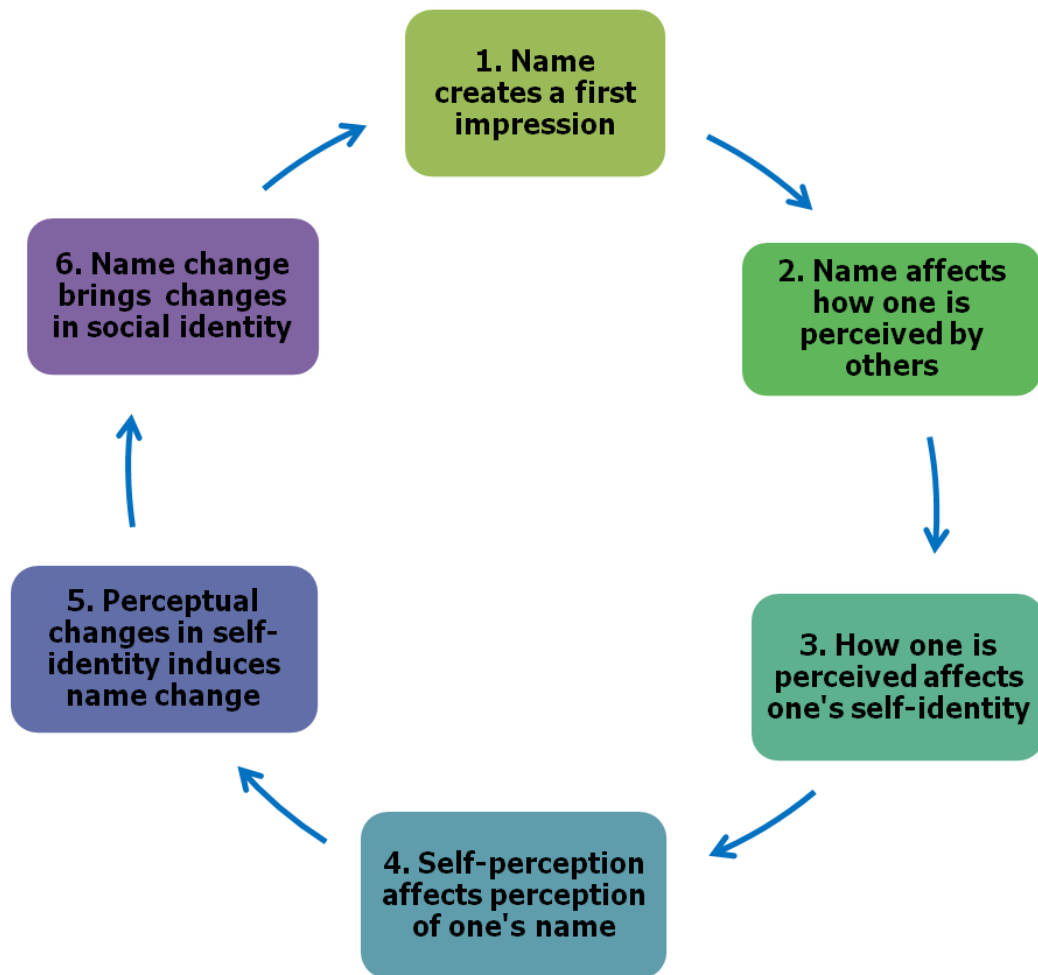

Figure 4.4   Dynamics between Name and Self-identity

Chapter 5: A Basic Social Process and Grounded Theory

This chapter delineates the basic social process and grounded theory of acculturation and cultural identity development which are drawn from the participants' understanding and experiences of maintaining and changing ethnic names during acculturation. Due to the nature of grounded theory methodology, this chapter addresses the theoretical implications of the study.

5.1 Defining and Negotiating Cultural Identity in a Cross-cultural Context

As previously discussed, the core category discovered in this study is *defining and negotiating identity and belonging in a cross-cultural context*. Regardless of maintaining or changing ethnic names, immigrants attempt to define and negotiate a cultural identity with which they can have a sense of security, belonging and fulfillment in the host society. When an immigrant enters a new culture or society, the change in sociocultural context naturally results in change of the individual's self-perception. As the social position that the individual used to hold in the previous culture or society undergoes changes in cross-cultural transitions, the identity by which the individual used to be defined by themselves and others may be challenged and subjected to redefinition, negotiation and reestablishment. As a symbol of one's self-identity, a name which creates a very first impression or an image of an individual's self-identity may be first brought to one's mind when negotiating an identity, especially in a cross-cultural context in which an ethnic name highlights one's ethnic identity.

Enmeshed Style

It is proposed in this study that there are three styles of defining and negotiating identity and belonging in a cross-cultural context relating to ethnic name change and

maintenance: *enmeshed style*, *restricted style*, and *open style*. The *enmeshed style* refers to the style of defining one's cultural identity by entirely following the cultural norms of the dominant host society while effacing the cultural distinctions stemming from one's culture of origin. Therefore, this self-effacing style has an enmeshed cultural boundary between the culture of origin and the host culture. Generally speaking, the collectivist Chinese culture in which individuals tend to be indoctrinated to yield to authority or the mainstream and withhold their individuality and personal preferences seems to be more likely to foster sense of self among individuals characterized as enmeshed, ensembled, interdependent and contextualized. In cross-cultural transitions, those who are predisposed to an enmeshed sense of self would become instantly aware of the cultural and ethnic differences in them in contrast to those of the dominant culture. As they are accustomed to an enmeshed sense of self reflected or defined by others, they tend to feel insecure and uneasy about their distinct cultural identities which they consider as an indicator that would exclude and alienate them from the dominant host culture.

Striving to be included as an inseparable part of the host society, the enmeshed sense of self urges many Chinese immigrants to relinquish or sideline their Chinese names, since being "different" simply means being "odd" and "unacceptable" which evokes undesirable attention, judgment, and rejection, not to mention that being "unpronounceable" means adding more hurdles to communication and employment. Thus, creating a new English-speaking identity and diminishing the original cultural identity seem to be the inevitable choice to adapt to the host society. Serena spoke of the experience of forsaking her "self" to fit in the dominant culture, as her sense of self depended on being identified with the dominant culture which meant utterly conforming to the norms of the host society:

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I just felt that in that environment you cannot afford to keep your identity. It's just the way it is under that circumstance. You have to copy the identity of others and conform to their rules. You won't know how much I was mimicking them… [Interviewer: Wouldn't that mean you have to lose yourself?] Why do you need the "self" for? In this environment you have to be like them to fit in. I just didn't feel that I needed a sense of self at all. I felt that maybe I could have my identity elsewhere, but in that environment, the sole goal was to be accepted by them. This gesture was critical. It was a process of assimilating. I taught for seven years in China but I had to forget about all of it. All the things I had before had to be thrown away, like what I taught in China. They became useless and were all denied, totally irrelevant to the skills that you had to learn here. You had to give up your personality too and change yourself completely. Now when I think back, it's really a painful experience.

Serena's statement above revealed an example of assimilating to the dominant culture to create an enmeshed sense of self. As Serena indicated, negotiating a new cultural identity by copying the identity of the host society while effacing and unlearning her original self was very painful to her. After all, there are deeply ingrained differences owing to the upbringing and roots of the culture of origin which would be nearly impossible to be erased. Eventually, when those who attempt to define and negotiate an identity and belonging with an *enmeshed style* come to realize that they could never be exactly the same as those from the dominant culture due to some unbridgeable cultural and ethnic distinctions, they may start to be disillusioned, feeling incongruent and inauthentic about the fabricated new identity whereas their original identity seems to be fading away as a result of being sidelined or omitted. Thus, a sense of identity confusion may arise along with a lack of sense of belonging.

Restricted Style

The *restricted style*, similar to the *enmeshed style*, identifies the host culture as the dominant force to submit to for survival. Nevertheless, different than the *enmeshed style*, the *restricted style* does not identify with the host culture on a deep level. While some immigrants who attempt to negotiate their identities by using the *restricted style* may adopt western names to assume an English-speaking identity and create perceived convenience,

some others consider it unnecessary to adopt western names. Whether adopting western names or not, they believe that it is nearly impossible for them to become part of the mainstream culture as first-generation immigrants due to unbridgeable cultural and ethnic distinctions. Therefore, they preserve a territory which is impermeable to and intact from the host culture for self-preservation, carrying over all of the traditional Chinese customs, norms, lifestyles, cultural heritage and roots.

Basically, those who negotiate identity and belonging in a cross-cultural context in a *restricted style* seem to live in two separate worlds by two distinct identities. In one world, they abide by the rules of the dominant culture when interacting with the host society, while in the other world they continue to be very "Chinese" in private. As the two worlds seem to be disjointed, their cultural adaptations stay on a superficial level. They may not only lack a deep understanding of the host culture, but also lack a deep level of cultural interaction with the host society, as if there is a wall shielding them from sharing their real identity and culture. To some of those who adopt western names, a western name is merely a facade to use when interacting with the dominant culture for desired social convenience without having to disclose or share the real parts of them. Therefore, the connections they make with the host society appear to lack genuineness and depth, and the cultural boundary that they set between the home culture and the host culture is rigid.

If using the metaphors referred to by the participants, a new identity negotiated in an *enmeshed style* is comparable to a mask and a new identity negotiated in a *restricted style* is similar to clothing and a firewall. A mask which puts on a new ready-made face for a person can conceal the person's real identity by covering his or her face, whereas it cannot cover the rest of the person's body. Similarly, putting on clothes of a certain style may serve a purpose

of generating a desired social image for a person when necessary, whereas it would never essentially change a person. As for a firewall, it shields a person from being in touch with the external world, providing the person some protection while isolating the person at the same time. These metaphors suggest that negotiating identity in either an *enmeshed style* or a *restricted style* may not result in an essential level of acculturation.

As an example of the *restricted style*, Jeff made the following comments:

> I think it's meaningless to let people know of my Chinese name. The so called connection doesn't necessarily mean that you need to divulge a lot of things about you, your Chinese name, and your family…The English name is really just a symbol, like clothes…As far as I know, the less people know about your real stuff here, the less trouble you will be involved, cause people can steal your real identity to commit crime…It's a firewall. I'm protecting myself. The name Jeff can draw people near me, but also not too close. [Interviewer: There's a part of you that you don't want them to touch] That's right.

Jeff denied the need of sharing his Chinese identity in the host society, revealing his intent to keep a territory which was intact from the host culture for self-preservation, due to an innate sense of insecurity and vulnerability as a new immigrant. Thus, the *restricted style* is similar to the *enmeshed style* in that both groups are inclined to feel disadvantaged, inferior and insecure in the host society and that both groups tend to negotiate identity and belonging in the host society by conforming to the norms of the dominant culture. However, as people of the *restricted style* tend to keep some space to protect and stay connected to the Chinese cultural roots, they seem to feel more grounded than those of the *enmeshed style* who tend to diminish their cultural roots to fit in the host society.

Open Style

The *open style* refers to the style of negotiating one's identity and belonging in a cross-cultural context by making effective cultural adaptations while also maintaining cultural distinctions. Different than the *enmeshed* and *restricted* styles, people of the *open*

style tend to feel secure with their ethnic identities. On one hand, they acknowledge the areas that they need to improve as new immigrants without feeling inferior, while on the other hand they embrace their cultural differences and respect their cultural heritage and roots. Since they accept and appreciate cultural diversity, they would have more self-acceptance with respect to their ethnic names and identities while being open and receptive to other cultures. They would be intrigued by learning from people with different cultural backgrounds about their cultures and they are also enthusiastic about introducing the Chinese culture to other people. With a capacity to cultivate an open and dynamic style of cultural interactions in a cross-cultural context, they can effectively integrate the home culture with the host culture.

