

SOCIALIZATION OF THE EXTENDED SELF IN CULTURAL CONTEXTS AND
RELATIONS TO CHILDREN'S SOCIO-EMOTIONAL OUTCOMES

A Dissertation

Presented to the Faculty of the Graduate School
of Cornell University

in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements for the Degree of
Doctor of Philosophy

by

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January 2015

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Cornell University 2015

This dissertation examined the socialization of the extended self in cultural contexts and the relations to children's socio-emotional outcomes. Three studies involving European-American, Chinese immigrant and Chinese preschool children and their parents were conducted. Study 1 investigated memory-sharing in a natural context, i.e., during dinnertime in European-American and Chinese immigrant families. Chinese immigrant families engaged in lengthier dinner conversations than did European-American families. During memory-sharing, Chinese immigrant parents focused not only on children's social relations, daily interactions with others, up-played their transgressions, and emphasized proper conducts, but also their personal thoughts and feelings. Conversely, European-American parents highlighted children's actions, downplayed their transgressions, and focused on their personal thoughts and feelings. Study 2 examined mother-child talk about future following memory-sharing, which connects the self from the past to the future. Chinese immigrant and Chinese mothers were more likely to talk about the future following memory-sharing than European-American mothers. Following past negative events, Chinese immigrant and Chinese mothers and children tended to engage in didactic talk that emphasized children's proper conduct in future, whereas European-American mothers and children tended to engage in autonomous talk that focused on children's opinions and preferences regarding the future. Study 3 studied mother-child reminiscing of emotionally

negative events and the long-term relations to children's socio-emotional outcomes. Both European-American and Chinese immigrant mothers and children who focused on the child's emotional states, explained the causes for the child's emotions and provided ways to resolve the negative emotions had children who showed better socio-emotional outcomes across time. Nonetheless, Chinese immigrant mothers and children who engaged in didactic talk had children who showed better emotional outcomes across time, but European-American mothers and children who engaged in didactic talk had children who showed worse emotional outcomes across time. The collective findings suggest that parents of different cultures socialize their children to develop an extended self and cope with emotionally negative experiences in ways that are congruent with the respective cultural value systems, which are associated with positive socio-emotional outcomes in children. Situated in the broader comparative context, this dissertation extended current understanding on cultural diversity in human cognition and psychological health.

BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCH

Bee Kim Koh holds a bachelor of social sciences with honors in psychology and a master of social sciences in psychology from the National University of Singapore. She is graduating with a Ph.D. in developmental psychology, with a minor in cognitive science, from Cornell University. She has received various fellowships and awards at Cornell, and has been recognized as an emerging diversity scholar by the National Center for Institutional Diversity at the University of Michigan (2013-2014). Her research has been published in peer-reviewed journals and as book chapters.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

Without whom... my heartfelt appreciation to:

Dr. Qi Wang: My committee chair, for all the invaluable guidance and lasting support rendered to me in every possible way during the course of my time in the graduate program.

Dr. Stephen Ceci and Dr. Cindy Hazan: My committee members, for all the suggestions and support rendered to me at different stages of my research and professional development.

All members of the Social Cognition Development Lab: My fellow graduate peers and undergraduate research assistants, for all the help and support rendered to me for data collection and data coding.

Department of Human Development: My graduate program department, for all the financial and instrumental support rendered to me during the course of my time in the program.

NIH Grant R01-MH64661, NSF Award BCS-0721171 and Hatch Grant from the U.S.

Department of Agriculture to Dr. Qi Wang: For supporting the three research studies conducted in this dissertation.

Dr. Weining Chang and Dr. Daniel Fung: My advisors back home in Singapore, for encouraging and starting me on this graduate school journey.

Dr. Charissa Cheah: My ardent supporter and friend, for being there for me during the course of my time in graduate school.

My friends back home in Singapore and at Cornell: For all the emotional support rendered to me as I made my journey through graduate school.

My family: For all the understanding and unconditional support rendered to me as I pursued this graduate school endeavor.

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Socialization of the Extended Self in Cultural Contexts and
Relations to Children's Socio-Emotional Outcomes

General Introduction

The self has been a subject of immense scholarly interest. Evident from both classic and contemporary writings, researchers across developmental, cognitive, neuroscience, social, and cultural psychology have shared a long history in engaging in intense scientific inquiries about the phenomenon of self. Such concerted efforts have led to the contemporary notion that the self is a rich and multi-faceted construct (e.g., Harter, 1999, 2006; Koh & Wang, 2012). Indeed, according to Neisser (1988), there are five different kinds of self-knowledge, and one of which is the extended self. This facet of self refers to the self as extended in time, which includes the self as it was in the past and the self to be in the future. Specifically, it is built on memories of past experiences and imaginations of future experiences that entail personal significance.

Specific to the developmental context, parent-child conversation about the past and future has long been suggested to be a critical medium for the socialization of the extended self (Neisser, 1988). Nelson and Fivush (2004; see also Fivush & Nelson, 2004, 2006) proposed a social cultural developmental theory on the emergence of autobiographical memory or the self as it was in the past, which highlights the role of parent-guided conversation. According to this theory, the emerging language abilities allow young children to represent, evaluate, and share past experiences with parents' scaffolding. Through participation in memory conversations with parents, children come to construct coherent and meaningful accounts of the past. During memory conversations, parents' provision of evaluative and causal information and placing the past in emotionally and personally meaningful contexts are particularly important in children's development of a sense of self in the past. Furthermore, during the course of sharing the past with parents, children come to the awareness that what they remember may or may not be the same as what someone else remembers about the same event. Through negotiating such

differences and disagreements, children may come to realize that they have a unique perspective on what occurred. In effect, children come to understand the self in the past as differentiated from others, and as continuous with the self in the present.

Turning attention to the other side of the coin, research on the socialization of the extended self as projected forward in time is in its infancy stage. Nevertheless, it is known that mother-child conversation about the future is commonplace when children are as young as two years of age (Lucariello & Nelson, 1987). During future conversation, mothers scaffold children's participation in the discussions by (1) using elaborative/advanced language, characterized by elaboration, and references to future events, possible actions, predictions and temporal terms; (2) making references to past events and general event knowledge; as well as (3) using repetitions and prompts and make references to preferences (Hudson, 2006). Through such mother-guided discussion about the future, children come to learn to envision and understand themselves in the future (Hudson, 2001, 2002).

Importantly, parent-child conversation is situated in the larger cultural context, which specifies the values and goals attached to the self (Wang, 2006). Parents of different cultures talk about past and future personal experiences with their children in ways that are in tune with prevailing cultural values. For example, extant studies have focused on examining mother-child conversation about the past, and have found that in cultures that embrace individuality, such as the European American culture, mothers use a high-elaborative, independently-oriented conversational style in which they elaborate on the child's responses and focus on the child's personal predilections and opinions. On the other hand, in cultures that embrace social connectedness, such as the Chinese culture, mothers employ a low-elaborative, interdependently-oriented conversational style in which they frequently pose and repeat factual questions and

show great concern with adherence to social norms, moral rules and behavioral standards with their children (Wang, Leichtman, & Davies, 2000; Wang, 2007). By participating in such culturally-mediated mother-child conversation, children develop representations of past and future personally significant events that align with cultural norms, through which they develop an extended self that matches the cultural expectations of the cultural worlds they reside. In other words, children come to develop an extended self that is culturally enduring and adaptive.

Regardless of the cultural milieus in which they reside, children's personal experiences are not all pleasant and positive. When the past experiences that parent-child talk about are emotional in nature, particularly those that are emotionally negative, children come to develop representations of these emotional events that not only allow them to define their emotional self (Fivush, Berlin, Sales, Mennuti-Washburn, & Cassidy, 2003), but also impact their social and emotional outcomes. During reminiscing, parents could help children to interpret and evaluate these experiences and regulate the aversive effects. Specifically, mothers and children tend to focus on understanding the emotions experienced, provide causal explanations for why those emotions were experienced, as well as the ways to cope with them. All of these elements have been deemed as pertinent to construct a meaning-making framework that is important for facilitating children's immediate and long-term understanding and regulation of the negative emotions. Importantly, they are associated with better social and emotional outcomes in children (e.g., Laible, 2011; Sales & Fivush, 2005).

Extant research has provided valuable insights to the socialization of the extended self in the cultural contexts and the relations to children's social and emotional outcomes. Nevertheless, there are important questions that have yet to be answered. Firstly, extant research has largely focused on examining dyadic memory conversations between mothers and children that takes on

the format of semi-instructed interview. In the day-to-day life, there is one context that may be particularly common for parents to scaffold children's developing sense of extended self, namely, family dinnertime. In this context, discussion of past events takes place and unfolds naturally. To date, there has been no study that examines parent-child past talk in such a natural context. The first paper of this dissertation thus sought to examine memory-sharing between parents and their 3-year-olds during dinnertime in Chinese immigrant families, with European American families as a comparison group.

Secondly, although there has been a suite of research examining mother-child talk about the future *per se*, it has been observed that some mothers tend to spontaneously talk about the future following a discussion of past events with their children. Such future conversation following memory-sharing is important for the development of the extended self because it connects the past with the future. Yet, this form of talk about future that follows from past event discussion has not been systematically studied. The second paper of this dissertation thus sought to study future talk following mother-child memory-sharing in European American, Chinese American and Chinese families with 3-year-olds.

Thirdly, extant research has examined the relations between mother-child reminiscing of emotionally negative events and children's social and emotional outcomes. However, these studies have focused on the concurrent, but not longitudinal, effects. Furthermore, these studies have largely been conducted with European American families and have not taken into consideration the influence of the larger cultural context. The third paper of this dissertation thus sought to investigate mother-child emotion talk of negative experiences and the long-term relations to children's socio-emotional outcomes in European American and Chinese immigrant families.

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Paper One

Narrative Self-Making During Dinnertime Conversations
in Chinese Immigrant Families

Paper published:

Koh, J. B. K., & Wang, Q. (2013). Narrative self-making during dinnertime conversations in Chinese immigrant families. In A. McCabe, & C. Chang (Eds.), *Chinese language narration: Culture, cognition, and emotion* (pp. 7-32). Netherlands: John Benjamins Publishing Company.

Abstract

Narrative self-making at dinnertime was examined in Chinese immigrant families, with European American families serving as a comparison group. Based on Bruner's (1986, 1990) "dual landscapes" theoretical framework, we analyzed memory conversations at dinnertime in five Chinese immigrant and seven European American families with preschool-aged children. Chinese immigrant families engaged in lengthier dinner conversations than did European American families. Chinese immigrant and European American parents further differed in the way they narrated information pertaining to the landscape of actions (e.g., people involved, child's actions, others' actions) and landscape of consciousness (e.g., child's internal states, others' internal states). As Chinese immigrant parents continue to uphold values from the culture-of-origin while adopting the values of the host culture, they narrated information that would socialize their children towards the development of a bicultural self. On the other hand, in accordance with their cultural values, European American parents narrated information that would socialize their children towards the development of an independent self. Dinnertime thus functions as an important socialization context for narrative self-making to construct a cultured self.

Introduction

Narrative encompasses the act of storytelling to organize experience and construct reality (Bruner, 1986, 1990). In the developmental context, narrating personal stories is one important medium for parents to help children organize their experience and construct reality in ways that are in tune with the prevailing values and norms of the cultural world in which they reside. It is a particularly powerful medium for parents to socialize their children to develop a self-concept that aligns with the expected cultural model of selfhood. Extant literature has examined narrative self-making through mother-child memory conversations (Nelson & Fivush, 2004). In the day-to-day life, there is one context that may be particularly common for parents to scaffold children's developing sense of self through narratives, namely, family dinnertime. Dinnertime has been regarded as an opportunity space where parents and children can come together to discuss and generate knowledge about everyday events (Ochs, Smith, & Taylor, 1989; Ochs, Taylor, Rudolph, & Smith, 1992). Yet, little is known about narrative self-making through dinnertime conversations.

Immigrant families are faced with the unique challenge of socializing their children to develop a self-concept that is in relation to both the host and origin cultures, where the respective cultural values, norms and expectations may not necessarily be congruent with each other. Dinnertime may serve as an important socialization context for immigrant parents to discuss everyday events. Through such discussions, they can come to socialize their children towards developing a bicultural self that is adaptive in the immigrant context.

In this chapter, we analyze dinnertime conversations in Chinese immigrant families with preschool-aged children, with European American families serving as a comparison group to illustrate the role of family narrative practices in the construction of a cultured self. We first

review theoretical accounts of the features of narrative that make it a powerful tool to understand human actions, intentions, thoughts and feelings as situated within one's cultural framework. We then review theoretical perspectives and empirical findings on narrative self-making, particularly in the developmental and cultural contexts. We then highlight theoretical accounts of the importance of narrative self-making at dinnertime, especially in the immigrant context. Finally, we detail a research project that analyzed narrative self-making during dinnertime conversation in Chinese immigrant and European American families.

Why Narratives?

The word narrative derives from the Latin verb *narrare*, meaning "to recount" and is related to the adjective *gnarus*, meaning "knowing." It entails the act of storytelling from which individuals discern meaning from experiences. The value of narrative has been highlighted in psychological research in recent years. Bruner (1986, 1990) distinguished between two modes of thinking for organizing experience and constructing reality. The paradigmatic mode refers to logical-scientific thinking that seeks to establish truth about the world through logical thinking, systematic observations, and empirical proof. In contrast, the narrative mode refers to story-form thinking that seeks to establish lifelikeness through recounting experiences and meaning making. While the paradigmatic mode has been a familiar way of thinking about human conditions to social scientists, the introduction to the narrative mode sets forth a way in which the experiential specificity of human action and intentionality as situated in cultural contexts can be best understood. Research using narrative methods has investigated a variety of topics such as family socialization (e.g., Miller, Fung, & Koven, 2007; Miller, Fung, Lin, Chen, & Boldt, 2012), self and identity development (e.g., McLean, 2005; McLean, Pasupathi, & Pals, 2007), autobiographical memory (e.g., Fivush & Nelson, 2004; Nelson & Fivush, 2004), and emotion

knowledge and emotion regulation (e.g., Wang, 2001; Wang & Fivush, 2005). More recently, narrative methods have been used to study more varied human conditions, one of which concerns parenting and child development in the immigrant context (e.g., Koh, Shao, & Wang, 2009; Wang, 2012).

Several distinct features of narrative are particularly noteworthy from the current perspective (Bruner, 1986, 1990). Narrative often deals with the canonical and the exceptional. Typically, a story begins with what is considered canonical, then proceeds to some form of departure from it, and then moves on to restore the canonical and finally, arrives at a resolution and a coda, which is often some form of moral insight. By portraying both the ordinary and the deviations, narrative reveals cultural meaning. Every culture has its own set of ideologies, beliefs, values, and practices that constitute what is considered normal about human functioning. Personal stories, through illustrating the canonical, reveal the common thoughts and behaviors within a particular cultural milieu. And through explaining and making sense of the exceptional, stories negotiate meanings of the norm-deviated thoughts and behaviors to render them understandable within the canonical as prescribed by a specific culture.

Furthermore, narrative comprises what Bruner (1986, 1990) termed “dual landscapes”. The landscape of action refers to the actions, events, and plot of the story, and the landscape of consciousness refers to the mental states of the characters involved in the landscape of action. With such dual landscapes, narrative depicts both actions and psychological states of the characters and thus reveals personal meaning. In other words, narrative deals with one’s actions, intentions, beliefs, desires, emotions, needs, and goals. Through telling about one’s internal states and evaluations of the events and happenings, personal stories reveal how one interprets the events and happenings as they unfold and their significance to oneself.

