Ever since I began taking Asian American Studies courses, I have been interested in subject of ethnic identities. What does it mean to be a Vietnamese American, a Chinese American, a Japanese American, or a Korean American? A book I read by Rick Bonus last year, *Locating Filipino Americans: Ethnicity & the Cultural Politics of Space*, answered this question by “locating” a Filipino American identity in terms of social spaces including an “Oriental” store, a church, a social hall, and a community center. Using Bonus’s approach, I would “locate” a Korean American identity within the social space of this University. I am also interested to see how Korean American students, as members of a larger community, view themselves at the University. How does UIUC and all of its institutions affect the creation of a Korean American identity?

Looking back at my initial question and my decision to focus on Korean grocery stores as a means of locating Korean Americans within this University, I am now ready to begin narrowing my questions having visited two very different stores. The first question I have is what do the aesthetics of each store mean and how does it apply to the to the Korean American community at UIUC? Are they simply a way of attracting customers or do they have some deeper meaning for Koreans and Korean Americans? My second question deals with access. What role does use of language (both spoken and written) in these stores play in determining who Korean Americans are and who are not? What the effects of using more Korean or English?