The main difference between the *open style* and the *enmeshed style* may lie in that the sense of self of the *open style* does not merely rely on the reflections or evaluations of others, but also on self-reflection and self-evaluation. This means that people of the *open style* tend to have a more constant sense of self and they are not easily swayed by external perceptions of their identities or by the change of social context. Specifically, in a cross-cultural context, they are less likely to feel insecure about their ethnic identities for the visible differences, as they accept and appreciate both cultural and individual diversity. Hence, they set a more solid cultural boundary, acknowledging the cultural attributes and differences which they need to adhere to rather than abandon to fit in the host society.

Compared to the *restricted style*, however, the *open style* has a more open, flexible and dynamic cultural boundary. People of the *open style* do not limit themselves to the home culture, but expand their scope of cultural experiences and actively engage in various cultural exchanges, learning about the differences between the culture of origin and the host culture,

so that they can make effective cultural changes to adapt to the host society. In general, the *open style* of negotiating identity and belonging in a cross-cultural context may be the most effective of all the three styles. The cultural boundary set by the *open style* is both open and solid, which means that people of the *open style* are receptive to the influences of the host culture and are therefore open to making required cultural adaptations, while at the same time they also set a firm cultural boundary in adhering to certain distinctions of the home culture, such as cultural values, customs, cultural heritage and roots.

It is important to note that the three styles of defining and negotiating identity and belonging in a cross-cultural context, although distinct, are not mutually exclusive. Due to the complexity of cultural identity development, an individual may experience different stages in which different styles may be used to negotiate an identity and belonging. For example, an individual may be more prone to an *enmeshed style* during the initial stage of acculturation, attempting to be soon accepted to the host society by assimilation. As cultural identity matures through acculturation, the person may resort to an *open style*, intending to negotiate an identity that can integrate the home culture and the host culture. Szu-Chi is a perfect illustration of experiencing all three styles in developing cultural identity.

When Szu-Chi came to Canada, she immediately adopted a western name for her high school to assume an identity of the dominant culture. Despite her efforts to assimilate, she associated mostly with her Taiwanese peers and their families and spent her leisure time on reading Chinese books or listening to Taiwanese radio. Thus, she mainly used the *restricted style* of negotiating identity and belonging at this phase. When studying at the university, Szu-Chi began to mostly socialize with white people. In spite of sensing the differences in her cultural values, such as body contact with the opposite sex, she tried to dissolve the

cultural differences by accepting the values of the dominant culture, which indicated her *enmeshed style* of cultural identity negotiation. After graduating with a bachelor's degree and working for years, she came to acknowledge her cultural attributes and distinctions that she needed to adhere to. Thus, she resumed using her Chinese name as a start of her cultural integration, which indicated her *open style* of identity negotiation.

Figure 5.1 outlines the three styles of defining and negotiating identity belonging in a cross-cultural context. As depicted in this figure, the circle of the *enmeshed style* is entirely contained in that of the host culture, representing an enmeshed cultural boundary, while the circle of the *restricted style* crossing that of the host culture is dissected into two closed parts representing a rigid cultural boundary. The *enmeshed style* and *restricted style* share in common tightly closed circles, signifying the inability of cultural integration. In contrast, the circle of the *open style* and that of the host culture are open for each other for dynamic interactions, representing a capacity of cultural integration.
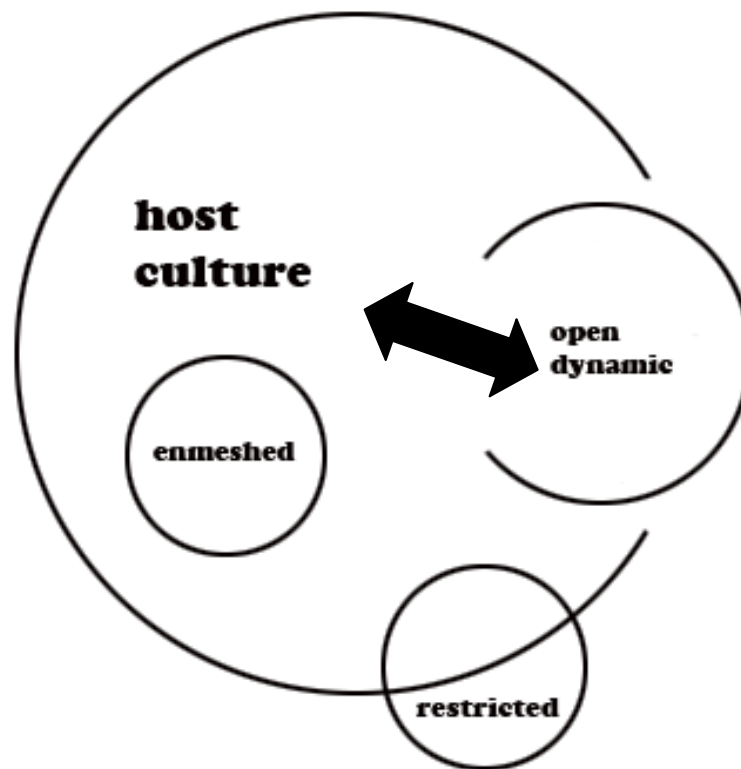
Figure 5.1   Three Styles of Defining and Negotiating Cultural Identity

5.2   The Role of Self-efficacy in Acculturation

Two Different Responses to the Dominant Culture: Passive vs. Assertive

It is noted that seven participants in the study had experienced the fear of being negatively judged or rejected due to their Chinese names. In response to their presumptions that Chinese names would pose perceived barriers to acculturation, they all chose to or had once chosen to passively submit to the dominant culture for approval. When asked if they were excluded from job interviews due to their Chinese names, the seven participants acquiesced to or had once acquiesced to the supposed culturally biased act without intending to assert themselves. In fact, several of them allegedly experienced discrimination or undesirable cultural stereotypes and biases, whereas none of them asserted themselves in those situations. In contrast, three other participants in the study revealed their intentions to work elsewhere rather than giving in to a workplace which would consider ethnic names as a criterion for job screening.

Comparing the responses of the seven relatively passive participants to the responses of the three more assertive participants, the contrast seems to arise from the perceptions of the participants as to whether they had alternatives other than passively succumbing to the external environment. To the relatively passive participants, assuming an English-sounding identity seemed to be the sole option left for them, as they seemed to lack confidence in their capacity to cope with acculturative stress relating to their Chinese names. To the more assertive participants, however, they believed that they had the option to choose an environment which would be conducive to their acculturation and also that they had the capacity to choose what to do in carrying out what they aspired for. Therefore, the contrast between them may relate to the level of perceived self-efficacy, namely, the sense of

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competence in oneself with regard to one's capability to have an effect on the environment and produce desired outcomes by executing required courses of action.

The Concept of Self-efficacy

The concept of self-efficacy was initially brought out by Bandura (1991) as the centre of his social cognitive theory. According to Bandura, perceived self-efficacy relates to the belief in one's own capacity to exercise control over one's functioning and over events that affect one's life. Self-efficacy affects one's life choices, level of motivation, quality of functioning, and resilience to adversity and life stress. Proposed by Bandura (1993), perceived self-efficacy exerts its influences through four major processes, which include cognitive, motivational, affective, and selection processes.

In the cognitive process, high self-efficacy is associated with high perceived controllability over the environment. Individuals with high self-efficacy can produce desired changes in the environment for themselves by persistent effort and effective use of external and internal resources. In the motivational process, high self-efficacy relates to the capacity to exercise self-influence by regulating proactive control and reactive feedback control of motivation. Individuals with high self-efficacy can set challenging goals for themselves and mobilize their skills, effort and resilience to achieve what they pursue.

In the affective process, high self-efficacy involves the capability to cope with stress and emotional distress experienced in difficult life situations. Individuals with high self-efficacy can effectively utilize social support and inner strength to move beyond personal vulnerabilities to achieve psychological well-being and functioning. In the selection process, high self-efficacy refers to the ability to shape the course of life by affecting choice of activities and environments. Individuals with high self-efficacy readily undertake

challenging activities and select situations which are within the realm of their capabilities. By making sensible choices, they develop various interests, competencies and social networks that determine life courses.

The Two-way Process of Acculturation

Applying Bandura's (1993) concept of self-efficacy, one's perceived self-efficacy seems to play a significant role in acculturation. For immigrants with a low level of perceived self-efficacy, acculturation may be a one-way process of assimilating to the dominant culture, which means absorbing the cultural output of the dominant culture without screening or contributing cultural input, as they tend to lack confidence in their efficacy to exercise control over the environments and the events that affect their lives. In contrast, for immigrants with a high level of perceived self-efficacy, acculturation ought to be a two-way process of cultural adaptation, which means making selective cultural adaptations in response to the contact with the dominant culture while contributing cultural input by retaining certain cultural differences, as they seem to have confidence in their capacity to deliver effective cultural changes in both themselves and the dominant culture.

In the literature, interestingly, acculturation research has primarily focused on the cultural adaptations of ethnic minorities with respect to how minority groups should acculturate to adapt to the dominant or host culture. However, as acculturation involves cultural contacts between different ethnic or cultural groups, intergroup interactions induce cultural changes in all interacting groups. Following this thread, Molina et al. (2004) and Wittig and Molina (2000) focus on the notion of mutual acculturation, wherein intergroup cultural contact influences change in both dominant and non-dominant groups. This means, acculturation entails a two-way process of change in which immigrants experience cultural

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changes in the contact with the dominant culture while at the same time bring changes to the dominant culture through delivering effective cultural input.

Self-efficacy and Individual Choices in Acculturation

Since acculturation needs to be a two-way process of cultural adaptation rather than a one-way process of change, immigrants should be entitled to different options as to how they would like to acculturate to the host culture depending on their personal preferences. They need not to feel compelled or obliged to absorb the dominant culture unreservedly. Instead, they can judge what cultural adaptations they would like to make and what cultural distinctions they would like to maintain based on their own cultural needs. Needless to say, the role of self-efficacy in acculturation is extremely critical, as the level of self-efficacy can determine the outcome of acculturation and one's functioning and psychological well-being during acculturation. High self-efficacy enables one to make sensible choices with respect to cultural adjustment and preservation of cultural heritage and also exerts control over one's functioning in contact with the dominant culture by mobilizing various external and internal resources. Individuals with high perceived self-efficacy tend to have the resilience and inner strength to effectively cope with acculturative stress when making cultural adaptations.

High perceived self-efficacy can help one make sensible choices in cultural adjustment by discerning what need and need not be changed. Individuals with high perceived self-efficacy tend to have a clearly defined but open and dynamic cultural boundary between their home culture and the host culture. On one hand, they actively engage in contact with the host culture and are open and receptive to its cultural output. On the other hand, they are selective of what they intend to absorb from the host culture by screening out what appears to be unnecessary for them, based on their internal needs for

cultural identity and belonging. Since the cultural boundary is set as open and dynamic, it may undergo adjustment now and then depending on the varying needs of the different stages of acculturation. Despite being adaptable, the cultural boundary is clearly set so that it helps one adhere to necessary cultural differences and preserve cultural roots.

The principle which guides individuals with high perceived self-efficacy to set a clear but open cultural boundary with regard to what need and need not be changed is bound by what is essential to them to most effectively make required cultural adaptations while adhering to needed cultural differences. Using ethnic name change as an example, it may appear to be helpful in creating perceived convenience in cross-cultural communication. However, it is certainly not indispensible for acculturation as perceived by individuals with high perceived self-efficacy. What is essential for acculturation to them is developing cross-cultural competence to find one's self-worth and belonging in the host society with persistent effort in learning and adaptation, although using a western name may provide perceived convenience in an initial contact with a non-Chinese person.

One critical difference between ethnic name changers and non-changers is the trust in one's efficacy to cope with various perceived barriers related to the use of ethnic names in a dominant English-speaking context, which lead to a difference in perceptions as to whether there are alternatives for them in addition to adopting a western name. In general, high perceived self-efficacy enables one to believe that the so-called "inconvenience" arising from a Chinese name can be overcome if using effective coping strategies. In particular, it enables one to set and enforce boundaries to guard against cultural biases and discrimination. Individuals with high perceived self-efficacy seem to know how to utilize the internal and external resources to cope with acculturative stress.