Perhaps the most important property of narrative is its sequentiality (Bruner, 1986, 1990). Narrative is made up of a unique sequence of changing events and happenings that involve some characters and their mental states. These constituents of narrative, when configured together, form the plot of the story. The meaning of each constituent is derived from its relation to the plot, and the meaning of the plot is, in turn, derived from the sequential positioning of each constituent. Through the particular sequencing of the constituents, the overall plot comes into being and the narrative makes meaning. Thus, embodied in the body of words in narrative (in oral or written forms) is a set of powerful features to discern meaning of personal experiences within the framework prescribed by the cultural context in which one operates.

Narrative Self-Making

The narrative approach views personal storytelling as a critical means of meaning-making in defining the self, where “we achieve our personal identities and self-concept through the use of the narrative configuration, and make our existence into a whole by understanding it as an expression of a single unfolding and developing story” (Polkinghorne, 1988, p. 150). Bruner (1990) argued that the self is constructed and reconstructed with changing situations as one experiences them. This self-construction process is guided by one’s memories of the past and one’s anticipation of the future. It is through telling about oneself that one makes up the story of the self -- who one is, what one is, what has happened, and why one is doing what one is doing. Along a similar line, Nelson (2000, 2001) suggested that during the narrativizing process about the self, the self is able to take an external viewpoint on one’s own experience. And with the provision of a verbal account of the experience, the Experiencing I becomes the Objective Me. The narration about the self in the past and the future further facilitates the construction of a Continuing Me. Thus, by examining “how *individuals* define their own Selves” in their life

stories (Bruner, 1990, p. 116), we can start to understand how the self is negotiated and constructed through narrative reflections on one's personal and cultural experiences.

Furthermore, narrative approaches to self-construction utilize unstructured, open-ended methods that allow individuals to "generate their own self-descriptions, using their own vocabularies and guided by their unique perspectives on themselves" (Hart & Edelstein, 1992, p. 304). Personal storytelling thus enables us to analyze and understand the processes of the development and socialization of the self from the individuals' own point of view.

Narrative Self-Making in Children

Developmentally, children are predisposed naturally to the act of narration to make sense of human action and intentionality (Bruner, 1986, 1990). Language development and socialization practices further allow children to perfect narrative skills. In line with Bruner's proposal, researchers of the Vygotskian (1978) social interactionist tradition maintain that narrative is both a linguistic and a socially-mediated practice (e.g., Nelson & Fivush, 2004; Miller et al., 2012). Adults (usually mothers) may provide multiple participant structures for children to take part in narrating stories, including telling stories *around* the child, telling stories *about* the child, and telling stories *with* the child (Miller & Moore, 1989). Through narrating stories in these manners, adults scaffold children to organize their experience and construct reality, as well as model to children the culturally canonical ways of narration. Importantly, such organization and modeling are in tune with the prevailing cultural beliefs, knowledge and language structures, and ways of thinking and feeling. Children, in turn, make sense of themselves and their social worlds within the framework prescribed by their culture.

Among the different participant structures, mothers telling stories of personally significant past experiences with children (i.e., mother-child memory conversations) is an

especially powerful medium for mothers to socialize their children to construct a self that aligns with cultural expectations. According to the social cultural developmental theory on the emergence of autobiographical memory (Fivush & Nelson, 2004, 2006; Nelson & Fivush, 2004), emerging language abilities allow young children to represent, evaluate, and share past experiences with adult scaffolding. In line with Bruner's (1986, 1990) discussion of the "dual landscapes", through participation in memory conversations with adults, children learn to provide orienting and referential information (which corresponds to the landscape of actions), as well as provide evaluative information (which corresponds to the landscape of consciousness). Through learning these canonical ways of narration, children come to construct coherent and meaningful accounts of the past. Importantly, adults' reflection on children's actions and provision of internal states and causal language place the past in emotionally and personally meaningful contexts for the children. Such conversational elements bring about awareness of the former self, which shapes children's development of a sense of self in the past. Furthermore, during the course of sharing the past with adults, children come to the awareness that what they remember may or may not be the same as what someone else remembers about the same event. Through negotiating the differences and disagreements, children come to realize that they have a unique perspective on what occurred. In effect, children come to understand the self in the past as differentiated from others, and as different from but continuous with the self in the present.

Elaborative memory conversations are particularly instrumental to children's autobiographical memory and self-development (for a review, see Fivush, Haden, & Reese, 2006). Extensive research has shown that there are two markedly different styles of narration that mothers use when sharing memories with their children. Mothers who use an elaborative or topic-extending style engage in lengthy conversation with their children. They provide rich and

embellished information about the past events under discussion and encourage children to provide similarly lengthy, rich, and embellished narratives. In contrast, mothers who use a low-elaborative, topic-switching or repetitive style engage in shorter conversation with their children. They provide fewer details about the past events under discussion and tend to ask pointed questions which have correct or incorrect answers. Depending on the parental narrative style, the amount of information narrated varies, which can affect children's developing sense of self. For example, elaborate discussions of internal states during memory conversations have been found to facilitate the development of a subjective autobiographical self (Fivush & Haden, 2005). Furthermore, mothers who mention more about emotion (Welch-Ross, Fasig, & Farrer, 1999), especially those who explain more about negative emotions (Bird & Reese, 2006), have children with more organized and consistent self-knowledge. In addition, mothers who mention more about positive emotions and explain more about both positive and negative emotions have children with higher self-esteem (Reese, Bird, & Tripp, 2007).

Narrative Self-Making in Children Across Cultures

Bruner (1986, 1990) contended that narratives are culturally bounded. In line with this view, mothers of different cultures engage in memory conversations with their children in different manners, and children, in turn, come to develop a sense of who they are that is in tune with the respective cultural milieus they reside in (Wang, 2006). Much of the cross-cultural research on autobiographical memory development has focused on comparisons between cultures that value independence or interdependence. Cultures valuing independence include North American, Western Europe and Australia, where the individual self is emphasized and personal distinctiveness and self-expression are highly cherished. Cultures valuing interdependence include East Asia, Latin America, Southern Europe and Africa, where the self-

in-relation is highlighted and interpersonal harmony, social hierarchy and social conformity are highly prized (Markus & Kitayama, 1991).

Studies have found that the amount of information and the types of information elaborated by mothers during memory conversations differ significantly across cultures (Miller et al., 2007, 2012; Wang, 2007; Wang, Doan, & Song, 2010; Wang & Fivush, 2005; Wang, Leichtman, & Davies, 2000). Mothers in cultures that embrace independence, such as European Americans, use a high-elaborative, independently-oriented conversational style. These mothers tend to elaborate upon the child's personal predilections, opinions and internal states, and often downplay their children's transgressions with the goal of protecting children's self-esteem. Such memory conversations are geared towards the development of autonomy and self-expression, consistent with the Western cultural emphasis on independence. In contrast, mothers in cultures that embrace interdependence, such as the Chinese and Chinese immigrants, employ a low-elaborative, interdependently-oriented conversational style. These mothers frequently pose and repeat factual questions, and tend to show great concerns about children's social interactions and proper behaviors. They often utilize discussions of children's transgressions to convey behavioral expectations as well as moral and social rules. The nature of such memory conversations is thus garnered towards attention to social hierarchy, conformity and relationships, in line with the cultural emphasis on interdependence.

Correspondingly, children come to develop a sense of self that is congruent with their respective cultures, as reflected in two kinds of their self-knowledge – autobiographical memory and self-concept (Han, Leichtman & Wang, 1998; Wang, 2004, 2006; Wang et al., 2010). Specifically, European American children often provide elaborate and detailed autobiographical memories focusing on their own roles, preferences, thoughts and feelings. In their self-

descriptions, European American children frequently highlight their personal and inner attributes, dispositions and traits in a positive light. In contrast, Chinese and Chinese immigrant children provide relatively skeletal accounts of past experiences that center on social interactions and daily routines in their autobiographical memories. In their self-descriptions, Chinese and Chinese immigrant children often highlight their social roles, context-specific characters and overt behaviors in a neutral or modest tone.

Narrative Self-Making at Dinnertime

The literature on narrative self-making to date has largely focused on examining dyadic memory conversations between mothers and children. However, there is increased recognition that telling stories and sharing memories with the family as a whole is pertinent to child development. Ochs and colleagues (Ochs et al., 1989, 1992) have argued that dinnertime is an opportunity space for families to come together to recount the day's event or to make plans for future events. In particular, through participating in the family's reminiscing about the day's events, members of the family not only learn to become storytellers but also theory-builders of their daily experiences. This is because each story that is told must be first explained. The explanations are then challenged by members of the family, who may add different perspectives to the story. The story is then reevaluated to reach a theory of what happened. This opportunity space allows for not only generation of social order, but also knowledge of everyday events.

Importantly, knowledge of everyday events generated through family reminiscing is instrumental to defining who one is. Although not directly examining family conversations at dinner tables, the few studies to date about family reminiscing have shown that sharing memories with the family influences children's self-development. In particular, a coordinated family reminiscing style that incorporates perspectives from not just mothers, but also fathers

and other family members, is associated with higher self-esteem, especially in girls (Bohanek, Marin, Fivush, & Duke, 2006). Nonetheless, not unlike in dyadic mother-child memory conversations, maternal (but not paternal) mentions and explanations about emotions during family reminiscing are associated with children's positive self-esteem longitudinally (Bohanek, Marin, & Fivush, 2008).

The emerging attention on family reminiscing suggests that it is another important socialization context in which parents can scaffold children's developing sense of self, in addition to mother-child memory-sharing. Such reminiscing often takes place at family dinnertime and may be shaped by the specific cultural context.

Narrative Self-Making at Dinnertime in the Chinese Immigrant Context

The Chinese immigrant families in the United States are one important cultural context to understand self-socialization and development. Chinese immigrant families are operating within a bicultural environment that includes influences from the host culture and the culture-of-origin. The two sets of cultural beliefs, knowledge and language structures, and ways of thinking and feeling are not necessarily congruent with each other. On the one hand, the host culture emphasizes the value of independence and its corresponding repertoire of psychological characteristics. On the other hand, the culture-of-origin emphasizes the value of interdependence and its corresponding set of behavioral characteristics. Kagitcibasi (2007, 2012) has contended that the development of an autonomous-relational self is the most adaptive in the immigrant context. This is because it is with such a bicultural self that immigrant children can navigate and function within the mainstream host cultural environment, while continuing to be relational and garner support from their families that are representative of the culture-of-origin. In effect, Chinese immigrant families are faced with the unique challenge of socializing their children to

develop a self-concept that is in relation to both the host and home cultures. Understanding the socialization mechanisms that may bring about the development of a bicultural self in Chinese immigrant children thus warrants attention.

Various studies have examined parental values upheld by Chinese immigrant parents, which influence the ways parents socialize their children, including self-concept development. In a qualitative study, Chao (1995) found that Chinese immigrant mothers continued to value relational characteristics, such as respecting and getting along with others, being obedient, and adhering to moral rules. However, they also endorsed the importance of individualist characteristics, such as being independent. In another study, Jose, Huntsinger, Huntsinger, and Liaw (2000) found that Chinese immigrant parents rated collectivist traits such as politeness and neatness as more important to encourage in their children than did European American parents. Nonetheless, they rated individualistic traits such as independence and assertiveness as important to encourage in their children equivalent to such endorsements by European American parents. In fact, Lin and Fu (1990) found that Chinese immigrant parents scored higher on parental control, emphasis on achievement, and encouragement of independence, when compared to European American parents. Collectively, the findings suggest that Chinese immigrant parents continue to uphold the values of culture-of-origin. They are also adopting the host culture values to at least a similar, if not higher, level as European American parents do. Correspondingly, both sets of values and their repertoire of psychological characteristics should be reflected and transmitted during the family reminiscing process, through which Chinese immigrant children can develop a bicultural self.

An important avenue for Chinese immigrant families to engage in family reminiscing is at the dinner table. In line with the cultural emphasis on interdependence, familial connectedness

and interactions are highly valued in Chinese families, including Chinese immigrant families (Chao & Tseng, 2002). Dinner is a time where all family members come to spend quality time together. Long conversations often take place at the dinner table so as to find out what happened or will happen to the family and each of the family members in detail. Dinnertime conversations about children's past and future events may thus be an important socialization context for the development of a bicultural self in Chinese immigrant children.

A Study of Dinnertime Conversations

We conducted a study to examine narrative self-making through dinnertime conversations in Chinese immigrant families. To better illustrate the role of family dinnertime conversations in the construction of a cultured self, European American families were used as a comparison group. In line with the literature on narrative self-making through memory conversations, we focused on examining dinner conversations about past events. We utilized Bruner's (1986, 1990) framework of "dual landscapes" to examine narrative self-making. Through the manners in which parents highlighted different pieces of information during memory conversations, we expected that Chinese immigrant parents would socialize their children to develop both an interdependent self and an independent self. Conversely, we predicted that European American parents would socialize their children to develop an independent self.

Method

Participants

Five Chinese immigrant families from Ithaca, New York, participated in the study. All focus children had lived in the United States since birth, except for one child who lived in the United States since two and half years of age. There were three boys and two girls, with a mean

age of 40.6 months. All parents had at least a college education. The comparison group included seven European American families from Ithaca, New York. The focus children included four boys and three girls, with a mean age of 39.4 months. Except for one mother who had a trade school education and two fathers who were high school graduates, all parents had at least a college education. Across all 12 families, the key members involved in dinnertime conversations with the focus child were the parents. Some families had other family members, including grandparents, siblings, and other adults, present at the dinner and took part in conversations. Participation was voluntary. Families were given \$50 for their participation. Children each received a small gift.

Procedure

The study was part of a larger longitudinal project on social-cognitive development across cultures. Families were recruited when the focus child was between the ages of two and half to three and half years, and were followed for a one-year period. Mother-child pairs were first invited to the lab to take part in a series of assessments, including mother-child play, storytelling, book reading, and memory-sharing. After the lab assessment, mothers were provided with audiotapes and were requested to record normal, everyday dinner conversations. Mothers were asked to record one dinner conversation approximately every two months, with a total of six conversations spanning twelve months. Mothers were instructed that these dinner conversations would need to include at least the mother herself and the focus child, and could include any other regular members of the family's dinners. In addition, mothers were told that the dinner conversations were to be conducted in the language that was normally spoken at home, with no time restrictions placed on the length of the conversations. Finally, mothers were asked to mail the audiotapes to the laboratory in the return envelopes provided.

The returned audiotapes were transcribed verbatim. All Chinese immigrant families spoke in Chinese, with one family speaking a mixture of Chinese and English. All European American families spoke in English. Correspondingly, bilingual Chinese-English research assistants transcribed the audiotapes for the Chinese families and English-speaking research assistants transcribed the audiotapes for the European American families. Only the data for the first audiotaped dinner conversations were available for all 12 families. Thus, only the first audiotaped dinner conversations were coded and analyzed.

Coding

Coding focused on parents' contributions to the dinnertime conversations. Bruner's (1986, 1990) "dual landscapes" theoretical framework was used as the basis for developing the coding scheme. All the variables were coded for frequency. This allowed us to examine not only the presence of the narrative codes but also how frequent and thus how important they were in the self-construction process. Information elements, which refer to any nouns, verb phrases, or unique modifiers (Fivush, Hazzard, Sales, Sarfati, & Brown, 2003), were coded into one of the following exclusive and exhaustive categories. For example, "Did you play at the playground today?" was coded for action (play) by child (you), location (playground), and time (today).

Landscape of actions. This category of codes captured new pieces of information parents provided with regards to who, when, where, objects and actions of child and others.

(1) *People:* The number of people present in each event, not including the child himself/herself.

(2) *Time:* References to when an event took place, including which day (e.g., yesterday; today) and what time (e.g., this morning; this afternoon).

(3) *Location*: References to the location that an event took place (e.g., school; church), including specific locations within the general location (e.g., classroom in school; inside the church).

