Discovering Remote Enculturation:
Riding the First Wave of a New Concept
Julianna Ge

Mentors: Christy V. Clarke & Dr. Gail M. Ferguson
Culture and Family Life Lab, University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign

Introduction

- International migration is at an all-time high (United Nations, 2013) and families are increasingly transnational, which has implications for enculturation or 'first culture learning' This poster captures my experience working with a team in the Culture and Family Life Lab to develop and propose a modern form of enculturation- "remote enculturation" – defined by learning aspects of one's heritage culture via indirect and/or intermittent exposure.

- Enculturation typically occurs in childhood and is influenced by racial/ethnic socialization from parents and the local community (Berry, 2014). Remote enculturation captures a new mechanism by which youth can learn about their heritage culture if living outside their heritage country (e.g. children of immigrants).

- Remote enculturation is a specific form of cultural socialization (Hughes et al., 2006) and may be facilitated by parents or sought out independently by youth themselves (See Table 1 & Figure 2).

Research Process

- **Background Research:** Searched for narratives from around the world of how people learn their heritage culture using 1) University of Illinois library databases (such as Access World News Database and search terms like "immigr* + connect + home"), 2) social media (such as Facebook and WeChat), and 3) online collections of third culture narratives (such as TCKWorld)
- **Informal Interviews:** Gathered feedback by conducting eight informal interviews with individuals who discovered new aspects of their heritage culture from afar. Sample question: "How have you learned about your [insert heritage culture] while you were living here in the US?" Interviewees included international students, immigrants (first-, second-, and 1.5 generation), multiracial adults, and children from multicultural families.
- **Constructive Feedback:** The team sought feedback on our idea at a Department of Human and Community Development's Prospective Graduate Student Visiting Day Symposium

Table 1
Comparison of Traditional Enculturation and Remote Enculturation

Dimension	Traditional Enculturation	Remote Enculturation
Directness of contact between the enculturating individual and the enculturating agent	Direct, face-to-face	Usually indirect, not face-to-face
Continuity of contact between the enculturating individual and the enculturating agent	Frequent, continuous	Can be intermittent or continuous
Overt/Covert	More covert	More overt
Sensitive period in lifespan	Childhood	Childhood to young adulthood

Members of the lab work remotely and communicate by phone and skype

Julianna searches online for narratives from around the world

Figure 1.
Examples of Research Process

Dr. Ferguson, Christy, and Julianna sought feedback at the Department Symposium

Summer camps for Korean adoptees in U.S. to learn heritage culture and develop ethnic pride (Randolph & Holtzman, 2010)
Picture Sourced from: https://www.campfriendshipnj.org/korea/

Figure 2.
Examples of Remote Enculturation

2nd generation Korean immigrant adolescents in U.S. consume South Korean mass media (Oh, 2011; Lee, 2004)
Picture Sourced from: http://quod. lib.umich.edu/i/ij/11645653.0002.102 /--hallyu-20-the-korean-wave-in-the-creative-industry?rgn=main;view=fulltext

Brief trips to heritage country (e.g., summer trips to Ireland by Boston Mayor Marty Walsh)
Picture Sourced from: http://www.bostonglobe.com/metro/2014/09/19/boston-mayor-martin-walsh-travels-ireland/NnRNFkA3atb9Hk4VpbWs8/story.html

Third Culture Kids use Facebook to connect with old friends from heritage country(-ies)
Picture Sourced from: http://gradedparent2parent.blogspot.com/p/third-culture-k ids.html

Home decorations sourced from heritage country
Picture Sourced from: http://www.spacemodz.com/3-main-themes-that-you-must-apply-in-japanese-home-decor.html#a-2

Research Discoveries: Aha Moments

- **Challenge:** The process of defining new words to describe well-known experiences was challenging and sometimes felt like describing colors to the blind
- **Attitude:** Riding the first wave of a new concept required an endless source of passion and strong endurance
- **Generativity:** Research consists of innovative processes that generates new knowledge
- **Growth:** Research fostered my own self understanding about my enculturation experience and brought together shared experiences of remotely enculturating youth

Future Plans

- **Dissemination:** I will continue to participate in activities to disseminate our conceptual work on remote enculturation in the form of a Prezi presentation and a manuscript revision
- **Empirical Studies:** Using existing research on traditional enculturation, racial/ethnic socialization, and remote acculturation (Ferguson, 2013) as a guide to develop empirical studies and collect data on remote enculturation
- **Continued Research:** I will apply to PhD programs and look forward to developing my own innovative research ideas in graduate school

Conclusion

- Remote enculturation provides new aspects of traditional enculturation theory that better represents the realities of 21st century transnational families
- I encourage other undergraduate students to explore opportunities to participate in innovative research and get a head start in experiencing the research process

References

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