Therefore, in situations of cultural biases and discrimination, they would have the self-assurance to assert their rights and needs by accessing various sources including social support for self-validation. They can exercise rational thinking with an understanding that cultural biases and discrimination do not represent the trend of the host culture, and they have the resilience to bounce back from challenging situations which they regard as learning opportunities to strengthen themselves and gain mastery of handling stress. They can make optimal choices over what course of action is needed in response to acculturative stress. If the environment is too detrimental and hinders their growing potential, they have the courage to seek an environment which is conducive to acculturation.

Various Factors that Affect Self-efficacy

As Bandura (1993) suggests, perceived self-efficacy can operate at multiple levels, both individual and collective. Individual self-efficacy is affected by shared beliefs within a cultural group in its conjoint capabilities to achieve desired goals. Thus, one's worldview, often reflective of one's cultural perspective, can shape one's perceived self-efficacy. In a cross-cultural context, the cultural belief among ethnic Chinese that they need to surrender to the dominant culture may have led to their perceived low self-efficacy without recognizing their capabilities to carry out alternative options. In addition, the fact that new immigrants have limited access to social resources in the host society due to a lack of cross-cultural competence and other barriers may corroborate their perceived low self-efficacy.

Perceived low self-efficacy may also stem from family upbringing, especially if brought up in a hierarchical family in which individuals are indoctrinated to discard independent thinking and obey authority. Margaret addressed how she never learned to make

independent choices in her upbringing which caused her lack of success in cultural

integration owing to her perceived low self-efficacy:

> Like my upbringing, I was just never allowed a voice to express myself. I was so numb from the way I was treated. I mean all of their best intention, my parents' best intentions. It sure was a problem to raise children. So I would just have learned to avoid any trouble, right? To just shut down for so long. So I never know how to integrate to either culture. I was never asked to think. I was just told what to do.

Although family of origin, culture and environmental setting can mold one's perceived self-

efficacy, ultimately, it is also up to the individuals themselves to build their self-efficacy by

persistent effort in learning and gaining experience through achieved tasks as well as

challenging situations.

Acculturation is a two-way process of cultural adaptation

Immigrants have choices in acculturation

Immigrants can maintain cultural distinctions while making adaptations

Self-efficacy plays a significant role in acculturation

Self-efficacy helps cope with acculturative stress and make effective cultural adaptations

- Discerning what need and need not be changed to make adaptive cultural changes

- Setting and enforcing boundaries for cultural biases and discrimination
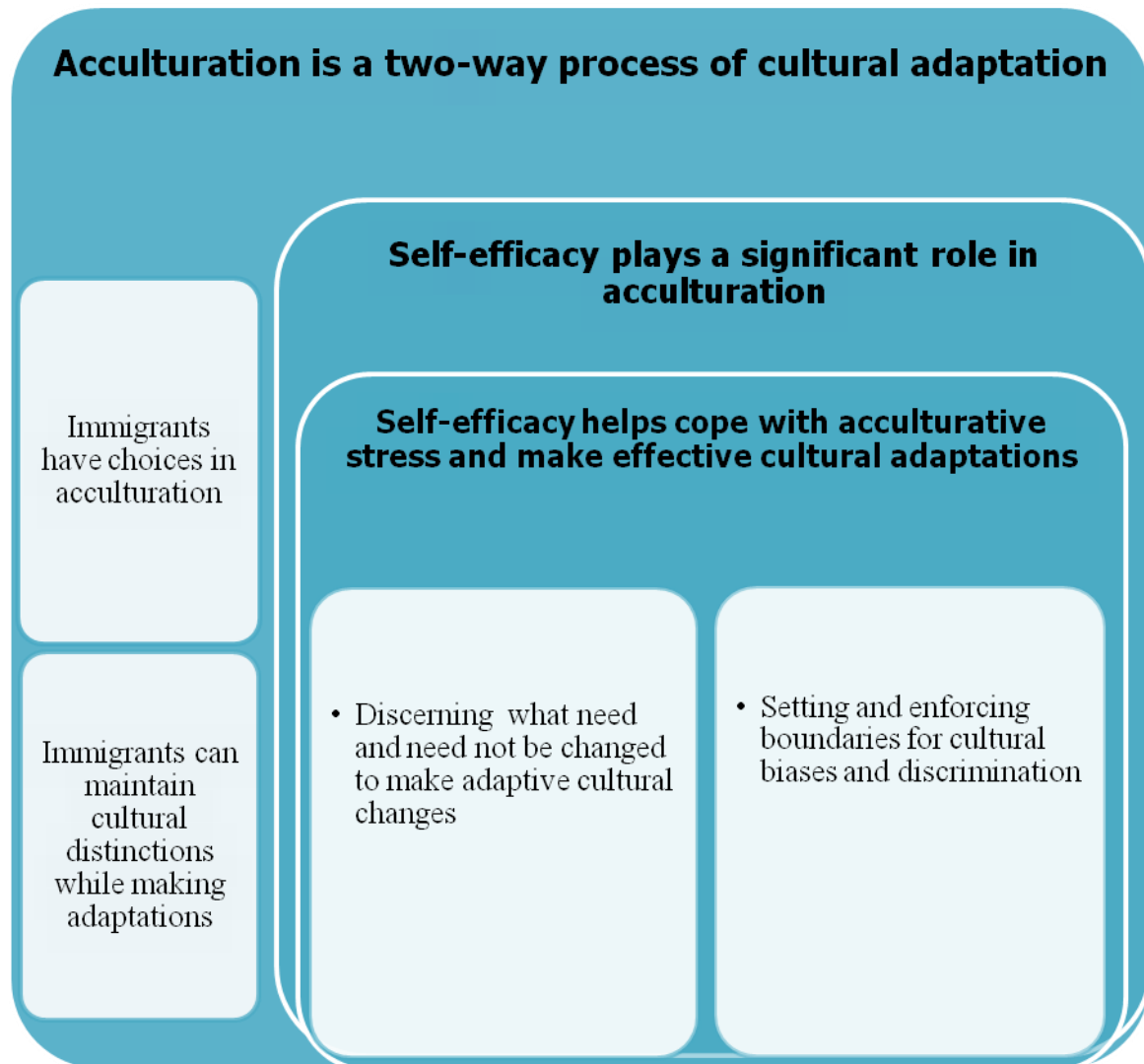
Figure 5.2   The Role of Self-efficacy in Acculturation

5.3   Seven Essential Components of Facilitating Acculturation

As discussed previously, ethnic name change may not necessarily exert significant influences on settlement or guarantee desired outcomes in acculturation. Alternatively, based on the accounts and experiences of the participants, this study proposes seven essential components of acculturation, which include: accepting one's cultural identity, protecting cultural roots, maintaining cultural distinctions, developing cross-cultural competence, building cultural common ground, persistent learning and adaptation, and finding self-worth and belonging. As depicted in the Figure 5.3, the seven essential components interrelate and jointly work together to cultivate an effective process of acculturation.

Accepting one's Cultural Identity

Accepting one's cultural identity refers to accepting oneself for who one is, including one's ethnicity and culture of origin. If an individual can learn to appreciate his or her own cultural identity, he or she would learn to appreciate that of others. The idea that acculturation entails a two-way process of changes suggests that while immigrants make cultural adaptations in response to contact with the dominant culture the dominant culture also experiences changes due to the cultural input of immigrants. Hence, accepting one's cultural identity can be extremely essential to acculturation. It may not only shape the dynamics of contact with other cultures but also affect one's acculturation status. Without accepting one's cultural identity, an individual would probably lack a genuine cultural identity and the capacity to provide sufficient cultural input, which implies that the individual may not culturally integrate to the host society.

In a cross-cultural context, accepting one's cultural identity means accepting and appreciating one's cultural heritage including one's ethnic name. It is notable that four out of

the ten participants of the study expressed shame or indifference to their Chinese cultural heritage and that seven participants feared or had feared using their Chinese names presuming that their Chinese names would be perceived as awkward and odd, creating hurdles to acculturation. Certainly, change of cultural context may affect one's self-perception and perception of one's own ethnic name, especially a person from a collective culture whose sense of self is contextualized. Therefore, ethnic minorities with a sense of self depending on reflections or evaluations of others may be more inclined to feel inferior and insecure in the dominant western culture.

However, if one's sense of self always fluctuates with the change of context or reflections of others, even if the ethnic name is replaced with a name from the dominant culture, an underlying sense of shame may remain deep inside the ethnic person, as one's ethnic origin and cultural background stay with a person like a birth mark. No matter how one attempts to erase his or her ethnic origin, there are traces of it that will remain. Thus, accepting one's cultural identity, including one's ethnic name, is essential for acculturation, which would help immigrants to cultivate self-acceptance and self-assurance, dissolve cultural identity confusion or conflict, and grow inner strength.

Protecting Cultural Roots

Protecting cultural roots refers to utilizing various means to stay connected to one's cultural roots. During acculturation, if cultural roots cannot be retained intact from the influences of the dominant culture due to cultural adaptations, it may generate a sense of rootlessness. Several participants who claimed feelings of disconnection from Chinese cultural roots resulting from westernized lifestyles including using western names reportedly experienced identity confusion and lacked a sense of belonging. Therefore, cultural roots are

comparable to a bird's nest to many immigrants, providing them a sense of security, identity

and belonging, which is essential for acculturation. The means of protecting cultural roots

vary among individuals, including but not limited to maintaining ethnic names, keeping

contact with family members and friends from the home culture, adhering to the cultural

customs and foods, celebrating traditional holidays, engaging in cultural activities, and

staying updated on the home culture using various media such as movies, TV, radio, books

and internet. If cultural roots can be well preserved, it would build a safety net for the

immigrants, bringing them a sense of security and belonging, fostering resilience, and laying

a solid foundation for them to achieve cultural integration.

Maintaining Cultural Distinctions

Maintaining cultural distinctions refers to maintaining certain differences stemming

from the culture of origin when making cultural adjustments to the host society. Maintaining

cultural distinctions includes but is not limited to protecting cultural roots. During

acculturation, there are immigrants who may not be aware of the choice of maintaining their

cultural differences. In particular, some immigrants who desire to be included as part of the

host society may believe that assimilating the dominant western culture to dissolve the

existing cultural gaps would be the sole solution to cultural adjustment. However, there are

certain aspects deeply embedded in them that can hardly be denied or effaced, such as

cultural values and beliefs, owing to the profound influences of the culture of origin and the

ethnic family upbringing.

If one forces oneself to assimilate the dominant culture without retaining any cultural

distinctions, the individual may eventually feel incongruent inside as if it is self-deceiving or

self-betraying. Szu-Chi addressed her recognition of the deep impact of her culture of origin

on her after years of attempting to assimilate the western culture:

> I realize now I tend to accept more of my oriental culture. In my unconsciousness,
> maybe I used the name Lydia to hide my cultural identity and cultural background to
> acculturate to the western culture. That's why I intended to use an English name.
> But in some aspects I couldn't really act like a westerner, like the straightforward
> style of expressing oneself, or the cultural values especially relating to the opposite
> sex in terms of body contact. Initially I didn't understand why I would feel this way,
> but later on I realized that it was coming from my cultural background and family
> upbringing…When you first come here you have a longing to acculturate to the
> western society. But you also can't deny your own cultural values. There are cultural
> differences that we have to acknowledge and accept.

As Szu-Chi indicated, there are certain cultural attributes and differences that ethnic

minorities need to embrace when acculturating to the western culture. Ultimately, it is up to

the individuals themselves to discern what values of their home cultures that they would like

to hold onto and what values of the host culture that they would like to adapt to, following

their own conscience and sense of cultural identity.