(4) *Objects*: References to the objects present in an event (e.g., computer; tacos), including the mentioning of animals (e.g., birds; swans).

(5) *Actions*: References to any actions carried out in an event (e.g., playing; talking). Actions were further categorized into (i) child's actions (e.g., did you sleep at school?) and (ii) others-involved actions, which included actions by child and others (e.g., did we take the pet to the pet store?) and actions by others only (e.g., was Edward jumping around?).

(6) *Positive behaviors*: References to positive behaviors carried out in an event (e.g., polite; nice). Positive behaviors were further categorized into (i) child's behaviors (e.g., were you polite?) and (ii) others-involved behaviors, which included behaviors by child and others (e.g., were we nice?) and behaviors by others only (e.g., was she nice?).

(7) *Negative behaviors*: References to negative behaviors carried out in an event (e.g., rude), including getting hurt (e.g., fell from swing). Negative behaviors were further categorized into (i) child's behaviors (e.g., you did not say "good-bye") and (ii) others-involved behaviors, which included behaviors by child and others (e.g., did you and Wendy fight?) and behaviors by others only (e.g., did Brian push David?).

(8) *Moral and social rules*: References to appropriate behaviors that should be adhered to by the people involved in an event (e.g., you should have told the teachers about it; don't be rude next time).

Landscape of consciousness. This category of codes captured new and repeated pieces of information parents provided with regards to how the child and others thought or felt and the social content of the thoughts and feelings.

(1) *Internal states*: References to the cognitive, emotional and subjective states of people.

Internal states were further categorized into (i) child's internal states (e.g., were *you* happy?) and (ii) others-involved internal states, which included those of child's and others' shared internal states (e.g., *we* didn't like it, did we?) and others' internal states only (e.g., was *she* angry?). Due to low frequency, the cognitive, emotional and subjective states were counted together as one category.

(2) *Social contents of internal states*: References to the social content of the cognitive, emotional and subjective states of people. The social contents of internal states were further categorized into (i) involving child only (e.g., were you happy *with yourself*?) and (ii) involving others, which included involving child and others (e.g., you wanted to play with *daddy and mommy*, right?) and others only (e.g., did you think *he* liked doing that?). Due to low frequency, the social content of cognitive, emotional and subjective states were counted together as one category.

The difference between the two codes is that "internal states" captured *whose* thoughts and feelings, whereas "social content of internal states" captured *who* was concerned in the thoughts and feelings. Drawing from an example above, "do you think he liked doing that?" was coded as child's internal state (do you think) with social content involving others (he).

Coding was conducted in the original languages. A Chinese-English bilingual coder coded all the datasets. Another Chinese-English research assistant coded 40% of the Chinese

immigrant and European American datasets, respectively, for inter-coder reliability estimates.

Repeated discussion sessions were held for disagreements to be resolved. Across the categories of variables, the percentage of agreement ranged from 95% to 100% for the Chinese sample and 83% to 100% for the European American sample.

Results

Table 1.1 shows the means and standard deviations of the variables studied. Due to the small sample size of the study, inferences were based on effect sizes instead of p values as a strategy for avoiding Type II errors (Cohen, 1992). Results of moderate to large effect sizes were reported. According to Cohen (1992), effect sizes of .20, .50 and .80 are considered to be small, medium and large respectively.

Length of Conversation and Number of Past Event Recounted

Overall, measured in minutes, Chinese immigrant families had longer dinner conversations than European American families did, $t(10) = 3.18, p < .05, d = .70$. Interestingly, Chinese immigrant and European American families recounted an equal mean number of past events, $t(10) = .03, n.s., d = .00$.

Landscape of Actions

Time, location, people, objects. Compared to European American parents, Chinese immigrant parents more frequently mentioned locations of events, $t(10) = .76, n.s., d = .43$ and the people involved, $t(10) = .85, n.s., d = .52$. The effect sizes for time and objects were trivial. Notably, the largest difference observed was in the mentioning of people who were involved.

Table 1.1. Means and standard deviations of the variables studied

Variables	Chinese Immigrant <i>M (SD)</i>	European American <i>M (SD)</i>
Length of conversation (in minutes)	40.70 (14.57)	19.27 (4.52)
Number of memories recounted	1.60 (1.82)	1.57 (1.27)
Landscape of actions		
People	2.60 (3.21)	1.29 (1.50)
Time	1.40 (1.52)	1.71 (1.50)
Location	2.40 (2.30)	1.57 (1.51)
Objects	3.00 (2.83)	2.43 (1.90)
Actions: Child	4.20 (4.92)	3.71 (3.20)
Actions: Others-involved	3.00 (3.74)	1.43 (2.15)
Positive behaviors: Child	.00 (.00)	.29 (.76)
Positive behaviors: Others-involved	.20 (.45)	.00 (.00)
Negative behaviors: Child	1.80 (2.49)	.14 (.38)
Negative behaviors: Others-involved	.00 (.00)	.14 (.38)
Moral and social rules	1.20 (1.64)	.71 (1.89)
Landscape of consciousness		
Internal states: Child	2.80 (3.35)	1.14 (1.86)
Internal states: Others-involved	.40 (.55)	.71 (1.50)
Social content of internal states: Involving child	1.40 (1.67)	1.00 (1.53)
Social content of internal states: Involving others	1.80 (3.49)	.14 (.38)

Actions. Compared to European American parents, Chinese immigrant parents more frequently mentioned others-involved actions, $t(10) = .85, n.s., d = .51$. References to child's actions did not differ between cultures. Within-culture analyses showed that child's actions were more frequently mentioned than others-involved actions by both Chinese immigrant parents, $t(4) = .51, n.s., d = .27$ and European American parents, $t(6) = 1.57, n.s., d = .84$. The within-culture difference in the mentions of child's versus others-involved actions was particularly pronounced in the European American sample.

Positive behaviors. Because the frequencies of responses were too low, this category was no longer considered for further analysis.

Negative behaviors. Compared to European American parents, Chinese immigrant parents more frequently mentioned child's negative behaviors, $t(10) = 1.48, n.s., d = .93$. Both Chinese and European American parents rarely mentioned others-involved negative behaviors. Within culture, Chinese immigrant parents more frequently mentioned child's negative behaviors than others-involved negative behaviors, $t(4) = 1.62, n.s., d = 1.02$. In contrast, European American parents rarely mentioned either child's or others-involved negative behaviors.

Moral and social rules. Chinese immigrant parents more frequently mentioned moral and social rules than did European American parents, $t(10) = .46, n.s., d = .28$.

Landscape of Consciousness

Internal states. Surprisingly, Chinese immigrant parents more frequently mentioned child's internal states than did European American parents, $t(10) = 1.10, n.s., d = .61$. Both Chinese immigrant and European American parents rarely mentioned others-involved internal states. Within culture, both Chinese immigrant parents, $t(4) = 1.86, n.s., d = 1.00$, and European

American parents, $t(6) = .47$, *n.s.*, $d = .25$, mentioned child's internal states more frequently than others-involved internal states.

Social content of internal states. Compared to European American parents, Chinese immigrant parents more frequently mentioned internal states that involved others, $t(10) = 1.06$, *n.s.*, $d = .77$. Chinese immigrant parents also more frequently mentioned internal states that involved children alone than did European American parents, $t(10) = .42$, *n.s.*, $d = .25$. In addition, European American parents mentioned more internal states that involved children alone than those that involved others, $t(6) = 1.35$, *n.s.*, $d = .77$. Chinese immigrant parents made similar numbers of references to internal states involving the child versus others.

The following examples extracted from the data further illustrate the kinds of information Chinese immigrant and European American parents mentioned when recounting past events with children at dinnertime.

Example 1: Chinese immigrant, A day at school

Father: *jin1 tian1 you4 er2 yuan2 de4 xiao3 peng2 you3 duo1 ma1?*

Were there lots of little children at kindergarten today?

Child: *bi3 jiao4 shao3.*

Fewer today.

Father: *jin1 tian1 bi3 jiao4 shao3 shi4 ma1?*

Fewer today, is it?

Child: *dui4...*

Yes...

Father: *Mimi dou1 mei2 qu4 shi4 bu4 shi4?*

Mimi didn't go, right?

Child: *dui4*.

Right.

Mother: *jin1 tian1 xing1 qi1 er4 ya0, xing1 qi1 er4 Mimi jiu4 bu4 shang4 xue2*.

Today is Tuesday. Tuesday, Mimi doesn't go to school.

Child: Yeah.

.....

Mother: *ni2 you3 mei2 you3 yi4 dian3 xiang3 Mimi a1?*

Did you miss Mimi a little bit?

Child: ...

Mother: *you3 mei2 you3 yi4 dian3 xiang3 Mimi?*

Did you miss Mimi a little bit?

Child: *you3 yi4 dian3*.

A little bit.

Father and Mother: (Laughs)

In the above example, Chinese immigrant parents were reminiscing with their child about a day at school. The conversation started off with orienting information on when and where the child was. Notably, the parents focused on asking about social others, i.e., child's peers at school in general and one friend specifically. Furthermore, the mother asked about the child's thought ("did you miss...") involving the friend, not once, but twice.

Example 2: Chinese immigrant, Misbehaving when visiting an aunt

Mother: Bao Bao *jin1 tian1 you3 mei2 you3 gen1 ba4 ba0 jiang3 ni3 fan4 de4 cuo4 wu4?*

Bao Bao, did you tell Papa what you did wrong today?

...

Mother: *ni3 zai4 a0 yi2 jia1 zen3 me4 le0?*

What happened to you at Aunty's house?

Child: Bao Bao *bu4 jin4 qu4.*

Bao Bao didn't go in.

Mother: *zai4 men2 kou3 bu4 jin4 qu4. ran2 hou4 ne0?*

Stay at the door and didn't go in. And then?

Child: *bu4 wan2.*

Didn't play...

Mother: *bu4 gen1 Edward wan2. hai2 you3 ne0?*

Didn't play with Edward... What else?

Child: *zai4 lou2 ti1 bu4 shuo1* "bye-bye".

At staircase, didn't say "bye-bye"

Mother: Hmm...

Child: *men2 mei2 you3 guan1 hao3.*

Didn't close door properly.

...

Father: *ba4 ba0 yi3 jing1 dou1 zhi1 dao4. xia4 ci4 jiu4 hui4 bian4 hao3 yi4 dian3 shi4
bu4 shi4?*

Papa already knows everything. Next time [Bao Bao] will change and be a bit better, right?

Mother : *xia4 ci4 jiu4 bu4 fan4 cuo4 wu4.*

Next time don't make mistakes.

In this example, the Chinese immigrant mother focused on recounting her child's negative behaviors when visiting an aunty and her son during the day. Specifically, the mother wanted the child to tell his father how socially inappropriate he was during the visit. In fact, the child's social misbehaviors were highlighted one by one in specific detail. Finally, both parents reminded the child that those social misbehaviors should not be repeated in the future. Again, orienting information, including two other people, was mentioned.

Example 3: Chinese immigrant, A day at the park

Mother: ... *ni3 jin1 tian1 zai4 gong1 yuan2 li3 wan2 shen3 me0 le0?*

... What did you play at the park today?

Child: *pa2 shan1 le0.*

Climb the hill.

Mother: *pa2 shan1 le0?*

Climb the hill?

Child: *en0.*

Yeah.

Mother: *dang4 qiu1 qian1 le0 mei2 you3?*

Play on the swing?

Child: *en0.*

Yeah.

Mother: *hai2 you3 ne0? Hai2 wan2 shen3 me0 ne0? qu4 kan4 ya1 zi3 le4 mei2 you3?*

What else? What else did you play? Did you go see the ducks?

Child: *en0.*

Yep.

Mother: *kan4 dao4 tian1 er2 le4 mei2 you3?*

Did you see the swans?

Child: *en0*.

Yep.

Mother: *kan4 tian1 er2 le4. hao3 a4.*

You saw the swans. That's good!

Child: *wo3 shuai1 le4 yi4 jiao1.*

I had a fall.

Mother: *ni3 shuai1 le4 yi4 jiao1? wei4 shen3 me0 hui4 shuai1 le4 yi4 jiao1? zen3 me4 shuai1 le4 yi4 jiao1?*

You had a fall? Why did you fall? How come you fell?

Child: *cong2... diao4 xia4 lai2 le4.*

I fell from...

Mother: *cong2 na3 er2 diao4 xia4 lai2 le4?*

Where did you fall from?

Child: *cong2 cao3 di4 shang4 diao4 xia4 lai2 le4.*

I fell from the grass.

Mother: *cong2 na3 er2 diao4 xia4 lai2 le4? cong2 na3 gei4 hua2 ti1 shang4 diao4 xia4 lai2 le4?*

Where did you fall down from? From which slide did you fall down from?

Child: *en0*.

Yep.

Mother: *cong2 hua2 ti1 shang4 diao4 xia4 lai2 le4?*

You fell down from the slide?

Child: *en0*.

Yep.

Mother: *teng2 bu4 teng2?*

Was it painful?

Child: *teng2*.

Painful.

Mother: *teng2? ni3 ku1 le4 mei2 you3?*

Painful? Did you cry?

Child: *ku1 le4*.

I cried.

Mother: *ku1 le4? na4 ni3 yi3 hou4 xiao3 xin1 yi4 dian3, hao3 bu4 hao3?*

You cried? You need to be more careful next time, ok?

Child: *hao3*.

Ok.

This example shows that the Chinese immigrant mother was focusing on her child's actions, i.e., what the child did when they were at the park during the day. Each piece of information was child-centered. Furthermore, the mother also asked about the child's own emotion ("did you cry"). Orienting information and various objects were mentioned.

Example 4: European American, Playing on the computer

Mother: Did you play on the computer today?

Child: Yea, I played Catch Fish.

Mother: Did you? Did you catch fish?

Child: Yep.

Mother: Really?

Child: Yea, I caught a big fish.

Mother: How big was it?

Child: This long, it was this long.

Mother: No way, that's huge!

Not surprisingly, child-centered conversation is also observed in European American families, as is shown in the above example. The European American mother was focusing on what the child did during the day.

Example 5: European American, Visiting the vet

Mother: ... Did you walk the dog?

...

Father: Did you tell Mommy where we took the puppy today?

Child: No.

Father: Where did we take the puppy?

Child: Petpet.

Father: Petpet.

Mother: To the Petpet? And was the Petpet nice? Did you all go in?

Child: Yup...

Mother: It was great? Did he whimper or cry? He didn't?

Child: Nope.

Mother: Did you whimper or cry when you saw the puppy getting a shot?

Child: Uh-uh.

Mother: No?

In the above example, although the European American parents were recounting an event that the father and child experienced together, the mother was focusing on the child's subjective opinions and emotions. While the subjective opinion concerned whether the venue was nice, the emotion referred to was the child's own emotional state. Orienting information and various objects were also mentioned.

Discussion

Dinnertime as a Socialization Context for Narrative Self-Making

Dinnertime appears to be an important socialization context for narrative self-making in Chinese immigrant families. Extant literature has shown that Chinese immigrant mother-child memory conversations are shorter than European American mother-child memory conversations (Wang, 2007). However, family dinner conversations are lengthier in Chinese immigrant than in European American families. In accordance with the Chinese cultural emphasis on interdependence, whereby familial connectedness and interactions are highly valued (Chao & Tseng, 2002), dinner is the time of the day where all family members can spend quality time together. Long conversations often take place at the dinner table, so as to allow for interactions and find out what happened or will happen to the family and each of the family members. From the very fact of the greater amount of time spent interacting and conversing at the dinner table, Chinese immigrant families are socializing their children towards the development of an interdependent self that is intimately connected with the family. Conversely, the European American culture places emphasis on independence. Collective-oriented activities, such as engaging in lengthy dinnertime interactions and conversations, would not be congruent with the

value of independence. Rather, European American families may be more concerned with independent activities that would take place after dinner, such as a cartoon video that a child could watch or playing outside. This is a form of socialization that is tilted towards socializing the development of an independent self.