Developing Cross-cultural Competence

Cross-cultural competence refers to competence in effective cross-cultural

interactions. It includes a variety of capabilities and skills, such as English proficiency,

cultural knowledge and awareness, an open and curious gesture toward cultures, and cross-

cultural communication skills. Cross-cultural competence may be most critical for

acculturation, as it directly affects the outcome of cultural adjustment. Ning Yuan vaguely

indicated the significance of cross-cultural competence to acculturation when discussing

what his perceived convenience was for cross-cultural communication as compared to

changing ethnic names:

> I don't like that – you change your name just to create convenience for people. But
> you still have other things that will create them "inconvenience". Ultimately, it is the
> cultural stuff that can truly create convenience for people. For example, you may feel

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more convenient after changing your name, but what you are talking about is all about Chinese stuff which may scare some people away sometimes…Only the cultural stuff can truly create convenience, not names. A name only creates convenience for 5 to 10 seconds, or at most 1 minute, but the cultural stuff, like the cross-cultural competence is more significant.

Among all the skills, a good command of English may be the most basic aspect of cross-cultural competence. Without a proper level of English fluency, one can hardly have productive conversations with people from other cultures in a cross-cultural context, or work effectively through the settlement process.

Cultural knowledge and awareness are also vital parts of ross-cultural competence. If an immigrant has adequate knowledge of the host society, such as cultural characteristics, history, customs, values, belief systems and current affairs, the person may easily relate to the people from the host society with a good understanding of them. On the basis of cultural knowledge, cultural awareness can be developed by growing sensitivity to the differences between one's own culture and other cultures, which accordingly brings one the capacity to look outside of oneself and become aware of one's own cultural norms, values, beliefs and attitudes during cross-cultural interactions, including cultural biases, assumptions and prejudices. Cultural awareness can help individuals cultivate respect and appreciation for the cultural differences with a non-judgmental attitude and build a good understanding of other cultures, which is conducive to cross-cultural interactions.

In addition, assuming an open and curious gesture towards cultures is an essential aspect of cross-cultural competence. During acculturation, immigrants need to be open and receptive to the cultural output of the host culture and maintain a high level of curiosity and interest in learning about the host culture, so that they can make desired cultural adaptations. Without an open and curious gesture, an immigrant may be restricted to the scope of one's

own culture which may lead to a limited capacity of cultural integration. When asked what

helped his settlement, Ning Yuan commented:

> It's the open and accepting attitude. I'm a foreigner after all. It's the idea of having
> more cultural interactions and not confining me to my own culture. What I need to
> do is to make more cultural contact. To adapt to the culture here I need to make more
> cultural exchange and contact.

Moreover, cross-cultural communication skills are imperative to the success of acculturation.

As differences in verbal and nonverbal communication exist across cultures, understanding

these differences when interacting with people from other cultures is conducive to effective

cross-cultural communication and prevents cultural misunderstanding.

Building Cultural Common Ground

Ning Yuan brought in the concept of building cultural common ground when

speaking of what he believed was more essential than names to give rise to a sense of

acculturation. His explanations are:

> The sense of acculturation mainly relies on cultural common ground which is more
> important than names. [Interviewer: What do you mean by cultural common
> ground?] Well, it's like the example I had before. It's something that you can find to
> make both sides happy and excited when talking about it. [Interviewer: What is it
> exactly?] Hmm, it's just a hunch. [Interviewer: Do you mean by cultural values or
> beliefs?] Right, it's something like that. For example, when you pass the road, or
> when you drive, you have to follow the traffic rules. It's about the norms or lifestyles
> etc. I think stuff like that is more important than names for acculturation.

Elaborating on Ning Yuan's statement, building cultural common ground, first of all, refers

to finding cultural similarities between the home culture and the host society to bridge

cultural gaps in acculturation. Despite cultural differences, there are similarities across

cultures in terms of morals, values, beliefs, spirituality, emotions and behaviours that reflect

commonalities in human experience.

As a genuine human connection is built on exchange of different ideas and sharing common interests, seeking similarities to relate to people from different cultures can help build common interests, rapport and understanding between each other which reduces the chance of potential cultural conflicts. From another perspective, building cultural common ground also means making required cultural adaptations to connect to the host society, including adopting certain values, beliefs and norms of the host culture that one accepts and identifies with. Adjusting one's cultural values, beliefs and norms within one's comfort zone is required during acculturation, so that cultural common ground can be built during cross-cultural interactions which leads to more acceptance by the host society and facilitates the cultural integration of the individual.

Persistent Learning and Adaptation

Acculturation is an extensive process of cultural adjustment which requires persistent effort in learning and adaptation. When immigrants begin the settlement process, they may have to go through a series of hardships due to a lack of resources in the host society in addition to language and cultural barriers. There are many areas that immigrants may need to work on to bridge cultural gaps and adapt to the host society, including improving English proficiency, learning about the new culture, acquiring new skills and training, building cross-cultural competence, and establishing new social networks. Hence, immigrant settlement requires persistent effort in learning, overcoming obstacles, and making adaptive changes while striving to maintain certain cultural differences. During this process, immigrants may experience difficulties and setbacks which may be very discouraging. Being persistent with an understanding that difficulties are impermanent and can be resolved is thus the key to ultimate success in acculturation.

Yi is an excellent example of illustrating the significance of persistence in making efforts to adapt to the host society and succeed in settlement. She believed that the idea of changing an ethnic name to create a shortcut to acculturation was shallow, as acculturation would take both time and persistent learning:

> Maybe some people think that changing a name is a step to getting access to the host society, but as for me, I won't act this way in this situation. I know difficulties are temporary and will pass for sure. I don't need to change my name just to create a shortcut. I don't think so. I think having the idea of changing a name to create a shortcut is a bit shallow, isn't it? You just have to gradually learn about the culture. There are a lot of things that you don't know, right? When you're in a new environment, you just need to take time to get to know about it.

Yi was a dentist in China, but she had to give up her dentist career in Canada because she lacked a license to practice here. Alternatively, she studied for a PhD in dentistry, doing research work. Despite having completed her PhD degree with excellent publications and working in a research institute, she did not cease her pursuit of self-realization. She was recently accepted to a clinical dentistry program and will finally become a dentist again after completing this program. When asked about her thoughts on the long hard process of realizing her aspirations in Canada, she revealed that she truly enjoyed the process of learning and adaptation:

> I never regretted about having to go through what I went through here. To me, it was an excellent learning opportunity. Maybe you'd think it took me a long time to finally return to the dentist clinical work, but all the things that I've learned throughout these years and all the experiences I've gained are precious. During this process, I've met so many people and learned so many things. I think I've benefited a lot. Since I've learned so many things, I can compare what I learned in China to what I learned here. I have solid learning here which is great. I still like research a lot, so after I complete the clinical program, I can do both research and practice.

Finding Self-worth and Belonging

To many immigrants the prime goal of acculturation may be simply locating a social position in the host society which reflects their self-worth and belonging. This means, first

and foremost, finding a career or position that demonstrates their social values. Due to the change of cultural context, immigrants with established social identities in their home countries have to reposition themselves in the host society. The settlement process is essentially a process of seeking to define and negotiate identity and belonging in the host society, including constructing a new social identity. If immigrants hold social values of being needed by the host society, they would gain a sense of competence and self-worth for the capacity of providing what others need, from which they can construct a social identity that they aspire to with a sense of fulfillment and belonging.

Culturally speaking, finding self-worth and belonging also means acknowledging and accepting the values and uniqueness of one's own culture while making needed cultural changes to adapt to the new culture for cultural integration. Once an immigrant successfully integrates the home culture with the host culture, it creates a solid bonding with the host society, which brings one a sense of belonging as if the host society has been internalized as an integral part of oneself. Ning Yuan addressed the prospect of developing equal adherence and allegiance to both cultures as a result of cultural integration:

> I stayed in China for more than 20 years, so the bonding with it cannot easily vanish. Perhaps eventually it grows into a bonding with both cultures which become like parents to me. China and Canada eventually become like my parents. Who can tell which parent has more importance? You cannot abandon either of them.

Similar to the fact that both parents are of equal significance in bearing and nurturing a child for the child's proper development, both cultures will eventually be owned by an immigrant as one integrated home culture resulting from cultural integration, jointly providing the immigrant a sense of cultural belonging.
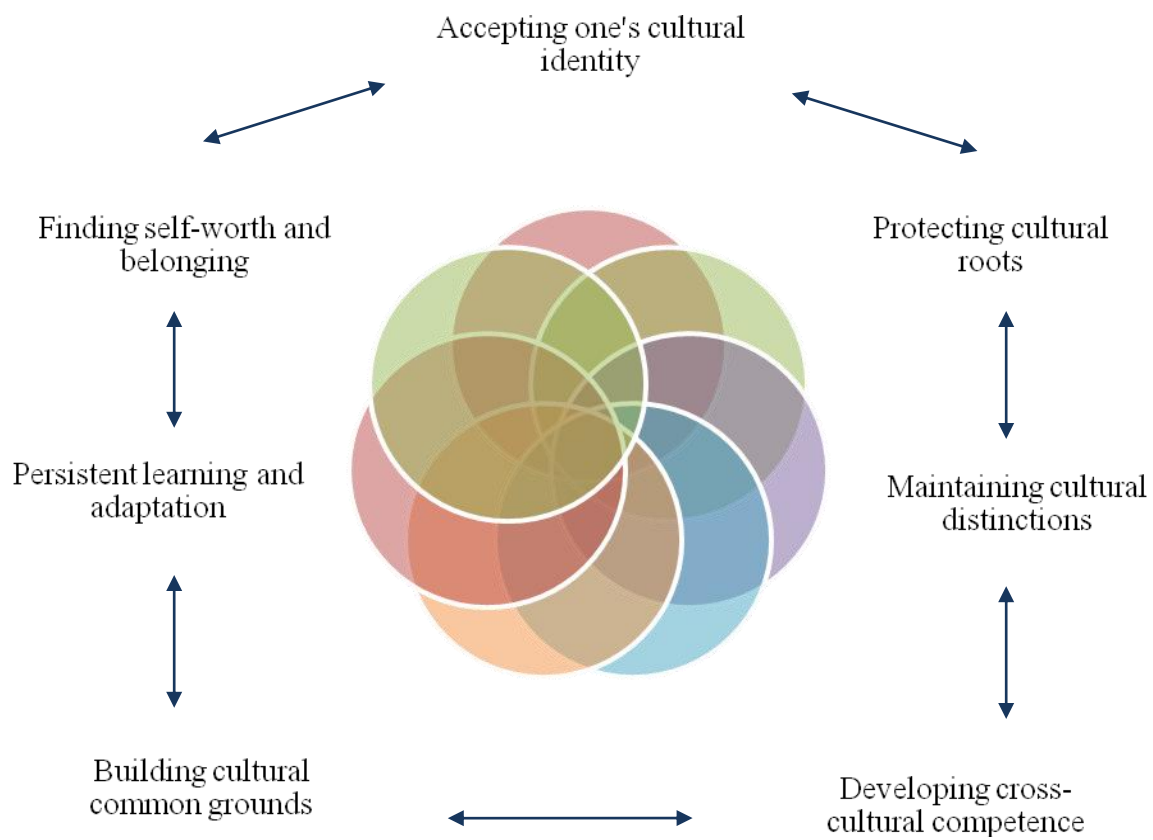
Figure 5.3   Essential Components of Facilitating Acculturation

5.4 Six Essential Components of Consolidating Cultural Identity

Based on the findings with regard to various factors that helped Chinese immigrants maintain their ethnic names, there are six proposed interrelated essential components of consolidating one's cultural identity in a cross-cultural context. These components are: accepting and appreciating diversity, adjusting expectations and attitudes toward ethnic names, cultivating self-acceptance, developing self-assurance, building self- efficacy and inner strength, and finding self-worth and belonging.