Furthermore, past research has found that the average number of past events recounted in one full day of mother-child conversations is three times fewer in Asian than in European American families (Mullen & Yi, 1995). However, the Chinese immigrant families in this study did not recount fewer past events than did the European American families. Although there are many differences between this study and the former one, possibly the context was key; that is, Chinese immigrant parents seem to make use of the opportunity space of dinnertime to engage in recounting past events with their children. In other words, dinnertime seemingly functions as an important socialization context for Chinese immigrant parents to engage in narrative self-making with their children.

Dinner Conversations and Socialization of Bicultural Self in Chinese Immigrant Families

What exactly do Chinese immigrant families talk about? In line with the culture-of-origin and host culture values upheld by Chinese immigrant parents (Chao, 1995; Jose et al., 2000; Lin & Fu, 1990), they mention different pieces of information reflecting the “dual landscapes” (Bruner, 1986, 1990) in ways that collectively would socialize their children towards the development of a bicultural self.

Within the landscape of actions, Chinese immigrant parents more frequently mentioned where the events were held and the people involved than did European American parents. Furthermore, Chinese immigrant parents mentioned about as often when the events took place and the object present as did European American parents. These are important orienting (i.e.,

when, where, and who) and referential (i.e., objects) information for children to remember what they did, when and where they did it, with whom and what objects were involved. Bruner (1986, 1990) has regarded such information as pertinent to the narrative self-making process. Notably, the largest cross-cultural difference was observed in the mention of people involved. This finding reflects the salient emphasis Chinese immigrant parents place on information regarding others and their presence in the children's lives. Recounting what the children did during the day in relation to other people suggests that other people are an integral part of the constructed social realities of Chinese immigrant children. And as Chinese immigrant parents talk about other people during memory conversations with their children, they are socializing children towards the development of an interdependent self.

In a similar vein, Chinese immigrant parents more frequently mentioned others-involved actions than did European American parents. Yet interestingly, Chinese immigrant parents mentioned about as often the child's actions as did European American parents. In fact, both Chinese immigrant and European American parents more frequently mentioned the child's actions than others-involved actions. In other words, parents in both groups focused on the individual child during past event discussions. Taken together, it appears that, on the one hand, Chinese immigrant parents are drawing their children's attention towards social activities and interactions to facilitate an interdependent self, and on the other hand, they are attuned to the individual child to encourage an independent self.

Although Chinese immigrant parents may adopt the European American cultural emphasis on individuality and independence (Chao, 1995; Jose et al., 2000; Lin & Fu, 1990), they continue to uphold Chinese cultural values and have high expectations of proper behavior in children. When recounting past events at the dinner table, they mentioned more negative

behaviors performed by children than did European American parents. Negative behaviors were not simply condoned but instead highlighted for children so as to allow for correction of those behaviors. Correspondingly, Chinese immigrant parents were also more likely to bring up moral and social rules than their European American counterparts, so as to teach and remind children of expected behavior. Chinese immigrant parents also tended to focus on their own child's behaviors rather than other children's behaviors because of parents' duty to discipline their own child. As Chinese immigrant parents focus on instilling proper behaviors during past events discussions, they are socializing their children towards the development of an interdependent self that conforms to social norms.

Within the landscape of consciousness, not unlike European American parents, Chinese immigrant parents mentioned more the child's internal states than others-involved internal states. Indeed, Chinese immigrant parents even mentioned more internal states of their children than did European American parents. It appears that Chinese immigrant parents are concerned about their children's own opinions, preferences, thoughts and feelings - an expression of the independent self. However, these findings are in contrary to prior findings in the context of mother-child memory-sharing, where European American mothers and children make more references to internal states than do Chinese immigrant mothers and children (Wang et al., 2010). One possible reason for the differences lies in the context of talking about the past. Dinnertime interactions and conversations are collective-oriented activities that Chinese immigrant families more typically participate in, compared with out-of-context memory conversations. As a result, immigrant parents may be more comfortable talking about their children's thoughts and feelings at dinnertime.

Although both Chinese immigrant and European American parents are concerned with how their children think and feel with regards to past events that they experienced, who was/were involved in the thoughts and feelings discussed (i.e., social content of internal states) differed. Chinese immigrant parents more frequently mentioned thoughts and feelings that involved others than did European American parents. Chinese immigrant parents also more frequently mentioned thoughts and feelings that involved children themselves than did European American parents. In fact, Chinese immigrant parents mentioned thoughts and feelings that involved children and others equally frequently. These findings suggest that Chinese immigrant parents encouraged not only thoughts and feelings concerning others but also the children themselves. In doing so, they are socializing their children towards the development of both an independent and an interdependent self.

Dinner Conversations and Socialization of Independent Self in European American Families

Not unlike mother-child memory conversations (Wang, 2006, 2007; Wang & Fivush, 2005; Wang et al., 2000), European American parents engaged in dinnertime conversations that socialize their children towards the development of an independent self. This is reflected in the different pieces of information mentioned pertaining to the “dual landscapes” (Bruner, 1986, 1990). Within the landscape of actions, European American parents mentioned orienting (i.e., when, where, and who) and referential (i.e., objects) information that is instrumental to the narrative self-making process (Bruner, 1986, 1990). Furthermore, they mentioned information that focused on the child’s actions. More often than not, negative behaviors were ignored. And moral and social rules were slightly less common during past event discussions as they were in Chinese immigrant families. As suggested by the literature, European American parents often downplay children’s transgressions to protect their self-esteem (Miller et al., 2007, 2012).

Importantly, within the landscape of consciousness, European American parents were concerned with how their children thought and felt with regards to the past events that they experienced, especially thoughts and feelings involving themselves (rather than involving child and others or others).

Conclusion, Limitations and Future Directions

Our analyses have revealed that as a normal everyday activity, dinnertime is a natural space for parents to share personal stories with their children. This space appears to be utilized to different extent and for somewhat varied purposes by parents in different cultures. In the process of sharing personal stories of the past, specifically, by recounting information about when and where the events took place, who and what were involved, the actions and internal states of children and others in manners that align with cultural norms and expectations, parents socialize their children to develop a sense of self that is adaptive for the respective cultural environments.

Although our analyses yielded important empirical evidence on the socialization of the self during dinner conversations in Chinese immigrant and European American families, there are limitations. We only analyzed parents' utterances and not children's. We recognized that children's own utterances may better reflect narrative self-making. However, children's responses in these conversations were generally infrequent and therefore may not result in meaningful analysis. Future studies may increase the number of dinner conversations to be examined per family and with a larger sample to reliably measure children's responses. Another caveat is the small sample size. Future studies with larger samples would need to be conducted to corroborate the current findings. In addition, the present study did not include outcome measures, such as children's own self-concepts, to ascertain the socialization effects of the memory

conversations at dinnertime. Future studies may strengthen the design by including relevant outcome measures.

Building on extant work, future studies can examine other aspects of the opportunity space of dinnertime that may influence self-development. For example, studying dinnertime conversations that focus on future events may shed light on future self-development. Besides the conversational aspects, examining dinnertime interactions between parents and children may also bring about further knowledge on self-construction in children.

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Paper Two

Mother-Child Future Talk Following Memory-Sharing
in Three Cultural Communities

Abstract

The present study examined mother-child spontaneous future talk following memory-sharing in three cultural communities. Seventy-one European American, 60 Chinese American, and 58 Chinese mothers and their 3-year-old children discussed two emotional past events, one positive and one negative. Chinese American and Chinese mothers and children were more likely than European American mothers and children to engage in future talk following memory-sharing. Following past negative events, Chinese American and Chinese mothers and children were more likely than European American mothers and children to engage in didactic talk that emphasized children's adherence to moral standards, social norms, and behavioral expectations in the future. Conversely, European American mothers were more likely than the two groups of Chinese mothers to engage in autonomous talk that emphasized children's preferences and opinions with regards to the future. Findings are discussed in light of the influence of mother-child conversations as a cultural context on the development of temporally extended self, both the future and past facets of it.

Introduction

Talking with parents about personal experiences in the past and the future is critical to children's development of temporally extended self or the "Continuing Me" (Neisser, 1988; Nelson, 2001). In the process of talking about the past and future, parents not only provide information about the events but also discuss about children's opinions, desires, thoughts and feelings as they re-experience the past or pre-experience the future (e.g., Fivush & Haden, 2005; Fivush, 2013; Fivush & Nelson, 2004, 2006; Hudson, 2001, 2002). By doing so, parents are scaffolding children to understand themselves in the past and future, thereby helping them to construct a temporally extended self. Over the past three decades, extensive research has been conducted to examine mother-child memory-sharing as a context for the development of the temporally extended self.

Interestingly, it has been observed that some mothers tend to spontaneously talk about the future following a discussion of past events with their children (Miller, Wiley, Fung, & Liang, 1997). Such conversations may be particularly important for the development of the temporally extended self because they connect the past with the future. By extending the past into the future, mothers may be helping children see the temporal or casual links between the past and future, understand the consequences of past actions, make future plans as a result of past activities, and learn lessons to guide future behavior. Yet, to our best knowledge, no study to date has examined future talk following memory-sharing, although there has been a suite of research examining parent-child conversations about the future.

Mother-Child Future Talk

Notwithstanding the paucity of research on mother-child future talk, the few studies conducted to date have revealed that it is a frequent occurrence for mothers to talk about the

future with their children, as young as two years of age. In studying the conversational exchanges between ten mothers and their 2-year-olds when they were engaging in different routine activities, Lucariello and Nelson (1987) found that while there were 38 episodes of past talk, there were 44 episodes of future talk. This finding suggests that future talk is at least as common as past talk, if not more. The context in which mothers and children engage in conversational exchanges, however, affects the frequency of occurrence of future talk (as well as past talk). Lucariello and Nelson further found that between the contexts of routine and play activities, 89% of future talk (and 84% of past talk) occurred in the context of routine activities, such as lunch routine, getting dressed in the morning, and bathing/getting ready for bed. Routine activities are familiar and “scripted” events. In such a context, children’s mental representations of the routine activities, i.e., their event knowledge or scripts, facilitate their engagement in future talk (and past talk) with their mothers.

As future talk occurs, how do mothers discuss about the future with their children? Hudson (2002) found that the temporal language used by mothers differed between past talk and future talk. In past talk, majority of the questions and contextual statements made by mothers were references to the past events involving the use of past tense, and most of the temporal terms used were terms that indicated event sequence (e.g., before, after, next). In contrast, in future talk, mothers talked about general event knowledge involving the use of present tense, past events involving the use of past tense, future events involving the use of future tense, and future hypothetical events involving references to possible actions, predictions of what might happen, and preferences in relation to the future event. Mothers also used conventional time markers (e.g., morning, hour, month, Monday, January, Spring) about twice as much in future talk compare to

past talk. These findings suggest that the language mothers use to talk with children about the future is temporally complex, and more so than when talking about past events.

Perhaps more importantly, the styles in which mothers use to discuss about the future influence children's contributions to the future event discussions. Hudson (2006) identified three types of maternal styles in future talk: (i) elaborative/advanced language, characterized by use of elaboration, and references to future events, possible actions, predictions and temporal terms, (ii) past/general events, characterized by references to past events and general event knowledge, and (iii) repetitive prompts/preferences, characterized by use of repetitions and prompts, and references to preferences. With younger children at age 2.5, mothers who used more elaborative/advanced language and made references to past/general events had children who were more elaborative when talking about the future. When children were older at age 4, mothers who used more of all three styles had children who were more elaborative during future talk, with the greatest effect coming from usage of elaborative/advanced language.

Taken together, the few studies that examined mother-child future talk suggest that it is commonplace when children are as young as two years of age. Mothers engage in future talk in ways that are different from when they engage in past talk with their children. Importantly, through the ways mothers talk about the future with their children, they scaffold children's participation and contribution to the discussions. It is noted that this suite of research has focused on examining mothers and children talking about the future versus talking about the past, and has not examined the effects of event valence. Nonetheless, research on mother-child memory-sharing has suggested that emotionally positive and negative events are discussed differently by mothers and children. To examine mother-child talk about the future following memory-sharing, it may be important to consider the valence of the past events.

Event Valence in Mother-Child Conversations

Research on mother-child memory-sharing has revealed that mothers and children talk about emotionally positive and negative events in different ways (Ackil, Van Abbema, & Bauer, 2003; Bauer, et al., 2005; Burch, Austin, & Bauer, 2004; Sales, Fivush, & Peterson, 2003). When talking about positive events, mothers and children tend to talk more about emotions, especially in making references to positive emotion terms. In contrast, when talking about negative events, mothers and children tend to make references to negative emotion terms, explain more about the causes of the emotions experienced, and are more coherent and complete in their discussion of the events.

In studies that included outcome measures, Reese and colleagues (Bird & Reese, 2006; Reese, Bird, & Tripp, 2007) found that during discussion of positive events, mothers who used more explanations and confirmations of the positive emotions had children with higher self-esteem, and children who made more evaluation of positive events had higher level of self-consistency. Conversely, during discussion of negative events, mothers and children who explained more about the causes of the negative emotions had children with higher levels of self-esteem and self-consistency. Mother-child pairs who mentioned more about resolving the negative emotions through social contact also had children with higher level of self-consistency. Furthermore, Wang, Doan, and Song (2010) found that independent of culture, mothers' and children's use of internal state language during reminiscing of the negative events uniquely predicted children's trait and evaluative self-representations. Explanations of internal states in the negative event context also predicted children's trait and evaluative self-representations.

Collectively, the findings suggest that the valence of past events influences the ways in which mothers and children talk about them, which entail different personal meanings that are

attached to the self. In general, reminiscing of negative events appears to be more effective in predicting children's self-concepts than reminiscing of positive events. Through discussing one's emotional and internal states, explaining the causes and consequences of the emotional and internal states, and finding ways to resolve the negative emotions, there seems to be greater personal meaning-making during reminiscing of negative events. In view that event valence influences the ways that mothers and children talk about past events, it may be of importance to consider event valence when examining mother-child talk about future following memory-sharing, particularly in relation to the influence of culture. Mothers of diverse cultural backgrounds may talk about personal experiences in the future following discussion of past events in varied manners, in line with the respective cultural values and socialization goals.

Culture and Mother-Child Conversations

Different cultures espouse different values and child-rearing goals, which impact child-rearing practices. The European American culture places emphases on the individual, autonomy and self-expression, and parents promote an independent socialization agenda. On the other hand, the Chinese culture embraces social connectedness, interpersonal harmony, and social hierarchy, and parents promote an interdependent socialization agenda (Bond, 1991; Chao, 1995; Keller et al., 2004; Markus & Kitayama, 1991; Wang, 2013).

Indeed, the ways in which European American and Chinese mothers engage in memory-sharing with their children largely align with the respective cultural values and socialization goals (Wang, 2007; Wang et al., 2010; Wang & Fivush, 2005; Wang, Leichtman, & Davies, 2000). European American mothers and children tend to focus on the child's personal preferences, opinions and emotions. In contrast, Chinese American and Chinese mothers tend to show great concerns about the child's social interactions and proper behaviors. Specific to

discussions of emotional events (Wang, 2001), European American mothers and children tend to focus on explaining the causes of the emotions. Conversely, Chinese mothers and children rarely discuss about the causes of the emotions. Rather, as emotions are often viewed consequences of social behaviors, these mothers tend to place emphasis on instilling proper behaviors in the child.