Accepting and Appreciating Diversity

Learning to accept and appreciate both cultural and individual diversity is indispensible for developing a strong cultural identity. First of all, acknowledging and accepting one's own cultural and individual distinctiveness, including one's cultural identity, ethnicity, inborn characteristics, family upbringing, and individual conscientious choice of cultural values and beliefs, is needed for cultivating self-acceptance. If one can accept one's own distinctive attributes, especially the attributes which are inborn or beyond one's control, the person may develop a solid self-identity which is not easily swayed by external influences. Otherwise, the sense of self is merely developed based on the evaluations of others, fluctuating with change of context or the people who evaluate. Hence, accepting and appreciating the diversity that one displays is a key component of consolidating one's cultural identity in a cross-cultural context.

Moreover, it is essential to accept and appreciate the diversity of others to develop a mature cultural identity. As acculturation is a two-way process of cultural adjustment, one needs to be open and receptive to other cultures during acculturation, which means accepting and appreciating the cultural differences in others while having a penchant for learning about

different cultures. Without accepting and appreciating cultural diversity, one is limited to the

scope of one's own culture with cultural biases and cannot be receptive to the output of other

cultures, which leads to ineffective cultural adaptation. Accordingly, the development of

one's bicultural identity is hindered due to a lack of capacity of cultural integration. Thus,

acceptance and appreciation of cultural diversity are vital for success in one's cultural

identity development in a cross-cultural context.

Adjusting Expectations and Attitudes toward Ethnic Names

Although an ethnic identity encompasses far more than an ethnic name, changing an

ethnic name which is a symbol of an ethnic identity may subtly affect an individual's

perceptions of his or her own ethnic identity. Thus, the expectations and attitudes toward

one's ethnic name in a cross-cultural context are critical in affecting the dynamics of defining

and negotiating one's cultural identity. Above all, ethnic minorities need to set realistic

expectations of what they may experience regarding the possibility that their ethnic names

may be mispronounced, misspelled, misidentified and misremembered due to the change of

cultural context. If expectations are set too high, the ethnic name may turn into a source of

frustration or disappointment. If expectations are set too low, the individual may easily give

up on using the ethnic name. Realistic expectations take into account the potential barriers

related to using ethnic names in an English-speaking context without exaggerating them.

If the expectations of one's ethnic name are realistically set, the individual would

have rational attitudes toward his or her own ethnic name, which helps to debunk

presumptions made by oneself and others and cope with perceived obstacles relating to

ethnic names. With rational attitudes, if one' s ethnic name cannot be accurately pronounced

or remembered, or if being unwittingly questioned by people as to why a western name is not

adopted, the individual does not take it personally or react with self-consciousness. Instead, the individual can distinguish his or her own reactions from those of others without being swayed by the external negativities of the ethnic name. If one's ethnic name can be solidly maintained, it may accordingly reinforce one's cultural identity.

Cultivating Self-Acceptance

Self-acceptance is paramount in developing a strong cultural identity. Self-acceptance means accepting oneself as whom one is, namely, acknowledging and accepting one's cultural and individual uniqueness despite individual weaknesses or deficiencies. In a cross-cultural context, self-acceptance refers to acceptance and appreciation of one's own culture, ethnicity, ethnic name, inborn characteristics, family upbringing, and other attributes that are beyond one's control, with a capability to be aware of and tolerate areas of imperfection of oneself. In this study, the participants who have higher cultural pride and more appreciation of their Chinese names and cultural heritage tend to assert themselves more in adhering to their Chinese names. On the contrary, those who lack allegiance to their Chinese cultural heritage and lack appreciation of their Chinese names tend to have less confidence in maintaining Chinese names.

As previously indicated, due to the Chinese collective cultural values, the sense of self of many Chinese immigrants may tend to be enmeshed and contextualized, contingent on the reflections or evaluation of others. Therefore, many of them may feel inferior and insecure in the dominant white culture, given the deficiencies in cross-cultural competence. In this sense, cultivating self-acceptance first requires acceptance and appreciation of cultural diversity with an acknowledgment of the value and uniqueness of one's own culture regardless of cultural contexts. Developing rational thinking is also required for cultivating

self-acceptance, so that one does not judge one's inherent values due to the deficiencies in cross-cultural competence which can be gained through persistent learning and adaptation. In addition, building various sources of self-validation, in particular staying connected to cultural roots and gaining knowledge of cultural heritage assets, can also cultivate self-acceptance by providing them self-nourishment and increasing their cultural pride.

Developing Self-Assurance

Self-assurance is a prerequisite to maintaining one's Chinese name in a dominant English-speaking context, given perceived barriers including discrimination, cultural stereotypes and biases, and the complications of pronouncing, spelling and remembering Chinese names for non-Chinese people. If lacking self-assurance, one may be susceptible to external negativities related to ethnic names and may feel insecure with one's cultural identity. Developing self-assurance which helps to consolidate one's cultural identity first and foremost requires self-acceptance. Without acceptance of one's own cultural identity in the dominant western culture, an ethnic minority is likely to feel inferior and insecure and lack the internal resources to assert themselves when being judged or negatively perceived for one's cultural identity. If an individual has the self-acceptance valuing his or her own cultural identity and heritage regardless of cultural contexts, the individual would have the self-assurance to counteract and defy the perceived barriers that impede the development of his or her cultural identity in a cross-cultural context.

In this study, the participants who had more cultural pride and appreciation of their Chinese names appeared to have more self-assurance in claiming their cultural identities if encountering discrimination or cultural biases. For example, Yi, Ning-Yuan, and Jia-Qi firmly stated that they would not want to work for a place where they might be negatively

judged or perceived due to their ethnic identities, whereas Serena, Jeff, Tina, Jane and Margaret seemed to be more inclined to hide, diminish, or sideline their ethnic identities to succumb to their presumptions of cultural biases and seemed to lack the assertiveness in claiming their ethnic identities. As self-acceptance relates to self-assurance in consolidating cultural identity, developing various sources of self-validation which would cultivate more acceptance of one's cultural identity, such as building supportive social networks, staying connected to cultural roots, and participating in cultural activities in the community, would increase one's self-assurance in asserting one's cultural identity.

Building Self-Efficacy and Inner Strength

Self-efficacy refers to the confidence in oneself with regard to one's capability to execute the required courses of action to exercise influence over events that affect one's life. Basically, self-efficacy is a sense of competence, believing that one's actions can have an effect on the environment and produce desired outcomes. If lacking a high level of self-efficacy, one may react very passively to the environment without believing in one's capability to exert effective influences and make desired changes. In a cross-cultural context, self-efficacy is the confidence in one's capacity to deliver effective cultural adaptations and maintain necessary cultural distinctions, which is extremely essential for developing one's cultural identity. Individuals with low self-efficacy tend to conform to the dominant culture for approval and passively absorb everything from the dominant culture even when encountering discrimination and cultural biases. On the contrary, individuals with high self-efficacy actively engage in contact with the dominant culture by setting open but clear cultural boundaries, which means that they are selectively receptive to the cultural output of the dominant culture by screening out the things that are detrimental to acculturation, such as

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cultural stereotypes and biases. As a result, those with high perceived self-efficacy likely achieve cultural integration and develop a solid bicultural identity.

A person's self-efficacy is molded by various factors in one's family of origin, culture, and environmental setting. Building self-efficacy in a cross-cultural context firstly requires self-acceptance and self-validation, because accepting and validating one's core self, including one's ethnic identity and cultural roots regardless of cultural contexts can foster one's inner strength and enhance confidence in one's capacity to deliver desired cultural changes during acculturation. Without appreciating one's cultural and individual uniqueness and recognizing that one is entitled to the option to maintain cultural differences, an ethnic minority may be prone to feeling inferior, insecure and helpless when placed in the dominant western society for being different and lacking the qualities that people from the dominant culture have. Accordingly, the individual may lack self-efficacy and not believe that they can exert actions that have an effect on the cultural environment. Therefore, cultivating self-acceptance and building various sources of self-validation can build one's self-efficacy to cope with acculturative stress.

Developing cross-cultural competence can also enhance one's self-efficacy in a cross-cultural context. Due to deficiencies in cross-cultural competence, such as lacking English proficiency, knowledge of the host culture and cross-cultural communication skills, an immigrant may have a lower evaluation of his or her efficacy feeling inadequate in cultural contact with the dominant culture without knowing what can be done to deliver effective cultural adaptations and maintain needed cultural differences. Thus, developing cross-cultural competence through the process of persistent learning and adaptation can increase one's perceived self-efficacy to effectively acculturate including coping with acculturative

stress, such as perceived obstacles to maintaining one's ethnic name. Jeff's experience can be used as an example for illustration.

When Jeff initially arrived in Canada, he worried that he might become a victim of identity theft and that he would be excluded from job interviews if indicating his hard-to-pronounce Chinese name [Guo-Feng] on the resume. Since he had low perceived self-efficacy as a new immigrant, he did not know what he could do in either of the cases which he feared. Thus, he chose to adopt a western name which he deemed as the best solution to avoid his presumed problems. In contrast, as he developed his cross-cultural competency, including improving his English and competence in cultural contact with the host society, he no longer considered that revealing his Chinese name in the resume would impede him from obtaining employment. He felt that he had the efficacy to cope with the problems that he feared in the past. Jeff's example mirrors the experiences of many other immigrants, suggesting that increasing cross-cultural competence can enhance one's perceived self-efficacy which can help dissolve the sense of insecurity that the newcomers likely experience and consolidate one's cultural identity.

Finding Self-worth and Belonging

Finding self-worth and belonging is the ultimate goal of acculturation. On one hand, finding self-worth and belonging means succeeding in the settlement process by locating a social position which reflects one's social values and full potential in the host society. On the other hand, finding self-worth and belonging also means achieving cultural integration by embracing certain cultural differences that one holds while making effective cultural changes to adapt to the host culture. Whatever it means to an individual, once one finds self-worth and belonging, it reinforces one's cultural identity through an increase in self-confidence

with a sense of fulfillment. Duo and Serena used the word "position" to refer to orienting oneself to find self-worth and belonging in the host society which in both cases increased self-confidence and acceptance of their own cultural identities. In Duo's case, she no longer felt insecure for using her Chinese name, as she settled both her career and family in Canada, which provided her solid sources of support, security, fulfillment, and belonging.

As for Serena, she learned a positive outlook on her cultural identity by recognizing its distinct values, after going through a long hard process of repositioning herself to seek self-value and belonging in Canada. Serena used to be an English teacher in a university in China. At first, she intended to continue teaching English in a high school in Canada. During her teaching practicum, she recognized some unbridgeable cultural gaps as a non-native English speaker which made her feel very inferior and insecure. Despite attempts to assimilate by imitating people from the host society, she eventually failed in her teaching practicum twice. Initially, she ascribed her failure to her Chinese name and identity. However, as she has repositioned herself as an ESL education coordinator, she acquired a very different outlook of her Chinese identity.

The following comments recorded Serena's reflections on the contrast in the results between looking up to the dominant western culture for approval and acknowledging and utilizing her own inborn cultural attributes and resources:

> I was struggling to teach English. I had to make myself very English and I made a lot of efforts trying to do that. A lot of the things they were doing were not something inborn for me, which made me have to look up to them. I just felt that I couldn't be like them, so I had to work really hard to be like them. I was looking up to them trying to get into their circle…But now they recognize my experience and expertise because I'm in a position of managing them. This brings me more confidence. They are also nice and accepting me. I have finally acknowledged my advantages that they don't have. Being an ESL education coordinator, I can communicate smoothly with both Chinese and non-Chinese people. I feel that I can gain advantages from both sides. If they want something that Chinese people don't understand, or if Chinese

people want something that they don't understand, I feel that I can help them bridge the gap. So my advantages are all played out.