Cultural differences were found to be particularly salient in the discussions of emotionally negative events (Fivush & Wang, 2005; Miller et al., 1997; Miller, Fung, & Koven, 2007; Miller, Fung, Lin, Chen, & Boldt, 2012; Wang & Fivush, 2005). European American mothers and children tend to explain the causes of the emotions and engage in negotiation when they disagree about the child's emotional responses. They also tend to downplay the child's transgressions with the goal of protecting the child's self-esteem. In contrast, Chinese mothers tend to be more didactic and use more negative words, whereby the usage of negative words has been suggested to be indicative of serving a didactic purpose that aims at helping the child to learn about appropriate emotional responses and regulations. They also often highlight and utilize discussions of the child's transgressions to convey behavioral expectations, as well as moral and social rules. Furthermore, they tend to end the discussions with a didactic coda in which the present or future implications of the emotionally negative events, particularly that of children's transgressions, were conveyed.

Extant research thus suggests that mother-child memory-sharing is influenced by cultural contexts, and particularly during memory-sharing of emotionally negative events. As reviewed earlier, mother-child future talk often involves discussions of plans, as well as children's preferences and opinions in relation to the future (Husdon, 2001, 2002). A large part of these future talk contents appears to be similar to those found in European American mother-child pairs' memory talk, which are consistent with the European American cultural values. As such,

might such future talk contents be more prevalent in the European American context, and especially during future talk following past negative events? Conversely, might mother-child future talk that focuses on discussions of social interactions as well as moral and social rules be more prevalent in the Chinese context, and particularly during future talk following past negative events? Such future talk contents may be more similar to those found in Chinese mother-child pairs' memory talk, which are in line with the Chinese cultural values.

The Present Study

The present study thus sought to examine mother-child future talk following memory-sharing of emotional experiences in European American, Chinese American and Chinese families with 3-year-olds. Based on the literature, we predicted that Chinese American and Chinese mothers would be more likely than European American mothers to extend the past conversations into the future. Further, we expected that European-American mother-child pairs would talk more about plans that involve the child, whereas the two groups of Chinese mother-child pairs would discuss more plans that involve the child and social others. We also predicted that European-American mother-child pairs would discuss children's emotions, as well as their preferences and opinions in relation to the future more so than the two groups of Chinese mother-child pairs. Conversely, we predicted that the two groups of Chinese mother-child pairs would highlight social interactions in the future more so than the European-American child-pairs. We further hypothesized that the two groups of Chinese mother-child pairs would emphasize adherence to moral and social rules in the future more so than the European-American mother-child pairs. Lastly, we postulated that when talking about the future following discussions of emotionally negative past events, European-American mother-child pairs would talk more about

children's emotions, as well as their preferences and opinions, whereas the two groups of Chinese mother-child pairs would emphasize more about adherence to moral and social rules.

Method

Participants

Participants were 71 European American and 60 first-generation Chinese American mothers-child pairs from a university town and suburban areas in upstate New York, and 58 Chinese mothers-child pairs from Beijing, China. Children were recruited through local nursery schools and by word of mouth to participate in a larger longitudinal study on early social cognitive development. The European American (37 boys, 34 girls), Chinese American (30 boys, 30 girls) and Chinese (33 boys, 25 girls) children had a mean age of 35.49 ($SD = 3.31$), 35.00 ($SD = 3.43$) and 34.17 ($SD = 2.54$) months respectively. All children were from middle-class families and the majority of mothers (93% European American; 98.3% Chinese American; 77.6% Chinese) had at least college education.

Procedure

Two native female researchers in the respective cultures visited the participating families. English-Chinese bilingual researchers visited the Chinese American families, and mothers were asked to use the language that they usually spoke at home with their children. Materials were written in both English and Chinese and a translation and back-translation procedure was carried out to ensure equivalence in both literal and sense meaning. During the visit, mothers were first asked to play with their children so that they were engaged and relaxed. This was followed by other mother-child activities, including mother-child memory-sharing. Finally, the researcher engaged the children in a series of other semi-structured activities. At the end, each child was

given a small gift. The entire visit took approximately 90 minutes and was video-recorded.

Measures relevant to the present study are described below.

Measures

Mother-child conversations. Mothers were asked to talk to their children about two specific, one-time events that they experienced together, such as a trip to the science museum or amusement park. One event was emotionally positive to the child, and one was emotionally negative. Mothers were asked to select events that took place within the past two months so that the memories were fresh in the children's minds. Mothers were further asked to talk with their children in the manner that they usually speak to each other at home. There was no time restriction and the mother-child pairs could talk for as long as they wanted. The sequence of talking about the positive and negative events was counterbalanced across mother-child pairs within each sample. Each mother-child conversation took about 20 minutes on average.

Future talk following each memory conversation was first identified and then coded following the categories described below. Coding was performed in the original languages. Propositions, defined as subject-verb constructions, were used as the coding unit (Fivush, Haden, & Adam, 1995). Each unique or implied verb in an independent clause constitutes a new propositional unit. For example, "We swung and swung" was considered as one proposition, whereas "We swung and laughed" was considered as two. The positive and negative events were coded separately. The coding was done by using Noldus's program The ObserveR® 5.0, a digital coding system designed to score video data online, with the codes and scores directly entered into a computer (Noldus, 2003).

Narrative volume. Two variables were adopted to measure the volume of future talk following each memory conversation. The first was *conversational turns*, where the total number

of turns taken by mothers and children respectively was counted. The second was *propositions*, where the total number of propositions in mothers' and children's respective utterances was counted. Meaningful non-verbal responses, particularly nodding and shaking head (which correspond to the verbal responses of "yes" and "no" respectively), were each counted to be a conversational turn and a proposition.

Narrative content. The specific content of future talk following each memory conversation by mothers and children were coded into the following categories. Coding was mutually exclusive and exhaustive, that is, each proposition was coded into one and only one of the categories.

- (1) *Planning talk:* Two categories were coded to reflect child's plans of future actions or future plans involving the child. The first was *individual (child) plan*, which refers to mothers' and children's statements or questions about children's future actions (e.g., M: What will you do tomorrow? C: I will buy an ice-cream.). The second was *shared plan*, which refers to mothers' and children's statements or questions about the future that include child and social others (such as child and mom, child and child's friends, child and teachers) as related to the memory discussed (e.g., M: We will go back again. C: Mommy will buy me a toy tomorrow.).
- (2) *Emotion talk:* This category was coded to reflect child's emotions with regards to the future. Specifically, it includes mothers' and children's mentions of emotion terms, whereby positive emotion terms (e.g., happy, laughing) and negative emotion terms (e.g., sad, yelling) were coded separately.
- (3) *Autonomous talk:* This category was coded to reflect child's personal preferences or opinions regarding the future. Specifically, it refers to mothers' statements or

questions about children's personal preferences or opinions regarding an object, person, or the event itself (e.g., M: Do you want to go to the zoo tomorrow?); and children's expressions about their own personal preferences or opinions (e.g., C: I want to go to the zoo tomorrow.).

- (4) *Relatedness talk*: This category was coded to reflect social interactions or involvement of others in child's future activities. Specifically, it refers to mothers' and children's utterances about instances that involved social interactions or group activities (e.g., M: When will we go to Disney together? C: I will give grandma a big hug.).
- (5) *Didactic talk*: This category was coded to reflect adherence to moral standards and social norms in child's future behaviors. Specifically, it refers to mothers' and children's statements or questions about moral standards, social norms, or behavioral expectations (e.g., M: Next time how should you behave when you are in school? C: Listen to the teacher and sit quietly.).

Two English-speaking research assistants coded the European American data, and two English-Chinese bilingual research assistants coded the Chinese American and Chinese data. Joint discussion sessions were held to ensure consistency in applying the same definitions of the codes to the three datasets. All coders were blind to the hypotheses of the study. 20% of the data from each sample was coded for reliability. Kappas ranged from .86 to .92 for the European American sample, .80 to .95 for the Chinese American sample and .87 to 1.00 for the Chinese sample. Joint discussion sessions were held to discuss and resolve any disagreement.

Language. Mothers filled out a shortened version of the Child Development Inventory (Ireton, 1992) designed to assess children's language production and comprehension. The possible score ranges from 0 to 100 and Cronbach's $\alpha = .93$.

Results

Preliminary analyses revealed no systematic effects of gender and age on the codes and they were thus not considered further. Language was found to have effects on some of the codes and was therefore considered as a covariate in all subsequent analyses. Two Chinese American mother-child pairs did not engage in memory-sharing because the children were not cooperative. They were thus excluded from further analysis. Results are presented in three sections. The first section focuses on the percentages of mother-child pairs who engaged in future talk following memory-sharing and their narrative volume. The second section focuses on mothers' and children's future talk content. In the final section, a descriptive analysis on how mother-child dyads talked about the future following different types of past events is presented.

Future Talk Engagement and Narrative Volume

Future talk engagement. Not all mothers-child pairs spontaneously engaged in future talk following memory-sharing. As such, the proportion of mother-child pairs that did so was first determined. Mothers who took at least one conversational turn to talk about the future following at least one of the memory discussions (i.e., positive and/or negative event) were considered to have engaged in future talk with their children. Future talk engagement was dummy coded, whereby mothers received a 1 if they engaged in future talk following memory-sharing and 0 if they did not. To examine cultural differences in future talk engagement, a binary logistic model was conducted and significant effects were followed up with focused comparisons. Mothers in the different cultures differed in their likelihood to engage in future talk following memory-

sharing, $\chi^2(2, N = 187) = 13.92, p < .01, \phi = .27$, with Chinese American (66%, $N = 39$) and Chinese (74%, $N = 43$) mothers more likely to do so than European American (41%, $N = 28$) mothers. All focused comparisons were significant at $ps < .01$. All subsequent analyses focused only on those mother-child pairs who engaged in future talk following memory-sharing.

Narrative volume. Means and standard deviations for conversational turns and propositions by mothers and children who engaged in future talk are displayed in Table 2.1 by culture and event valence. These continuous variables were analyzed in a 3 (Culture: European American vs. Chinese American vs. Chinese) x 2 (Event Valence: Positive vs. Negative) repeated-measures ANOVA on mothers' and children's codes separately, with culture as the between-subject factor and event valence as the within-subject factor.

Table 2.1. Means and standard deviations of narrative volume by culture and event valence

Narrative Volume	European American <i>M (SD)</i>	Chinese American <i>M (SD)</i>	Chinese <i>M (SD)</i>	Total <i>M (SD)</i>
Mothers				
Conversational turns				
Positive	2.04 (2.57)	1.86 (2.45)	1.57 (2.23)	1.79 (2.39)
Negative	1.54 (2.32)	2.25 (2.03)	2.26 (2.50)	2.07 (2.30)
Propositions				
Positive	3.39 (4.24)	2.72 (3.87)	2.60 (4.23)	2.85 (4.09)
Negative	2.61 (4.19)	4.00 (3.78)	4.07 (4.22)	3.66 (4.08)
Children				
Conversational turns				
Positive	1.64 (2.47)	1.44 (2.20)	1.31 (2.07)	1.44 (2.20)
Negative	1.29 (2.07)	1.58 (2.03)	1.88 (2.31)	1.62 (2.15)
Propositions				
Positive	1.75 (2.65)	1.56 (2.31)	1.36 (2.14)	1.53 (2.32)
Negative	1.29 (2.05)	1.61 (2.16)	1.93 (2.39)	1.65 (2.22)

For mother-child pairs who engaged in future talk following memory-sharing, there was no cultural difference in the conversational turns taken and propositions made by mothers and children respectively. There was no difference either in the conversational turns taken and propositions made by mothers and children respectively between positive and negative event discussions.

Narrative Content

Except for mothers' autonomy and didactic talks, the means for the content categories of future talk were generally low (< 1). Mothers' and children's respective responses were thus dummy coded and analyzed as categorical data. For each coded category, mothers and children received 1 if they gave any response in relation to that category, and received 0 if no relevant response was made. Due to low proportion of mothers and children who made utterances about emotion talk, including both positive and negative emotion terms ($< 10\%$), these variables were not analyzed further. Table 2.2 presents the percentages of mothers and children who responded to each content category by culture and valence. Using generalized estimating equations (GEE), each future talk content category was analyzed in a 3 (Culture: European American vs. Chinese American vs. Chinese) \times 2 (Event Valence: Positive vs. Negative) binary logistic model for mothers and children separately, with culture as the between-subject factor and event valence as the within-subject factor. Significant omnibus effects were followed up with focused comparisons.

Table 2.2. Percentages of responses for content categories by culture and event valence

Content Category	European American	Chinese American	Chinese	Valence Total
Mothers				
Individual plan				
Positive	20	35	38	30
Negative	44	15	32	28
Culture Total	30	24	35	
Shared plan				
Positive	47	41	32	40
Negative	17	4	16	10
Culture Total	30	14	23	
Autonomous Talk				
Positive	71	77	76	75
Negative	68	27	39	44
Culture Total	70	53	59	
Relatedness Talk				
Positive	64	59	52	58
Negative	66	47	64	59
Culture Total	65	53	58	
Didactic Talk (Negative)	36	87	74	
Children				
Individual plan				
Positive	22	36	28	28
Negative	35	8	22	19
Culture Total	28	18	25	
Shared plan				
Positive	16	18	13	15
Negative	6	0	3	0
Culture Total	10	0	6	
Autonomous Talk				
Positive	59	72	67	66
Negative	61	32	37	43
Culture Total	60	52	52	

Table 2.2. (Continued)

Content Category	European American	Chinese American	Chinese	Valence Total
Children				
Relatedness Talk				
Positive	18	22	26	22
Negative	14	10	20	15
Culture Total	16	15	23	
Didactic Talk (Negative)	26	57	53	

Planning talk: Individual versus shared. There was a main effect of event valence on mothers' shared plan, $\chi^2(1, N = 141) = 11.42, p < .01, \phi = .28$, whereby mothers were more likely to refer to shared plan in the future following positive event discussion than negative event discussion. Because the percentage of children who referred to shared plan during future talk was low (< 10%), their responses were not analyzed. No other effects reached significance.

Autonomous talk. There was a main effect of event valence on mothers' autonomous talk, $\chi^2(1, N = 141) = 14.01, p < .001, \phi = .32$, qualified by a marginally significant Culture x Valence interaction effect, $\chi^2(2, N = 141) = 5.61, p = .06, \phi = .20$. European American mothers were more likely to refer to children's autonomy in the future following negative event discussion than Chinese American and Chinese mothers, $\chi^2(2, N = 72) = 5.81, p = .06, \phi = .28$. For Chinese mothers both in the United States and China, they were more likely to refer to children's autonomy in the future following positive event discussion than negative event discussion, $\chi^2(1, N = 53) = 14.42, p < .001, \phi = .52$ for Chinese American, and $\chi^2(1, N = 55) = 6.04, p < .05, \phi = .33$ for Chinese. Likewise, there was a main effect of event valence on children's autonomous talk, $\chi^2(1, N = 141) = 6.79, p < .01, \phi = .22$, whereby children were more

likely to express their own autonomy in the future following positive event discussion than negative event discussion. No other effects reached significance.

Relatedness talk. There was no cultural difference in mothers' and children's respective discussions with regards to children's social interactions in future. There was also no difference in mothers' and children's respective discussions about children's future social interactions between positive and negative event discussions.

Didactic talk. Cross-tabulation showed that the number of mothers and children who engaged in didactic talk following positive event discussion was low (European American mothers and children, 0 response respectively; Chinese American mothers and children, 4 and 1 responses respectively; Chinese mothers and children, 1 response respectively), which did not meet the requirement for repeated binary logistic modeling using GEE. This portion of the data was no longer considered, and analysis for didactic talk thus focused on cultural differences following negative event discussion only. Using generalized linear model, didactic talk was analyzed in a binary logistic model for mothers and children separately.