As indicated in Serena's statement, she found a position that reflected her social values in the host society, which increased her self-confidence with a sense of accomplishment. Meanwhile, she also located her bicultural identity by effectively combining the resources of both cultures instead of denying or devaluing her home culture to look up to the dominant western culture for approval. Recognizing the advantages of a bicultural identity, she seemed to have found her self-value and cultural belonging.
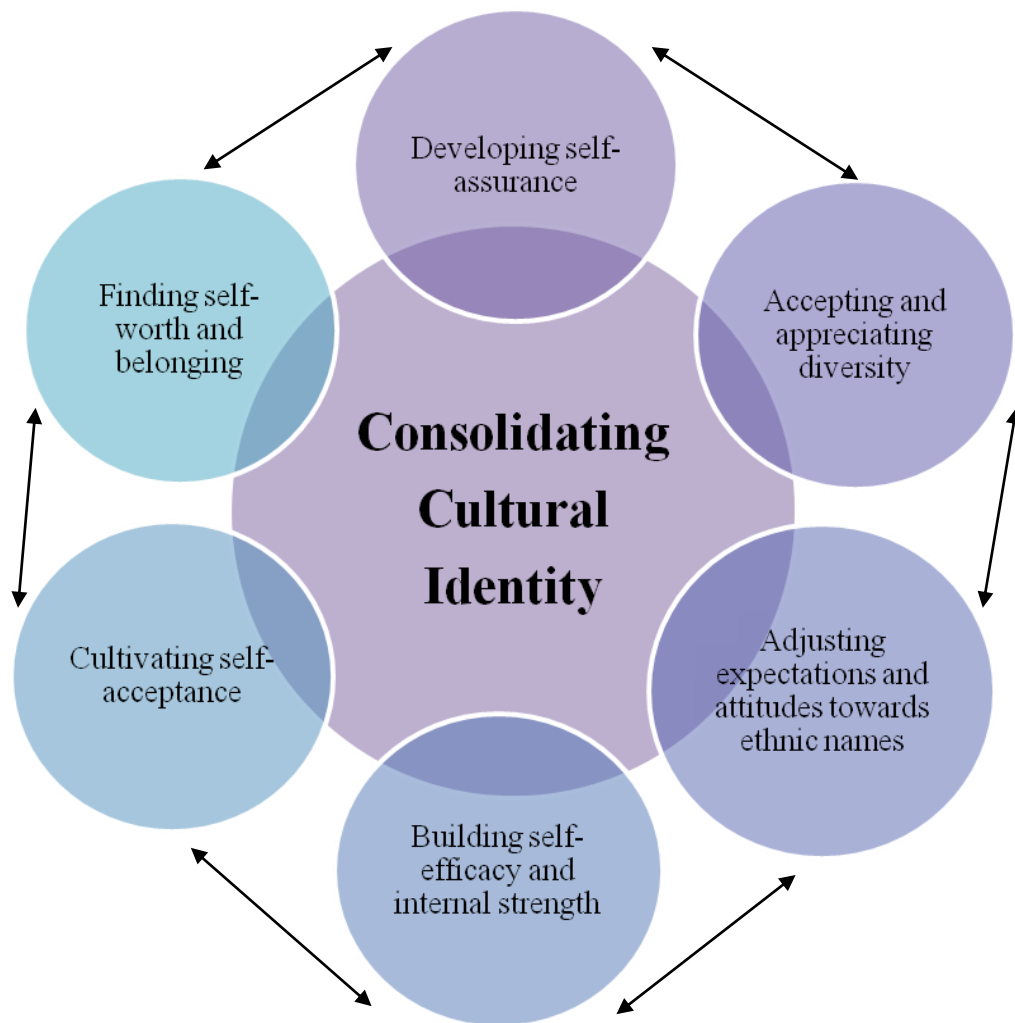
Figure 5.4   Essential Components of Consolidating Cultural Identity

Chapter 6: Conclusions

The purpose of the study was to examine to the experiences of first-generation ethnic Chinese immigrants in relation to changing and maintaining ethnic names in cross-cultural transitions. The findings showed that the phenomenon of ethnic name change and maintenance might be a reflection of the immigrants striving to define and negotiate identity and belonging in a cross-cultural context. In response to the contact with the dominant culture, there seemed to be two divergent attitudes. Those who felt inferior and insecure about their ethnic identities were inclined to adopt western names to assume an English-sounding identity to feel that they belonged to the host society, while those who felt content and secure with their ethnic identities tended to preserve their ethnic names without adopting western names, as they believed that developing one's efficacy and competence would be the key to success in finding self-value and a sense of belonging in the host society. As revealed by the participants, although ethnic name change may not guarantee success in acculturation, it may exert certain influences on one's life by affecting the perceptions of an individual by themselves and by others.

To assume a mainstream identity for a sense of security and belonging, some participants would rather adopt western names which they perceived as "clothes", "firewall" or "mask". Discovered from the patterns and strategies to cope with pertinent acculturative stress and perceived barriers related to maintaining and changing ethnic names in cross-cultural transitions, the study proposed three styles of defining and negotiating identity and belonging among ethnic Chinese immigrants: *enmeshed style*, *restricted* and *open style*. The immigrants who apply the *open style* by setting an open, dynamic but clearly defined cultural boundary would likely achieve cultural integration during acculturation, as they tend to be

receptive to the cultural output of the host culture for needed cultural adaptation while

preserving cultural roots. People who apply the *enmeshed style* or the *restricted style* may not

achieve cultural integration, as they either diminish their necessary cultural differences and

roots to fit in the host society or restrict themselves to the scope of the culture of origin

without being sufficiently receptive to the host culture for effective cultural adaptations.

Accordingly, the essential components that facilitate acculturation and consolidate

cultural identity were proposed. There are seven components which may facilitate

acculturation: accepting one's cultural identity, protecting cultural roots, maintaining cultural

distinctions, developing cross-cultural competence, building cultural common ground,

persistent effort in learning and adaptation, and finding self-worth and belonging. The six

components which may consolidate cultural identity include accepting and appreciating

diversity, adjusting expectations and attitudes towards ethnic names, cultivating self-

acceptance, developing self-assurance, building self-efficacy and inner strength, and finding

self-worth and belonging. These components interrelate to each other and have an essential

impact on acculturation and cultural identity development.

6.1   Contributions of the Study

This study makes a number of contributions. First, it contributes to the limited body

of literature on investigating little known issues around ethnic name change and

maintenance, encompassing the contexts and perceptions which precipitate ethnic Chinese

immigrants' intentions to change and maintain their ethnic names in cross-cultural

transitions, their pertinent internal and external experiences prior to and subsequent to ethnic

name change, their patterns and strategies to cope with acculturative stress and perceived

barriers relating to maintaining and changing ethnic names, and the impact of ethnic name

change and maintenance on immigrants' lives. By exploring ethnic Chinese immigrants'

experiences and understanding of the core phenomenon, the study delineates the basic social

process and grounded theory of acculturation and cultural identity development, outlining

three different styles of defining and negotiating identity and belonging in a cross-cultural

context amongst ethnic Chinese immigrants from which a variety of essential components

which facilitate acculturation and consolidate cultural identity are accordingly elucidated,

including the critical role of self-efficacy in acculturation.

Thus, the study connects to the literature by addressing a variety of key concepts

which have been discussed by other researchers from different perspectives, such as identity

negotiation, acculturation strategies, cross-cultural competence, self-efficacy, and self-

acceptance. Meanwhile, it provides a unique perspective to further explore these concepts

which may benefit researchers for future reference when studying relevant phenomena. The

study also contributes to ethnic minorities by providing them a model to cope with cultural

adjustment issues in respect to ethnic name change and maintenance.

Specifically, the study has the capacity to deepen immigrants' awareness and

understanding of acculturation and ethnic identity development, by guiding them to cultivate

self-acceptance, appreciate cultural and individual diversity, develop efficacy and

competence, and persist in learning and adaptation, so that they can find self-worth and

belonging in the host society with genuine cultural identities and inner strength to dissolve

perceived barriers, including discrimination and cultural biases. Furthermore, the study can

raise public awareness of the acculturative stress and perceived barriers that immigrants are

susceptible to during cross-cultural transitions, so that a validating multicultural environment

can be built to embrace cultural diversity and appreciate uniqueness and values in each

culture, which is conducive to cultural interactions between different cultural groups and leads to growth in them by learning about each other's cultural essence.

6.2   Implications of the Study

By investigating the social process of ethnic name change and maintenance in a cross-cultural context and delineating the immigrants' patterns and strategies of coping with pertinent acculturative stress, this study has important implications for the host society, the ethnic minority communities, and the clinical practice in cross-cultural counselling.

Implications for the Host Society

The findings may help illustrate to the host society an indispensable need for building an open, accepting, and validating multicultural environment. Evidently, Canada takes pride in its value of multiculturalism which embraces cultural diversity with respect and equality. Acceptance and integration of different cultures have made Canada become a cultural mosaic. However, cultural biases and discrimination still exist in nearly every society to varying degrees and in different forms, including Canada. The fact that the majority of the participants in the study experienced the fear of exclusion due to ethnic names implies a need to raise the public awareness of the perceived barriers that ethnic minorities may be susceptible to in the dominant western culture.

Although much of the participants' fear largely stemmed from their presumptions, several participants allegedly witnessed or had actual experiences of cultural stereotypes, biases and discrimination in the host society, which made them feel diminished, insecure, and disadvantaged with a lack of sense of belonging. Thus, cultivating a validating cultural environment is indispensable for acculturation, so that people from different cultural groups can truly feel accepted, secure and a sense of belonging in the host society. As acculturation

entails a two-way process of cultural adaptation wherein all interacting cultural groups experience cultural changes through cultural contacts, the host culture can promote its own growth by learning the essence of other cultures if it assumes an open, accepting and receptive attitude towards minority cultures.

Specifically, those who are in relatively more influential positions in the host society, such as employers, school teachers and service providers, need to be very respectful and sensitive to the cultural differences in people from other ethnic groups. Taking ethnic names as an example, the choice of ethnic minorities to maintain their ethnic names must be respected rather than disapproved of or even discriminated against. During cross-cultural interactions, people from the host culture may show their genuine respect for the culture of an ethnic minority by being open and patient to learn about ethnic names, from which they may not only gain more understanding of that culture but also inspire some cultural exchanges between each other to help build cultural common ground.

Despite the uncommonness of ethnic names and potential complications involving pronouncing or remembering them, people from the host culture should not suggest overtly or covertly that ethnic minorities anglicize their ethnic names, as ultimately it is the choice of ethnic minorities as to what they decide to do with their ethnic names without feeling compelled to cater to the dominant culture. If the cultural differences in people from minority groups, such as names, food, customs and arts, can be respected with openness and appreciation by people from the host society, ethnic minorities can sense that their ethnic identities are included and validated, which can develop for them a strong bonding and cohesion with the host society and facilitate their cultural adjustment.

Implications for Immigrants

The findings would also provide a perspective for immigrants by revealing the need for cultivating self-acceptance with respect to one's cultural identity and the significance of developing self-efficacy and cross-cultural competence for acculturation. One implication is that immigrants need to first recognize that they have the option to choose how they would like to acculturate to the host society, with regard to what cultural adaptations to be made by them and what cultural distinctions for them to adhere to. The host society should not enforce the acculturation process for them. Taking ethnic names as an example, immigrants need to be aware that they are entitled to maintaining them as part of their cultural differences and that adopting western names is neither indispensable nor essential for acculturation. In reality, many ethnic Chinese consider using western names in an English-speaking context as an implicit norm to which they are required to conform, as if assuming an English-sounding identity holds the passport to adapt to the host society.