Mothers in the different cultures differed in their likelihood to engage in didactic talk following negative event discussion, $\chi^2(2, N = 72) = 9.55, p < .01, \phi = .36$, with Chinese American and Chinese mothers more likely to do so than European American mothers. All focused comparisons were significant at $ps < .05$. Children in the different cultures did not show a significant difference in their likelihood to engage in didactic talk following negative event discussion, $\chi^2(2, N = 72) = 3.33, ns$. However, there was a small effect size of $\phi = .22$. Pairwise comparisons revealed a significant difference between Chinese American and European American children, $p < .05$, and a marginal difference between Chinese and European American

children, $p = .08$, whereby Chinese American and Chinese children were more likely to engage in didactic talk than European American children following negative event discussion.

Mother-Child Future Talk Following Types of Past Events Discussed

The content of all the past events discussed by the mother-child pairs were first collated. Past events that were discussed by at least 20% of the mother-child dyads by culture and event valence were then identified. The ways in which mothers and children talked about the future following these identified past events were then tabulated. Table 2.3 summarizes the findings by culture and event valence.

The most frequently discussed past positive event was outings and activities for all three cultural groups. In addition, European American mother-child pairs were also more likely to talk about holiday events and relationships. Across all three cultural groups, mothers most likely engaged in autonomous talk, followed by relatedness talk when discussing the future following memory-sharing of these past positive events. Likewise, across the three groups of children, they most likely engaged in autonomous talk when discussing the future following memory-sharing of these past positive events.

The most frequently discussed past negative events were scary things and separation from caregivers for the European American sample. Following memory-sharing of these past negative events, European American mothers were more likely to have autonomous talk and relatedness talk than other types of talk when discussing the future, while the children were more likely to engage in autonomous talk than other types of talk. For the Chinese American sample, the most frequently discussed past negative events were conflicts with parents (including scolding from parents), child's injuries/medical issues, and conflicts with siblings. Following discussion of these past negative events, Chinese American mothers and children were more likely to engage

Table 2.3. Mother-child future talk following types of past events discussed by culture and event valence

Event Types	%	Types of Future Talk: Mothers	%	Types of Future Talk: Children	%
Positive Events					
European American					
Outings and activities	40	Autonomous talk	88	Autonomous talk	88
		Relatedness talk	63		
Holiday events	25	Relatedness talk	80	Autonomous talk	60
		Autonomous talk	60		
Relationships	20	Shared plan	75	Shared plan	50
		Relatedness talk	50		
Chinese American					
Outings and activities	58	Autonomous talk	79	Autonomous talk	71
		Relatedness talk	57		
		Shared plan	57		
Chinese					
Outings and activities	80	Autonomous talk	75	Autonomous talk	65
		Relatedness talk	45		

Table 2.3. (Continued)

Event Types	%	Types of Future Talk: Mothers	%	Types of Future Talk: Children	%
Negative Events					
European American					
Scary things	31	Autonomous talk	100	Autonomous talk	100
		Relatedness talk	50	Individual plan	50
		Individual plan	50		
Separation from caregiver	23	Relatedness talk	100	Autonomous talk	66
		Autonomous talk	66		
		Shared plan	66		
Chinese American					
Conflicts with parents/Scolding	38	Didactic talk	100	Didactic talk	82
Child injuries/ Medical issues	24	Didactic talk	71	Autonomous talk	57
		Autonomous talk	57	Didactic talk	43
Conflicts with siblings	21	Didactic talk	100	Didactic talk	50
		Relatedness talk	100		
Chinese					
Conflicts with parents/Scolding	23	Didactic talk	86	Didactic talk	71
		Relatedness talk	43		
Child injuries/ Medical issues	23	Relatedness talk	86	Didactic talk	57
		Didactic talk	71	Autonomous talk	43

in didactic talk than other types of talks when talking about the future. Similarly, for the Chinese sample, the most frequently discussed past negative events were conflicts with parents (including scolding from parents) and child's injuries/medical issues. Following discussion of these past negative events, Chinese mothers and children were more likely to engage in didactic talk than other types of talks when talking about the future. In addition, Chinese mothers were also more likely to engage in relatedness talk than other types of talks.

Discussion

Studies on mother-child future talk has been scanty, particularly one that examines it in the cultural contexts. The present study is the first to examine mother-child future talk following memory-sharing in European American, Chinese American and Chinese families with 3-year-olds. Findings showed that specific to this form of future talk, there were both cultural similarities and differences. These findings may provide important insights regarding the ways in which mothers and children extend their conversations about past experiences into the future, and the implications on children's developing temporally extended self.

Future talk following memory-sharing was found to be more prevalent in the Chinese culture (including both Chinese American and Chinese families) than in the European-American culture. A closer examination on the content discussed revealed that the two groups of Chinese mothers and children were more likely to engage in didactic talk that emphasized children's adherence to moral standards, social norms, and behavioral expectations, particularly when talking about the future following past negative events. This was especially so when there was a prior conflict with parents (including scolding from parents). These findings are consistent with those found in an earlier study, whereby Chinese families were more likely to use personal storytelling to convey moral and social standards, particularly in face of children's transgressions

(Miller et al., 1997). Indeed, it appears that in the Chinese culture, this form of future talk serves a didactic function, especially in face of prior negative events that are interpersonal in nature and involving authority figures. Mothers use it to remind and teach children the proper ways of behaving and regulating the self in the future, perhaps especially so that future social and familial disharmony could be minimized or prevented. Children, in turn, talk about how they would self-regulate and behave properly in future.

On the other hand, European American mothers and children were found to engage in this form of future talk not as commonly as Chinese American and Chinese mother and children did. However, when they did so, European American mothers were more likely to focus on autonomous talk that emphasized children's preferences and opinions with regards to the future than the two groups of Chinese mothers, especially following past negative events. It seems that even in face of past negative experiences, European American mothers make use of follow-up future event discussion to continue to inculcate and respect children's sense of autonomy by referring to children's personal preferences and opinions with regards to the future. In view that the most commonly discussed negative events involved scary things and separation from caregivers, such focus and encouragement on children's autonomy may be particularly needed as such events are common occurrences that children need to learn to deal with on their own, i.e., what do children think or prefer to do in face of such situations.

As suggested by Hudson (2001, 2002), an implication for mother-child talk about the future is that such conversations may contribute to children's emerging self-concepts. Specific to the Chinese context, mothers and children focused on instilling children's proper behaviors in the future to maintain social and familial harmony. By doing so, they are co-narrating and envisioning a self in the future that is interdependent, socially connected and conforming to

social norms and moral rules. In a similar vein, in the European American context, mothers and children focused on what children would like to see happen, what they thought would happen and how would they feel about what will happen. By doing so, they are co-narrating and envisioning a self in the future that is independent, autonomous and agentic.

Furthermore, the ways in which European American and Chinese mothers and children talk about the future are consistent with the ways in which they talk about the past. In memory talk, cultural differences have been found to be especially pronounced in negative event discussions, whereby Chinese mothers tend to be didactic and European American mothers tend to focus on children's autonomy (Fivush & Wang, 2005; Wang & Fivush, 2005). Such similarities suggest the consistent influence of mother-child conversations as a cultural context on the development of temporally extended self, both the past and future facets of it.

Two interesting pieces of findings that were unexpected emerged with regards to engaging in autonomous talk in the Chinese context. It was found that the two groups of Chinese mothers were more likely to refer to children's personal preferences and opinions with regards to the future following past positive events than past negative events. It appears that although Chinese mothers are willing to respect children's personal preferences and opinions with regards to the future, this is contingent upon whether prior experiences are positive or negative. They are more likely to do so following positive experiences rather than negative experiences. No such difference was observed in European American mothers, suggesting that mothers in this culture are equally likely to refer to children's personal preferences and opinions regarding the future following both past negative events and past positive events. Not surprisingly, independent of culture, children, in turn, were found to be more likely to engage in autonomous talk during future talk following past positive events.

Although no cultural effect was found on mother-child discussions of shared plan, as postulated, an effect of event valence was found. Independent of culture, mothers were more likely to discuss about plans that include the child and others following past positive events rather than past negative events. Fivush and colleagues (Sales et al., 2003; Fivush & Wang, 2005) have argued that memory talk about positive events serves to maintain and strengthen bonds between mothers and children, and creates a sense of shared history. Perhaps in a similar manner, future talk following past positive events functions to maintain and strengthen relationships, and creates a sense of shared future between mothers and children, as well as those social others who have been mentioned during the course of shared plan discussions.

The present study yielded important insights regarding mother-child future talk. Nonetheless, there are a few limitations. This specific form of future talk is not a full-fledged mother-child conversation about the future, which might have limited both the length of discussion and the range of content discussed. Future studies that ask mother-child pairs to focus on talking about future events *per se* would be needed to corroborate and/or extend the findings found in the present study. Closely-related, there has been a surge of research that examines children's episodic future thinking (e.g., Atance, 2008; Bélanger, Atance, Varghese, Nguyen, & Vendetti, 2014; Busby & Suddendorf & 2005), but the social mechanisms in which such form of thinking develops have not been extensively investigated. Mother-child talk about future events has been suggested to be of important influence (Suddendorf, 2010). Taken together, mother-child talk about future events *per se* may serve to be a fruitful pursuit for understanding the social mechanism for children's future self and future thinking development. A second limitation of the present study is the lack of inclusion of outcome measures, such as children's independent narratives about future events or their future self-concepts, to ascertain the effects of the mother-

child future conversations on future self-development. Future studies may strengthen the design by including relevant outcome measures. Another limitation is the focus on middle-class families in the United States and China, which might limit the generalizability of the findings. Future research may be extended to examine mother-child future talk in different populations, such as working-class families.

In conclusion, the ways in which mothers and children talk about the future following memory-sharing are influenced by cultural contexts. Mothers of different cultures make use of this form of future talk to serve varied purposes that entail importance in the respective cultural contexts. Furthermore, the respective focal contents of future talk appear to be consistent with those found in past talk. Such consistency, in turn, may contribute to the development of a continuous, enduring and culturally adaptive self in children.

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Paper Three

Mother-Child Reminiscing of Emotionally Negative Events and Children's Socio-Emotional
Outcomes: A Cross-Cultural Longitudinal Study

Abstract

The present study examined the long-term relationships between mother-child reminiscing of emotionally negative events and children's social and emotional outcomes in two cultural communities. When children were age 4.5, European American and Chinese immigrant mother-child dyads discussed together an event that was emotionally negative to the child. Children's social and emotional outcomes, including socially adaptive behaviors, internalizing problems, and externalizing behaviors, were assessed at age 7. Independent of culture, mentions of negative emotion terms, attributions of emotion to children, causal explanations of children's emotions, reconfirmation of the explanations and highlighting moral lessons as a resolution during mother-child reminiscing were related to better outcomes in children. Conversely, attribution of emotion to other people and causal explanations of other people's emotions brought about worse outcomes in children. Notably, culture moderated some of the long-term effects of emotional reminiscing on children's outcomes. Engagement in didactic talk, and surprisingly, mentions of positive emotion terms and providing reassurance as a resolution were related to worse outcomes in European American children, but brought about better outcomes in Chinese children. Implications for the role of culturally mediated parent-child reminiscing of emotionally negative events on children's social and emotional outcomes are discussed.

Introduction

Parent-child reminiscing serves several functions, especially in face of emotionally negative events (Fivush, 2013; Fivush, Berlin, Sales, Mennuti-Washburn, & Cassidy, 2003; Kulkofsky & Koh, 2009; Kulkofsky, Wang, & Koh, 2009; Wang, 2004; Wang & Fivush, 2005). Children are in the process of learning how to remember and tell about their emotionally negative experiences. As such, it is common that they could recount what happened, but would require assistance from parents to interpret and evaluate these experiences and regulate the aversive effects (Fivush, et al, 2003). Furthermore, during reminiscing, parents and children are not in the heat of the moment, and may be better able to interpret and evaluate the emotionally negative experiences (Fivush, et al, 2003; Wang & Fivush, 2005). Importantly, research has suggested that parent-child reminiscing of emotionally negative experiences hold implications for children's social and emotional development and adjustment (e.g., Fivush, Haden, & Reese, 2006; Pasupathi, 2013). Yet interestingly, different cultures embrace different values towards emotions. Parents in different cultures may talk about emotionally negative events with their children in varied ways, which may, in turn, hold different implications for children's psychological adjustment. Thus, the present study sought to examine the long-term effects of mother-child reminiscing of emotionally negative events on children's socio-emotional well-being in European American and Chinese immigrant families.

Mother-Child Reminiscing of Emotionally Negative Events

Studies have found that mother-child reminiscing of emotionally negative events entail certain characteristics that collectively provide a meaning-making framework. Specifically, these conversations often involve not only discussions of what happened, but also focus on feeling states and causal explanations. For example, Sales, Fivush, and Peterson (2003) compared

mother-child reminiscing about an injury that necessitate a visit to the emergency room and a positive event, and found that both parents and children mentioned more negative emotion and causal explanations for the emergency room event than for the positive event. In another study, Ackil, Van Abbema, and Bauer (2003) compared mother-child reminiscing about a devastating tornado and two non-traumatic events, and found that at 4-month post-tornado, the recollections included more references to negative emotions, as well as causes and consequences of the events, for the tornado event than for the non-traumatic events. Notably, similar patterns of differences were found when mothers and children were asked to discuss the same three events again 6 months later, suggesting an enduring focus on highlighting feeling states and causal explanations when discussing traumatic than non-traumatic events.

Not unlike highly stressful or traumatic events such as an emergency room visit or a devastating tornado, mother-child reminiscing of day-to-day stressors show similar contents. Burch, Austin, and Bauer (2004) found that children provided more interpretations, which included information regarding their feelings and causal explanations for the events, when they were reminiscing day-to-day negative events than non-negative events with their mothers. Likewise, Fivush and colleagues (Fivush et al., 2003) found that mothers attributed emotional states to the individuals involved when discussing daily events that made children felt angry, and highlighted causal information when recollecting everyday events that elicited sadness, anger and fear with their children.

Besides emphasizing emotions and causal explanations, mother-child reminiscing of emotionally negative events tends to further include information on ways to regulate the negative emotions. Fivush and colleagues (Fivush et al., 2003) found that both mothers and children

provided information on ways that could help to resolve the negative affect experienced when discussing about sad and fearful daily events.

Taken together, the findings suggest that regardless of the nature of emotionally negative experiences (i.e., be it highly stressful, traumatic or mundane), when discussing these events, mothers and children tend to focus on understanding the emotions experienced, provide causal explanations for why those emotions were experienced, as well as the ways to cope with them. All of these elements have been deemed as pertinent to construct a meaning-making framework that is important for facilitating children's immediate and long-term understanding and regulation of the negative emotions. Nonetheless, how effective are such conversations in bringing about positive outcomes in children? What are the relations of mother-child reminiscing of emotionally negative events to children's socio-emotional outcomes?

Relations to Socio-Emotional Outcomes

As discussed by Greenhoot and McLean (2013), there is considerable range in the conceptualization and measurement of positive outcomes in relation to meaning-making of emotionally negative experiences. Such outcomes include reduction or absence of emotional and psychological symptoms, enhancement or presence of normative attributes, such as prosocial behaviors, as well as desirable personality attributes. Indeed, studies have found that mother-child reminiscing of emotionally negative events is predictive of various social and emotional outcomes in children.

One set of outcomes pertains to social competence. In a study that compared mother-child reminiscing of emotionally positive versus negative events, Laible (2011) found that it was the reminiscing of emotionally negative events that was related to children's emotional and relational understanding. Specifically, in-depth discussion of emotion predicted higher level of

emotional understanding, while validation of emotion predicted higher level of prosocial representations of relationships, in children.

Another set of outcomes is emotional well-being, which include both internalizing and externalizing behaviors. Laible (2006) compared mother-child discussions of negative and positive emotions during a reminiscing task and a storybook telling task, and found that it was discussions of negative emotions during the reminiscing task that predicted lower level of aggression in children. However, it is noted that discussions of negative emotions was summed across mother-child reminiscing of both emotionally negative and positive events in this study. Although the effects of reminiscing about emotionally positive and negative events could not be teased apart, the finding underscores that a focus on discussing negative emotions brings about lower level of behavioral problem in children.

Notably, the effects on emotional well-being appear to be influenced by the nature of the emotionally negative events discussed. Sales and Fivush (2005) asked mother-child dyads to discuss one chronic experience and one acute stressful experience related to the child's asthma. Chronic experiences included events relating to day-to-day management of the illness, and acute stressful experiences included events such as unexpected asthma attacks that required emergency room treatment. Mothers provided more causal explanations for the chronic event than the acute event. Importantly, during chronic event discussions, mothers who mentioned more emotion had children who showed fewer internalizing and externalizing behaviors, and mothers who provided more causal explanations had children who showed fewer externalizing behaviors. In contrast, for acute event discussions, there was no relation between maternal content and children's outcomes. However, children who mentioned more emotion showed more internalizing behaviors.

The collective findings suggest that discussions of emotions and provision of causal explanations for the emotions experienced during reminiscing of emotionally negative events, especially those that are experienced in the day-to-day context, bring about children's positive social and emotional outcomes. However, in face of highly stressful events, the search for meaning may be difficult (Fivush, Sales & Bohanek, 2008). With feeling states being mentioned but causal explanations for the emotions experienced impeded, children are worse off in terms of their emotional well-being. Extant studies have thus provided some insights to the effects of mother-child reminiscing of emotionally negative events on children's outcomes. Nonetheless, these studies have focused on the concurrent, but not longitudinal, effects. Furthermore, these studies have largely been conducted with European American families and have not taken into consideration the influence of the larger cultural context (Wang, 2013).

Mother-Child Reminiscing of Emotionally Negative Events Across Cultures

Different cultures hold different values towards emotion, which impact the ways of emotional reminiscing. In the European American context where individuality is highly valued, talking about emotion is regarded as a direct expression of the self and affirms the significance of the individual (Wang, 2013). European American mothers believe that it is important to help children convey and articulate their emotions and feelings so that they could get their needs met (Chao, 1995). In contrast, in the Chinese context where relationships are highly valued, emotion (especially negative emotion) is regarded as disruptive to social harmony and expressions of emotions are often discouraged (Chao, 1995; Wang, 2013). Instead, sensitivity to others' emotions are encouraged (Wang, 2001). Furthermore, as emotions are often viewed as a consequence of children's social acts, Chinese parents tend to emphasize and focus on instilling

moral rules, discipline, and proper behaviors (Fivush & Wang, 2005; Wang, 2001; Wang & Fivush, 2005).

Studies have found that mother-child reminiscing of emotional experiences largely mirrored the respective cultural values towards emotions (Wang, 2001; Wang & Fivush, 2005). European American mothers and children tend to engage in more conversational turns, suggesting lengthier discussions of the emotional experiences. They also tend to provide more causal explanations for the emotions experienced by the children themselves as well as other people. In contrast, Chinese children tend to make more attribution of emotions to other people, and although somewhat surprisingly, Chinese mothers and children also attribute more emotions to children themselves.

Cultural differences were found to be particularly salient in the reminiscing of emotionally negative events (Fivush & Wang, 2005; Wang, 2001; Wang & Fivush, 2005). European American mothers and children as well as Chinese mothers and children tend to use more negative words, but Chinese mothers and children use more. Chinese mothers also tend to make more attributions of emotions to children. On the other hand, European American mothers and children tend to make more causal explanations for the emotions experienced by the children. Chinese mothers and children also engage in more didactic talk that focuses on moral rules, discipline, and behavioral expectations. Further, European American mothers tend to provide reassurance to resolve the negative emotions. Conversely, Chinese mothers tend to highlight moral lessons and focus on reestablishing relationships as resolutions.

Although extant research have shed lights on the ways in which mothers and children engage in reminiscing of emotionally negative experiences, an important question remains

unanswered: What are the relations of mother-child reminiscing of emotionally negative events to children's socio-emotional outcomes in different cultural contexts and across time?

The Present Study

The present study sought to examine the effects of early mother-child reminiscing of emotionally negative events (when children were age 4.5) on children's later social and emotional outcomes (when children were age 7) in the European American and Chinese immigrant contexts. We asked mother-child dyads to discuss day-to-day negative events. Measures of children's outcomes included social competence as assessed in terms of socially adaptive behaviors such as social skills, as well as emotional well-being, as assessed in terms of internalizing problems such as depression and externalizing behaviors such as conduct problems. Based on the literature, we expected that European American mothers and children would provide more causal explanations about children's and other people's emotions and reassurance as resolutions. In contrast, Chinese immigrant mothers and children would mention more negative emotions, make more attribution of emotions to children and other people, engage in more didactic talk, and highlight moral lessons and reestablishment of relationships as resolutions. As the sample comprised of normative families, we did not make any specific hypothesis with regards to cultural differences in children's social and emotional outcomes, although research has suggested that emotional well-being tend to be manifested in somatic and interpersonal symptoms in Chinese children (Koh, Chang, Fung, & Kee, 2007).

Specific to the relations between mother-child reminiscing and children's outcomes, we predicted that: (1) References to negative emotions would bring about better social and emotional outcomes in both groups of children, but more so in Chinese immigrant children; (2) attribution of emotions to children and other people would bring about better social and

emotional outcomes in Chinese immigrant children; (3) explanations about the causes of children's and other people's emotions would bring about better social and emotional outcomes in European American children; (4) didactic talk would bring about better social and emotional outcomes in Chinese immigrant children; (5) providing reassurances as resolutions would bring about better social and emotional outcomes in European American children, and in contrast, highlighting moral lessons and focusing on reestablishing relationships as resolutions would bring about better social and emotional outcomes in Chinese immigrant children. Lastly, the mother-child reminiscing literature has not suggested any effects of positive emotions during discussions of emotionally negative events. However, it has been found that in children's independent reminiscing of a traumatic experience, references to positive emotions is related to better emotional outcome across time (Sales, Fivush, Parker, & Bahrick, 2005). As such, we included a hypothesis on the effects of positive emotions, whereby references to positive emotions would bring about better social and emotional outcomes in children, but we did not make further prediction on the effects of culture in relation to positive emotions on children's outcomes.

Method

Participants

Participants were part of a larger longitudinal project on autobiographical memory development. This sample comprised of 34 European American (20 boys and 14 girls) and 22 Chinese immigrant (10 boys and 12 girls) mother-child pairs. All of these families were recruited from a university town and suburban areas in upstate New York. Recruitment was conducted through local nursery schools and word of mouth. All families were middle-class. Majority of the mothers and fathers had college education and beyond. All of the Chinese immigrant children

were born in the United States, except for two, who came to the United States at an average of 2 years of age. Sample attrition (46%, from when children were age 4.5 to age 7) was mainly due to family relocation and loss of contact.

Procedure and Measures

At both time points, two female researchers visited the mother-child pairs in their homes. The main researcher interacted and worked through the study procedures with the mother-child pairs and the second researcher took charge of the video procedure. The main researcher was always a native of the culture of the family visited and spoke the native languages. In the European American families, English was the primary language used. In the Chinese immigrant families, the mother-child pairs were asked to speak in the language that they normally speak at home, which could be English, Chinese or a mixture of both. All materials were prepared in both English and Chinese. A translation and back-translation procedure was conducted to ensure language equivalence in both literal and sense meanings. When children were at age 4.5, mothers provided informed consent for participation. When children were older at age 7, mothers provided informed consent again and children provided informed assent for participation. Across the two time-points, the visits generally comprised of (i) a mother-child memory-sharing segment, (ii) a researcher-child segment where the main researcher worked through the various study tasks with the child, and (iii) a questionnaire segment where the mother responded to a battery of questionnaires. Each visit lasted for about 1.5 to 2 hours. At the end of each visit, the child was given a small gift to keep, and the mother was given a \$30 giftcard in appreciation of their participation. The tasks and questionnaires relevant to the present study are described below.

Language. When children were at age 4.5, mothers responded to the shorten version of the Child Development Inventory (CDI; Ireton, 1992). This measure assesses children's

language production and comprehension. Mothers responded to the 100 items with total possible score ranging from 0 to 100. A higher score indicates higher level of language production and comprehension. Cronbach's α was .86.

Emotion talk. When children were at age 4.5, mothers were asked to talk to them about a specific, one-time event that both of them experienced together, which was emotionally negative to the child. Mothers were asked to choose an event that took place within the last two months so that children still had memories of them. Mothers were asked to discuss the event with their children as they normally would and for as long as they wanted. The discussions were video-taped. Each conversation lasted for approximately 10 minutes.

Behavior Assessment System for Children-Second Edition (BASC-2). When children were at age 7, mothers responded to the Parent Rating Scales of BASC-2 (Reynolds & Kamphaus, 2005). This is a multidimensional measure that assesses internalizing and externalizing problem behaviors as well as socially adaptive behaviors of children. The problem behavior dimensions include hyperactivity (10 items), aggression (11 items), conduct problems (9 items), anxiety (14 items), depression (14 items), somatization (12 items), atypicality (13 items), withdrawal (12 items), and attention problems (6 items). The adaptive behavior dimensions include adaptability (8 items), social skills (8 items), leadership (8 items), activities of daily living (8 items) and functional communication (12 items). The measure has a total of 160 items, of which some are "critical" single item on their own that entail clinical significance and do not belong to any of the dimensions. Mothers responded to the items on a 4-point Likert Scale (1 = Never to 4 = Always). A higher score in each dimension indicates higher level of that problem or adaptive behavior. In the present sample, one item each from atypicality and functional communication had negative item-total correlation and were deleted. Cronbach's α s for the sub-scales ranged from .74 to .87.

Children Depression Scale-Caretaker Version. When children were at age 7, mothers also responded to the caretaker version of the Children Depression Scale. This measure was adapted from the original child version (Koh, Chang, Fung, & Kee, 2007). It comprises of four dimensions of children's depression: negative affect and cognitive dysfunction (6 items), loss of interest (4 items), psychosomatic manifestations (4 items), and negative social self (6 items). Mothers responded to the 20 items on a 5-point Likert Scale (1 = Not at all like my child to 5 = Most like my child). A higher score in each dimension indicates higher level of that depressive symptom. One item from negative social self and another item from psychosomatic manifestations were found to have negative and zero item-total correlation respectively and were deleted. Cronbach's α s was .79 for the entire scale (i.e., comprising the remaining 18 items) and ranged from .45 to .72 for the sub-scales (i.e., with 3 to 6 items respectively). It is commonly recognized that Cronbach's α is affected by test length, whereby the value is reduced with short test length (e.g., Streiner, 2003). Studies have reported, for example, the Cronbach's α s for 4-item sub-scales in the range of .39 to .65 (e.g., Weisz, Weiss, Wasserman, & Rintoul, 1987; Weisz et al., 1989). Thus, in view that the item set in each sub-scale was small and that the internal consistency for the entire scale was satisfactory, the Cronbach's α s were not unexpected and deemed as acceptable.

Coding

Mother-child conversations were coded using Noldus's program The ObserveR® 5.0. This is a coding program whereby coders view the video materials online and score the codes directly on the computer (Noldus, 2003). Coding was conducted in the original languages. For most of the codes, proposition was used as the coding unit. It is defined as a subject-verb construction (Fivush, Haden, & Adam, 1995). Each unique or implied verb in an independent

clause forms a new propositional unit. For example, “You were really sad” was one proposition and “You were really sad and crying” was two. All the variables were coded for frequency. This allowed us to examine not only the presence of the codes but also how frequent and thus how important they were in the meaning-making process. Mothers’ and children’s utterances were coded into one of the following mutually exclusive and exhaustive categories.

- (1) *Emotion terms*: Mothers’ and children’s utterances of specific emotion terms, which could be either emotions experienced (e.g., happy; sad) or emotional behaviors (e.g., laughing; crying). Positive and negative emotion terms were coded separately.
- (2a) *Attribution-child*: Mothers’ utterances that ascribed emotional states or reactions to their children (e.g. M: You were scared, weren’t you?); children’s utterances that ascribed emotional states or reactions to themselves (e.g., C: I was mad.)
- (2b) *Mothers’ reconfirmation of attribution*: In a three-utterance sequence, mothers’ utterances that reconfirmed the emotional states or reactions ascribed to their children (e.g., M: You were scared. C: Yeah. M: *Yeah, you were scared.*)
- (2c) *Attribution-others*: Mothers’ and children’s utterances about other people’s emotional states or reactions (e.g. M: Grandma was angry, wasn’t she? / C: Daddy was mad.)
- (3a) *Explanation-child*: Mothers’ utterances about the causes of their children’s emotional states or reactions (e.g., M: You were scared because daddy was fierce; M: Why were you sad?); children’s utterances about the causes of their own emotions (e.g., I cried because I didn’t like it.)
- (3b) *Mothers’ reconfirmation of explanation*: In a three-utterance sequence, mothers’ utterances that reconfirmed the causes of their children’s emotional states or reactions (e.g., M: Why were you sad? C: I lost my dolly. M: *Yeah, you did.*)

- (3c) *Explanation-others*: Mothers' and children's utterances about the causes of other people's emotional states or reactions (e.g. M: Daddy was mad because you were naughty. / C: I didn't listen to grandma, so she was angry.)
- (4) *Didactic content*: Mothers' and children's utterances about moral standards, social norms, or behavioral expectations and disciplines (e.g., M: It was wrong of you to make grandma angry. / C: Children should listen to their parents.)
- (5) *Mothers' provision of resolutions*: Mothers' utterances that helped to resolve the issues and situations that elicited negative feelings in the child, which provided closure to the negative event. Resolutions were coded into the following mutually exclusive categories:
- a. *Reassurance*: Resolution to reassure or comfort child that everything was alright (e.g., M: Mommy hug you and said not to be scared, right?)
 - b. *Reestablishment of relationships*: Resolution to reestablish harmonious relations with the person who caused the negative emotion in child (e.g., M: Daddy didn't let you play that because it was dangerous and he didn't want you to fall. He cares about you.)
 - c. *Moral lesson*: Resolution to teach children the appropriateness of their emotional experience or behavior (e.g., M: You shouldn't cry when getting a shot. Be brave!)

English-speaking and English-Chinese bilingual research assistants coded the datasets in English and Chinese respectively. All coders were unaware of the study hypotheses. Repeated joint coding sessions were held to ensure that the same definitions were followed by all the coders. Reliability was assessed for 20% of the data from each group. Kappas ranged from .76 to .93 for the European-American sample and .78 to .89 for the Chinese immigrant sample.

Results

Preliminary analyses revealed no systematic effects involving age, gender and language; these variables were therefore not considered further. One European American child did not provide a memory about a negative experience, so the data from this mother-child pair was not included for further analyses. For the outcome measures, missing data was replaced with series means.

Types of Negative Events Discussed

For European American mother-child pairs, the commonly discussed negative events were injuries and medical procedures (30.3%), conflicts with and scolding from parents (18.2%), disappointments (15.2%), and conflicts with siblings or peers (12.1%). Other negative events discussed were about death (9.1%), separation from caregivers and others (9.1%), scary things (3.0%), and losing a special object (3.0%). For Chinese immigrant mother-child pairs, the commonly discussed negative events were conflicts with siblings or peers (31.8%), conflicts with and scolding from parents (22.7%) and injuries and medical procedures (22.7%). Other negative events discussed included disappointment (9.1%), new environment (9.1%) and scary things (4.5%). Overall, although European American mother-child pairs talked about a wider range of events, there were more similarities than differences in the types of negative events discussed across cultures. Nonetheless, it was noted that Chinese immigrant mother-child pairs were more likely to discuss about conflicts with parents, siblings or peers (54.5% total) than European American mother-child pairs (30.3% total), $\chi^2(1, N = 55) = 3.15, p = .08, \phi = .24$.