Nevertheless, many ethnic Chinese may fail to check within themselves their personal preferences and internal needs for cultural integration and identity development, prior to deciding to adopt a western name. As a result, some ethnic Chinese may end up feeling incongruent and rootless for holding an identity which is a mismatch to their genuine cultural identities and for diminishing an identity which connects to their cultural roots. Therefore, immigrants need not feel obliged or compelled to adopt western names in cross-cultural transitions. It is fundamental for them to look deeply inside to examine what their personal preferences and cultural needs are from various aspects, so that they can ultimately make independent choices as to whether or not to adopt western names, instead of merely abiding by the so-called norm or trend even when it contradicts their internal needs.

In addition, immigrants should not easily surrender to the perceived barriers associated with ethnic names such as pronunciation complications, cultural stereotypes and biases, and discrimination. It is concerning that 70% of the participants used or had used western names for the fear of being judged or excluded by people in the host society. As perceived by them, using Chinese names may potentially lead to social rejection and create barriers to employment for their uncommonness and "unpronounceability". However, adopting western names to avoid being excluded from job interviews or being socially rejected by people in the host society could be sending a signal to name holders themselves and to those who hold cultural biases towards ethnic names that they are succumbing to the existing cultural stereotypes, cultural biases and prejudices. Unfortunately, this type of passive response may not prevent or eliminate the occurrences of cultural biases and discrimination but may foster a detrimental environment which could lead to more occurrences of cultural biases and discrimination by acquiescing to their legitimacy.

Ishiyama (2000) proposed a model of active witnessing to reduce prejudice and discrimination which addressed four levels of witnessing discrimination: dis-witnessing, passive witnessing, active witnessing, and ethical social action. Dis-witnessing means aligning with discrimination by rationalizing it or acting with indifference. Passive witnessing means passively complying with discriminatory behaviours with silence despite disagreement. Active witnessing actively engaging in speaking out against injustice to the perpetrators or supporting the victims with empathy and encouragement in response to situations of discrimination. Ethical social action means taking broader social action to prevent occurrences of discrimination on the social level, such as giving speeches in the community or posting comments in blogs against discrimination. Given the interdependence

of human behavior, it would be essential for everyone from both the host society and the ethnic minority communities to be involved in active witnessing and ethical social action to maximally prevent cultural biases and discrimination.

Applying the model of active witnessing (Ishiyama, 2000), ethnic Chinese can aim to move from a passive witnessing level to higher levels of active witnessing and ethical social action in situations of cultural biases and discrimination related to ethnic names. Rather than complying with presumed or actual situations of discrimination by adopting western names, they need to step up to fulfill their shared responsibilities of being an active witness and part of the joint social effort to challenge, reduce and prevent the events of cultural biases and discrimination related to ethnic names. Using Serena as an example, when hearing from a friend teaching Chinese in an elementary school that her principal disclosed his reluctance to hire Chinese teachers whose names were "unpronounceable" for him, Serena quickly aligned with this cultural bias believing that adopting a western name was the sole situation for her to adapt to the host society. Alternatively, Serena could have been a more active witness, such as voicing her disagreement, empathizing with the friend about the experience of invalidation, and engaging in community activities for discrimination reduction.

As indicated in the study, some participants tend to feel insecure over their ethnic identities in the dominant western culture. Ishiyama (1995) indicated the term "cultural dislocation" to refer to a state of feeling displaced among immigrants in cross-cultural transitions due to a lack of validation of self and cultural uprootedness. Based on this concept, he suggested a model of self-validation to assist individuals to cope with cultural adjustment issues, such as the sense of insecurity over one's ethnic identity in cross-cultural transitions. In this model, there are five thematic components of self-validation which are:

(a) security, comfort, and support; (b) self-worth and self-acceptance; (c) competence and autonomy; (d) identity and belonging; and (e) love, fulfillment and meaning in life. Building various sources of self-validation that reflect the five themes can dissolve adjustment difficulties and contribute to psychological well-being.

The findings of the study have confirmed that the five thematic components are essential in helping immigrants maintain their ethnic names by strengthening their cultural identities and dispelling their innate sense of insecurity as ethnic minorities in a cross-cultural context. Hence, the key is to build sources of self-validation through different means, such as establishing social support network and validating relationships, developing activities that are enjoyable and meaningful, selecting places and settings which are respectful, supportive, and conducive to one's functioning and well-being, and keeping the things that hold values for oneself. Specifically, to help maintain one's ethnic name and cultural identity in cross-cultural transitions, immigrants need to build sources of validation of their cultural heritage and roots, such as staying in touch with the ethnic family members and friends, associating with people who appreciate and show genuine interests in their cultures, and participating in cultural events in the community.

Implications for Clinical Practice

In addition to a wide range of theoretical implications as discussed above, there are practical implications to helping professionals. First, the findings would imply to the clinical practitioners that it is crucial for them to develop a keen awareness of the acculturative stress that ethnic minorities may be subject to during the process of cultural adjustment and identity negotiation in a dominant western culture. Specifically, in working with culturally diverse clients, counsellors need to suspend their assumptions, biases and stereotypical thinking that

dictate which names immigrant clients should use in the host culture and respect the choices made by clients themselves as to whether they assume English-sounding new identities or maintain their original ethnic names. Since immigrant clients' choices to change or maintain ethnic names in cross-cultural transitions may indicate their acculturation orientations and patterns of coping with perceived acculturative barriers, counsellors may want to consider initiating conversations with clients to discuss their perceptions and experiences of ethnic name change and maintenance during counselling sessions, as an approach to gather more information of the clients' sources of distress, self-perceptions, perceived self-efficacy and internal locus of control, and their mechanisms of coping with acculturative stress.

Another implication is that it is necessary for clinical practitioners to foster extra sensitivity to immigrant clients' names. As indicated throughout the study, ethnic names can be a very sensitive and vulnerable part of immigrants, given that immigrants as newcomers in the host culture may be inclined to be more self-conscious and susceptible to reactions and comments from the host society concerning their ethnic identities, especially those from the collective cultures with the sense of self contextualized by the values of others. In particular, perceived negative reactions from counsellors in relation to clients' ethnic names could be detrimental to therapeutic alliances and outcomes, regardless of how subtle these reactions are. This should be taken into account, given that counsellors could be some of the very few people whom immigrant clients can access for support in the host community due to various barriers that limit them from accessing sufficient sources of social support.

Therefore, showing patience, genuine interest and effort in learning about immigrants' ethnic names on the part of counsellors, such as the pronunciation, spelling, meanings, origin, and personal stories behind the names, would help to validate the clients'

ethnic identities and reduce their associated feelings of insecurity and doubt. For clients who are concerned about using their ethnic names due to their presumptions of cultural biases or previous negative experiences, it is essential for counsellors to show empathy, support and encouragement to empower them and help them realize that the negative experiences that they have encountered or the presumptions that they make may not be generalized across the entire host society. Instead, clients can be guided to acquire a more open and active gesture in contributing more cultural input and exerting influences on the host community during cultural adjustment. In addition, the findings imply that although the presenting concerns of immigrant clients may vary individually, the core aspects of cross-cultural counselling seem to entail helping clients to cultivate more self-acceptance, explore various sources of self-validation, foster solid connections to cultural roots, build more resilience and inner strength, and develop a high level of self-efficacy and cross-cultural competence.

6.3   Strengths of the Study

The study is credible because it abides by the research principles of grounded theory; the credibility of grounded theory is judged by its own rigors (Glaser & Strauss 1967). First, sampling was not predetermined by the researcher but rather decided by what emerged in the data analysis. Data were collected from the same participants multiple times and in multiple ways including data from negative cases to achieve maximum diversity in testing emerged categories and theory. Constant comparisons within the same groups of data and between different groups of data were conducted in the data analysis which brought more credibility to the study. The theoretical concepts drawn in the study were also assessed for conceptual consistency with the existing theories in the literature. In addition, the researcher twice

checked with all the participants to verify accuracy of the interpreted transcripts and

conceptual categories.

6.4   Limitations

There are several limitations related to the study. First, although the study strived to

achieve maximum diversity of data, the samples were restricted to first-generation Chinese

immigrants from Mainland China, Taiwan and Hong Kong, which suggests that the findings

may not apply to the total population of immigrants, specifically, those of different

generations and ethnicities. There were only two male participants who responded to the

study, making it unknown if gender had an effect on the findings. The age range of the

participants was between 19 and 45, which implies that the findings may not be generalized

to children or adolescents, although half of the participants disclosed their experiences of

adopting western names during early childhood or adolescence.

As well, the findings may not be generalized to adults who are older than 45,

especially older adults who immigrated to Canada under the family class and have lived

exclusively in the Chinese community. Given that these older adults may not have been

exposed to western culture through employment and social interaction, and that they may not

be under pressure to find employment to support the family as are younger adults, they may

not experience the same level of insecurity and self-consciousness around their ethnic

identities, and may not feel compelled to adopt western names for settlement and adaptation

to the host society. Moreover, participants were recruited through two websites: Vancouver

Craigslist and UBC Careers Online. As both websites are English, the recruitment ads were

posted only in English. The study respondents were mostly well-educated university

graduates with relatively high levels of English proficiency. This might indicate that the

findings may not necessarily represent the immigrant population which has lower levels of education and English proficiency.

It should be taken into account that the study was conducted in Vancouver, a city which is exceptionally high in its multicultural density. The multicultural environment in Vancouver may have largely contributed to some immigrants' decisions to adhere to their ethnic names without adopting western names. Therefore, caution needs to be exercised when interpreting and generalizing the findings of the study with respect to immigrants' levels of perceived self-efficacy in geographic areas which are low in multicultural density. Since the study was not longitudinal and relied heavily on interviews for data collection, it lacked factual observations of the social process behind ethnic name change and maintenance and lacked actual materials to support the full credibility of the study, for example, diaries or accounts of the people who witnessed the participants' relevant experiences.

Thus, there is likelihood that participants may have either made up or concealed certain truths due to embarrassment, concerns about being judged, memory loss, lack of awareness, and confusion which would compromise the credibility of the study. It was essentially difficult to judge or control the truthfulness of the participants' narrations of their experiences without factual validations, which may be a disadvantage that studies relying on participants' self-report share in common. In contact with the participants regarding the accuracy of the interpreted transcripts and coded conceptual categories, several participants provided feedback by email. Although they approved the accuracy of the data analysis, it was difficult to tell how thoroughly they read through the bulk of the analytic notes, summary memos, coded categories and final concepts without interactive conversations in person or by telephone.

In addition, despite the fact that the interviews were conducted and transcribed in whichever language that the participants felt most expressive or comfortable with to capture the complexity of their experiences, data analysis was solely conducted in English to ensure the consistency of the coded categories, analytic notes and memos across participants. As a result, subtleties may have been partially lost when coding the Chinese transcripts in English due to limitations in translation, which may have sacrificed the full depth of the categories given that seven interviews in the study were conducted and transcribed in Chinese. As the coded categories, analytic notes and memos were written in English, it is uncertain if all the participants, some of whom had relatively lower levels of English proficiency, fully comprehended them prior to verifying their accuracy, although the researcher provided verbal explanations in Chinese to assist those who lacked English proficiency.

6.5   Research Implications for Future Studies

As there is limited research on the social process of ethnic name change and maintenance among ethnic minorities in cross-cultural transitions, there are some areas remaining for future research. First, more studies need to be conducted to further investigate the core phenomenon across different generations and ethnicities. Immigrants who are not first-generation may be recruited for studies to examine differences in their experiences and understanding of ethnic name change and maintenance as compared to first-generation immigrants. Immigrants from various other ethnicities and cultures may also be recruited for studies to understand how the phenomenon of ethnic name change and maintenance is manifested in different ethnicities and cultures.

It was noticed in this study that Chinese immigrants may have different attitudes towards ethnic name change for themselves and for their children. Although some of them

declined to adopt western names, they preferred to give their children western names as first names. As reported by them, they were much more concerned about the potential negative influences that ethnic names would have on their children than on themselves, because children in general would be more vulnerable, with less capacity to express emotions and locate resources to effectively cope with acculturative stress. Therefore, it may be necessary to investigate the experiences of immigrant children with respect to maintaining ethnic names in a dominant English-speaking context, especially children who have ethnic names which are considered as very uncommon.

In addition, studies can be conducted among people from the dominant western culture, especially employers and service providers such as school teachers, to examine societal perceptions of and attitudes toward ethnic names in the dominant host society. Studies from the perspective of the dominant host society can provide an overview of what ethnic minorities may experience with respect to maintaining their ethnic names in cross-cultural transitions rather than the presumptions of immigrants themselves as to how they might be treated by people from the host society for using ethnic names.

This study illustrates the richness and depth of experiences of Chinese immigrants in identity negotiation and cultural adjustment during cross-cultural transitions by delineating the social process of ethnic name change and maintenance. It is my hope that further research can deepen public awareness and understanding of the acculturation issues of immigrants relating to negotiating identity and belonging in the host society, and that a validating multicultural environment can be built to truly embrace cultural diversity with respect and appreciation of the uniqueness and value that each culture holds.

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Appendices

Appendix A: Online Recruitment Advertisement

(UBC Careers Online and Vancouver Craigslist)

Participants Needed for a UBC Research Study

Interested in participating in research?

We are looking for Chinese immigrants who are willing to share their personal experiences of adopting English names and/or maintaining Chinese names after immigrating to Canada.

You are eligible for the study if you are:

1. First-generation Chinese immigrants who were born in China, Hong Kong, or Taiwan.

2. Between 19-68 years old.

3. Have/had adopted an English name, and/or have maintained the Chinese name subsequent to immigrating to Canada.

The interviews will be conducted in either Chinese or English, in whichever language you are more fluent and expressive. If you decide to participate, you will have a face-to-face interview with the researcher and also two follow-ups by telephone or email, which all together will take approximately 1 ½ to 2 hours. You will receive a total of $20 honorarium for your participation.

For more information, please contact the researcher at 604.616.2685 or email to liaowenting@gmail.com. All personal information will be kept in strict confidentiality.

Appendix B: Informed Consent

UBC

The University of British Columbia

The Faculty of Education

Scarfe Library 292, 2125 Main Mall

Vancouver, BC V6T 1Z4

Phone: (604) 822 5329 Fax: (604) 822 3302

INFORMED CONSENT FORM

Ethnic Name Change & Maintenance: The Acculturation of Chinese Immigrants

Dr.Ishu Ishiyma, Wenting Liao

Department of Educational and Counselling Psychology, and Special Education
University of British Columbia

You are invited to participate in the research project described below. The researcher will explain the project to you in details. Please feel free to ask any questions. The researcher will assist you with whatever questions you may have.

Principal Investigator

Dr. Ishu Ishiyama is the principal investigator of the study. He is an associate professor of the Department of Educational and Counselling Psychology, and Special Education of the University of British Columbia, and a registered psychologist. He can be reached as per the contact information noted above in the letter head.

Co-Investigator

Wenting Liao is the co-investigator of the study. She is an M.A. student in the Department of Educational and Counselling Psychology, and Special Education at the University of British Columbia. The present study is her thesis study for the M.A. degree in counselling psychology, under the supervision of her thesis advisor, Dr. Ishu Ishiyama. She can be reached by phone at 604-616-6285, or by email at liaowenting@gmail.com.

Description of the Study

You are asked to participate in the research project *Ethnic Name Change & Maintenance: The Acculturation of Chinese Immigrants.* This study examines the experiences and perceptions of Chinese immigrants in maintaining and changing ethnic names during cross-cultural transitions, through which the social process of ethnic name change and maintenance will be delineated. Moreover, a conceptual model will be drawn to elaborate on the patterns and strategies of coping with pertinent acculturative stress.

Participants for the study will be selected from **first-generation Chinese immigrants who have maintained or changed their ethnic names subsequent to immigration to Canada.** The number of participants will not be predetermined but rather will be decided by the emergency of the conceptual categories during the research process until data saturation is reached.

Your participation is significant for the study, as it will contribute to the literature by facilitating the researcher with a better understanding of the little known issues around the process of ethnic name change and maintenance.

The study will have the capacity to deepen immigrants' awareness and understanding of their ethnic identity development and acculturation process; it will raise public awareness of the acculturative stress that immigrants are susceptible to in the struggle of maintaining and changing ethnic names and identities in cross-cultural transitions.

Procedures

If you decide to take part in this study, you will be invited to 3 interviews, including an initial interview and two follow-up telephone interviews, with the researcher in a strictly confidential setting. The interviews can be conducted either in Chinese Mandarin or English, in whichever language you can be most expressive, so that the complexity of your experience can be captured.

The first interview is face-to-face and semi-structured. It will be audio-taped and will last approximately 60-90 minutes. This interview may be conducted in the psycho-educational lab in the university, or at your home if you request so. An open-ended fashion will be assumed for the interview, in which the participant will speak freely and honestly about their personal experiences in respect to maintaining and changing ethnic names after immigrating to Canada.

After the interview is transcribed, you will receive a copy of transcripts by email or in person upon request. An informal telephone interview will be subsequently arranged with you to

verify and clarify the accuracy of the transcripts. Once the final version of transcripts is approved by you, the researcher will begin the coding analysis. The coded conceptual categories will be forwarded to you by email or in person upon request. Then, a third and informal telephone interview will be set up to discuss with you and check if the theoretical codes have truthfully represented your experience. Your total participation in the study will be approximately 1 ½ to 2 hours. The study itself needs 6-12 months to be completed.

Confidentiality

Confidentiality will be guaranteed within legal limits in order to protect the participants' privacy. All records of the participants, including demographic questionnaires, audiotapes, transcriptions, signed informed consent, computer files, and so on, will NOT be made available to the public; they will be instead kept private in a locked area that only the investigators of the study have access to.

Transcripts may be accessible to inter-raters and the thesis committee members for academic purpose, if necessary. However, under circumstances required by law, when there might be immediate harm to the participants or others, researchers may be required to breach the confidentiality and report to authorities, or to a court of law.

In order to guarantee confidentiality, participants will not be identified by their full names or initials in the transcripts or final reports. Nevertheless, as the study is to investigate the process of ethnic name change and maintenance, which may involve addressing the meanings behind personal names, indication of the participants' first names is necessary.

To ensure participants' anonymity as much as possible, participants' Chinese given names will be revealed only in *pinyin,* a Romanized spelling system of the Chinese language; corresponding Chinese characters of the names will not be disclosed.

Voluntary Participation and Withdrawal

 Your participation in the study is entirely voluntary. If you so decide, you may skip particular questions during interviews, or cancel your participation in the study at any time, for any reason.

Your refusal to answer particular questions will not result in loss of benefits to which you are entitled for agreeing to be in the project, including the honorarium you will be receiving upon completion of each interview. Your decision to stop participating in the study prior to its completion for any reasons will be truly respected and does not result in any form of penalty.

Benefits of the Study

This study can help participants gain self-awareness and reach a deeper level of understanding of their own experiences in respect to maintaining and changing ethnic names in cross-cultural transitions.

Together with the researcher, participants will learn how ethnic name change and maintenance might be associated with their ethnic identity development and acculturation process, and this process of self-exploration and learning will ultimately promote their personal growth. In addition, participants can access the researcher, during and after the study, if they intend to seek resources for further self-exploration or growth.

Honorarium

All participants will receive a small compensatory honorarium for their participation in the study. A total of $20 will be offered to the participants for their participation of all three interviews. Participants may be given a Starbucks coffee card, or paid with cash, upon request. Participants' refusals to answer certain questions during interviews for personal reasons, or withdrawals from the study prior to its completion, DO NOT result in a loss of honorarium.

Risks or Discomfort

You can be assured that there will be no major foreseeable risks in your participation in the study. However, feelings of discomfort may surface during interviews, as the purpose of this study is to identify the sociopsychological process behind ethnic name change and maintenance and to delineate a conceptual model addressing the patterns and strategies of coping with pertinent acculturative stress in cross-cultural transitions. Thus, participants are cautioned to be aware of a potential emotional strain during interviews.

Treatment

If an unexpected injury or physical illness occurs to the participant during interviews, the researcher will assist the participant in seeking medical treatment at a nearby clinic or hospital. If a participant presents overwhelming psychological distress during interviews, the researcher is responsible for applying immediacy using grounding techniques to help deescalate the participant's emotional strain. If the participant's psychological distress reaches a level whereby psychotherapeutic treatment is required, the researcher maintains the responsibility of referring the participant to relevant counselling services for psychotherapy.

Questions, Rights and Complaints

If you have any questions about this research project, please feel free to contact Wenting Liao by phone at 604-616-2685 (Cell) or by email at liaowenting@gmai.com. If you have any questions about the process or about your rights as a participant in the study, please contact the Behavioral Research Ethics Board of the University of British Columbia (604-822-5112).

Consent statement

By signing this document you consent to participating in the study *Ethnic Name Change & Maintenance: The Acculturation of Chinese Immigrants,* conducted by Dr. Ishu Ishiyama and Wenting Liao.

This statement certifies that you are 19 years old or above, that you have read the consent, and that all your questions have been answered. You understand that you may withdraw from the study at any time, and that by withdrawing early, you will not lose any of the benefits that you would otherwise receive.

All of the answers you provide to Wenting Liao, the researcher who is responsible for the study, will be kept private. You have the right to see the results prior to publication.
A copy of the informed consent will be given to you.

I (_____)*,* consent to participate in the study *Ethnic Name Change & Maintenance: The Acculturation of Chinese Immigrants*, being conducted by Dr. Ishu Ishiyama and Wenting Liao. I have understood the nature of this project and wish to participate. I am not waiving any of my legal rights by signing this form. My signature below indicates my consent.

_____

Typed/printed Name

_____

Signature of Participant

_____

Date

Appendix C: Demographic Questionnaire

1. Age: _____

2. Gender: Male   Female   (Please circle one)

3. Original geographical region: _____

4. Education: _____

5. Occupation: _____

6. How long have you been in Canada?

_____years_____ months

7. Marital status

a) Single (   )   b) Married (   )   c) Divorced or Separated (   )

8. Do you have children?

        Yes   No   (Please circle one)

Appendix D: Interviewing Question Guide

1. What did your Chinese name mean to you? How did you think your Chinese name represented you as a person? How did you like to be identified through a name, prior to your name change?

2. What was the experience like for you to be addressed by your Chinese name by people from other ethnic groups? What feelings and thoughts did you have for your Chinese name and your identity?

3. What exactly happened to you that led to a decision to adopt an English name? (Any critical incident? Or, influenced by anyone?)

4. Why was it necessary for you to adopt an English name subsequent to immigration? What benefits did you think or expect that an English name could bring you?

5. What changes occurred to you and to your life, both internally and externally, after you adopted an English name? Were these changes related to your name change in any way? What might your life be different if you had not adopted an English name but instead maintained your Chinese name?

6. How did you feel about your English name and your name change (identity change)? What did you experience internally and externally as a Chinese person who was identified by an English name? Is there any difference as to how others reacted to you when you were addressed by your English name/Chinese name? If yes, how do/did others react differently?

7. How do you feel about your English name now? What is the difference compared to how you felt about it before?

8. What exactly happened that prompted you to change back to your Chinese name? (Any critical incident? Or influenced by others?) What feeling and thoughts did you have when you decided to resume the use of your Chinese name?

9. What have you experienced internally and externally ever since you resumed the use of your Chinese name? (feelings, thoughts, beliefs, values, attitudes, behaviors, life style, self-image, identity) What impacts do you think your Chinese name and English name respectively have/had on you and your life?

10. What does your Chinese name mean to you now? What differences exist in your feelings and thoughts, compared to how you felt about it before? What is so special in your Chinese name that has made you feel that you need to stick to it?