Mother-Child Emotional Reminiscing

The means for most of the emotion talk categories were generally low (< 1). Mothers' and children's utterances were thus dummy coded and analyzed as categorical data. For each

coded variable, mothers and children received 1 if they made any utterance, and received 0 if they did not make any utterance, in relation to that variable. Due to low proportion of mothers who made utterances about reestablishment of relationships as a resolution and low proportion of children who made utterances about other's emotions (i.e., attribution-others) and the causes of others' emotions (i.e., explanation-others), these variables were not analyzed further. To examine cultural differences in the emotion talk variables, binary logistic regression analyses were conducted. Table 3.1 shows the proportions of mothers and children who made utterances for the different emotion talk variables across groups.

Chinese immigrant mothers were more likely than European American mothers to utter negative emotion terms, $\chi^2(1, N = 55) = 3.56, p = .06, \phi = .25$, didactic content, $\chi^2(1, N = 55) = 8.17, p < .01, \phi = .39$, and to provide moral lesson as a resolution, $\chi^2(1, N = 55) = 4.12, p < .05, \phi = .27$.

European American children were more likely than Chinese immigrant children to ascribe emotional states or reactions to themselves, $\chi^2(1, N = 55) = 3.10, p = .08, \phi = .24$. Chinese immigrant children were more likely than European American children to utter didactic content, $\chi^2(1, N = 55) = 4.12, p < .05, \phi = .27$.

Table 3.1. Percentages of mothers and children who provided responses for the emotion talk variables by culture

Emotional reminiscing	Mothers			Children		
	EA	CI	Total	EA	CI	Total
Emotion terms: Negative	52	77	62	27	23	26
Emotion terms: Positive	33	23	29	12	14	13
Attribution-child	52	64	56	52	27	42
Mothers' reconfirmation of attribution	30	18	26	--	--	--
Attribution-others	27	9	20	15	5	11
Explanation-child	67	64	66	67	50	60
Mothers' reconfirmation of explanation	30	18	26	--	--	--
Explanation-others	15	9	13	6	0	4
Didactic talk	9	45	24	9	32	18
Mothers' provision of resolutions: Reassurance	33	32	33	--	--	--
Mothers' provision of resolutions: Reestablishment of relationships	6	5	6	--	--	--
Mothers' provision of resolutions: Moral lesson	10	32	18	--	--	--

EA = European American; CI = Chinese Immigrant

Children's Outcomes

To examine cultural differences in mothers' reports of children's socio-emotional well-being, independent sample t-tests were conducted. Table 3.2 shows the means and standard deviations of the variables examined. Based on mothers' reports, European American children scored higher than Chinese immigrant children on aggression, $t(53) = 3.89, p < .001, d = 1.12$, conduct problems, $t(53) = 2.14, p < .05, d = .59$, social skills, $t(53) = 1.99, p = .05, d = .55$, and leadership, $t(53) = 2.36, p < .05, d = .63$. Chinese immigrant children scored higher than European American children on psychosomatic manifestations, $t(53) = 2.08, p < .05, d = .56$.

Mother-Child Emotional Reminiscing and Children's Outcomes

To examine the longitudinal effects of mother-child emotion talk on children's socio-emotional well-being, univariate ANOVAs were conducted, with culture and each emotion talk variable as independent variables, and each socio-emotional well-being dimension as dependent variables. Significant interaction effects were followed up with focused comparisons. In view of the small sample size, focused comparisons that did not reach the conventional statistical significance level based on p -value, but nonetheless showed moderate to large effect sizes were reported. According to Cohen (1992), effect sizes of .20, .50 and .80 are considered to be small, moderate and large respectively. Table 3.3 provides a summary of the findings.

Emotion terms: Negative. There were main effects of mothers' utterances of negative emotion terms on hyperactivity, $F(1, 51) = 5.52, p < .05, \eta_p^2 = .10$, conduct problems, $F(1, 51) = 3.72, p = .06, \eta_p^2 = .07$, atypicality, $F(1, 51) = 4.34, p < .05, \eta_p^2 = .08$, and functional communication, $F(1, 51) = 3.50, p = .07, \eta_p^2 = .06$. Independent of culture, mothers who uttered negative emotion terms had children with lower levels of hyperactivity, conduct problems, and atypicality but higher level of functional communication than mothers who did not. There was

Table 3.2. Means and standard deviations of socio-emotional well-being variables by culture

Socio-emotional well-being	European American <i>M (SD)</i>	Chinese Immigrant <i>M (SD)</i>
BASC Internalizing and Externalizing Problem Behaviors ^a		
Hyperactivity	1.95 (.43)	1.82 (.39)
Aggression	1.66 (.32)	1.36 (.20)
Conduct problems	1.56 (.30)	1.39 (.28)
Anxiety	1.79 (.27)	1.82 (.49)
Depression	1.52 (.30)	1.42 (.25)
Somatization	1.27 (.24)	1.38 (.23)
Atypicality	1.30 (.24)	1.30 (.27)
Withdrawal	1.57 (.33)	1.59 (.40)
Attention problems	1.98 (.58)	2.09 (.51)
BASC Socially Adaptive Behaviors ^a		
Adaptability	3.06 (.52)	3.10 (.40)
Social skills	2.93 (.52)	2.64 (.54)
Leadership	2.94 (.39)	2.64 (.57)
Activities of daily living	2.95 (.40)	2.82 (.46)
Functional communication	3.30 (.33)	3.21 (.46)
ACDS ^b		
Negative affect and cognitive dysfunction	1.28 (.38)	1.39 (.37)
Loss of interest	1.30 (.41)	1.22 (.33)
Psychosomatic manifestations	1.14 (.31)	1.35 (.42)
Negative Social Self	1.07 (.14)	1.08 (.16)

^a4-point Likert scale (1 = Never to 4 = Always)

^b5-point Likert scale (1 = Not at all like my child to 5 = Most like my child)

Table 3.3. Summary of findings on the relations between mother-child emotional reminiscing and children's outcomes independent of culture as well as cultural effects

Emotional reminiscing	Social and Emotional Outcomes		
	Independent of culture	Cultural effects	
		EA	CI
Emotion terms: Negative			
Mothers	+		+
Children	+		
Emotion terms: Positive			
Children		-	+
Attribution-child			
Mothers	+		
Attribution-others			
Mothers	-		
Explanation-child			
Mothers	+		
Children	+		
Mothers' reconfirmation of explanation	+		
Explanation-others			
Mothers	-	+	-
Didactic talk			
Mothers		-	+
Children		-	+
Mothers' provision of resolutions:			
Reassurance		-	+
Mothers' provision of resolutions:			
Moral lesson	+		

EA = European American; CI = Chinese Immigrant; + = Better outcomes; - = Worse outcomes

also a Culture x Negative emotion terms interaction effect on withdrawal, $F(1, 51) = 3.24, p = .08, \eta_p^2 = .06$. Chinese immigrant mothers who uttered negative emotion terms had children with lower level of withdrawal than mothers who did not, $t(20) = 1.86, p = .08, d = .91$, whereas this was not true for European Americans. Further, there was a main effect of negative emotion terms, $F(1, 51) = 4.22, p < .05, \eta_p^2 = .08$, qualified by a Culture x Negative emotion terms interaction effect, $F(1, 51) = 3.81, p = .06, \eta_p^2 = .07$, on negative social self. Chinese immigrant mothers who uttered negative emotion terms had children with lower level of negative social self than mothers who did not, $t(20) = 2.45, p < .05, d = .87$, but no effect was found in the European American sample.

There was a main effect of children's utterances of negative emotion terms on somatization, $F(1, 51) = 3.74, p = .06, \eta_p^2 = .07$. Independent of culture, children who uttered negative emotion terms showed lower level of somatization than those who did not.

Emotion terms: Positive. No effect was found for mothers' utterances of positive emotion terms on children's socio-emotional well-being. Nonetheless, children's utterances of positive emotion terms showed Culture x Positive emotion terms interaction effects on conduct problems, $F(1, 51) = 4.10, p < .05, \eta_p^2 = .07$, and somatization, $F(1, 51) = 4.59, p < .05, \eta_p^2 = .08$. European American children who uttered positive emotion terms showed higher level of conduct problems, $t(31) = 1.80, p = .08, d = .92$, and higher level of somatization, $t(31) = 1.27, n.s., d = .43$, than those who did not. In contrast, Chinese immigrant children who uttered positive emotion terms showed lower level of conduct problems, $t(20) = 1.12, n.s., d = .80$, and lower level of somatization, $t(20) = 1.80, p = .09, d = 1.42$, than those who did not.

Attribution-child. Mothers' utterances that ascribed emotional states or reactions to their children showed a main effect on negative social self, $F(1, 51) = 3.53, p = .07, \eta_p^2 = .07$.

Independent of culture, mothers who ascribed emotional states or reactions to their children had children with lower negative social self than mothers who did not. No other effects reached significant difference. However, children's utterances that ascribed emotional states or reactions to themselves did not have any effect on their own socio-emotional well-being.

Mothers' reconfirmation of attribution. There was no effect of mothers' reconfirmation of attribution on children's socio-emotional well-being.

Attribution-others. Mothers' utterances that ascribed emotional states or reactions to others showed main effects on aggression, $F(1, 51) = 3.96, p = .05, \eta_p^2 = .07$, negative social self, $F(1, 51) = 6.24, p < .05, \eta_p^2 = .11$, and activities of daily living, $F(1, 51) = 3.72, p = .06, \eta_p^2 = .07$. Independent of culture, mothers who ascribed emotional states or reactions to others had children who showed higher levels of aggression and negative social self, but lower level of activities of daily living.

Explanation-child. There were main effects of mothers' utterances about the causes of children's emotional states or reactions on hyperactivity, $F(1, 51) = 6.06, p < .05, \eta_p^2 = .11$, and negative social self, $F(1, 51) = 9.74, p < .01, \eta_p^2 = .16$. Independent of culture, mothers who uttered about the causes of their children's emotional states or reactions had children with lower levels of hyperactivity and negative social self than mothers who did not.

There was also a main effect of children's utterances about the causes of their emotional states or reactions on loss of interest, $F(1, 51) = 6.78, p < .05, \eta_p^2 = .12$. Independent of culture, children who uttered about the causes of their own emotional states or reactions showed lower level of loss of interest.

Mothers' reconfirmation of explanation. Mothers' utterances that reconfirmed the causes of their children's emotional states or reactions had main effects on aggression, $F(1, 51) = 4.27,$

$p < .05$, $\eta_p^2 = .08$, conduct problems, $F(1, 51) = 8.07$, $p < .01$, $\eta_p^2 = .14$, withdrawal, $F(1, 51) = 3.26$, $p = .08$, $\eta_p^2 = .06$, attention problems, $F(1, 51) = 3.68$, $p = .06$, $\eta_p^2 = .07$, adaptability, $F(1, 51) = 6.10$, $p < .05$, $\eta_p^2 = .11$, social skills, $F(1, 51) = 7.96$, $p < .01$, $\eta_p^2 = .14$, leadership, $F(1, 51) = 4.89$, $p < .05$, $\eta_p^2 = .09$, activities of daily living, $F(1, 51) = 4.76$, $p < .05$, $\eta_p^2 = .09$, and functional communication, $F(1, 51) = 7.18$, $p < .05$, $\eta_p^2 = .12$. Independent of culture, mothers who reconfirmed the causes of their children's emotional states or reactions had children with lower levels of aggression, conduct problems, withdrawal, and attention problems, but higher levels of adaptability, social skills, leadership, activities of daily living and functional communication.

Explanation-others. Mothers' utterances about the causes of others' emotional states or reactions showed main effects on negative affect and cognitive dysfunction, $F(1, 51) = 3.83$, $p = .06$, $\eta_p^2 = .07$, and leadership, $F(1, 51) = 9.99$, $p < .01$, $\eta_p^2 = .16$. Independent of culture, mothers who explained about the causes of other's emotional states or reactions had children with higher level of negative affect and cognitive dysfunction and lower level of leadership than mothers who did not. There were also Culture x Explanation-others interaction effects on withdrawal, $F(1, 51) = 3.25$, $p = .08$, $\eta_p^2 = .06$, and functional communication, $F(1, 51) = 3.94$, $p = .05$, $\eta_p^2 = .07$. Chinese immigrant mothers who uttered about the causes of others' emotional states or reactions had children with higher level of withdrawal than mothers who did not, $t(20) = 1.60$, *n.s.*, $d = 1.57$, whereas this was not true for the European Americans. Nonetheless, European American mothers who uttered about the causes of others' emotional states or reactions had children with higher level of functional communication than mothers who did not, $t(31) = .85$, *n.s.*, $d = .48$. In contrast, Chinese immigrant mothers who uttered about the causes of

others' emotional states or reactions had children with lower level of functional communication than mothers who did not, $t(20) = 1.61$, $n.s.$, $d = .97$.

Didactic talk. Mothers' utterances about moral standards, social norms, or behavioral expectations and disciplines showed a Culture x Didactic content interaction effect on loss of interest, $F(1, 51) = 4.45$, $p < .05$, $\eta_p^2 = .08$. European American mothers who engaged in didactic talk had children with higher loss of interest than mothers who did not, $t(31) = 1.65$, $n.s.$, $d = 1.08$. In contrast, Chinese immigrant mothers who engaged in didactic talk had children with lower loss of interest than mothers who did not, $t(20) = 1.32$, $n.s.$, $d = .58$.

Children's utterances about moral standards, social norms, or behavioral expectations and disciplines also showed a Culture x Didactic content interaction effect on loss of interest, $F(1, 51) = 3.43$, $p = .07$, $\eta_p^2 = .06$. European American children who engaged in didactic talk had higher loss of interest than children who did not, $t(31) = 1.65$, $n.s.$, $d = 1.08$. Conversely, Chinese immigrant children who engaged in didactic talk had lower loss of interest than children who did not, $t(20) = .84$, $n.s.$, $d = .41$.

Mothers' provision of resolutions: Reassurance. Mothers who reassured or comforted child that everything was alright showed a Culture x Reassurance interaction effect on somatization, $F(1, 51) = 6.67$, $p < .05$, $\eta_p^2 = .12$. Surprisingly, European American mothers who provided reassurance had children with higher level of somatization than those who did not, $t(31) = 2.95$, $p < .01$, $d = 1.01$. In contrast, Chinese immigrant mothers who provided reassurance had children with lower level of somatization than those who did not, $t(20) = .96$, $n.s.$, $d = .40$.

Mothers' provision of resolutions: Moral lesson. Mothers who taught children the appropriateness of their emotional experience or behavior showed main effects on anxiety, $F(1, 51) = 5.57$, $p < .05$, $\eta_p^2 = .10$, negative affect and cognitive dysfunction, $F(1, 51) = 4.83$, $p < .05$,

$\eta_p^2 = .09$, adaptability, $F(1, 51) = 3.39, p = .07$, $\eta_p^2 = .06$, and leadership, $F(1, 51) = 3.89, p = .05$, $\eta_p^2 = .07$. Independent of culture, mothers who uttered about moral lesson had children with lower levels of anxiety, negative affect and cognitive dysfunction and higher levels of adaptability and leadership than mothers who did not.

Discussion

Albeit a growing literature that examines the relations between mother-child reminiscing of emotionally negative experiences and children's outcomes, studies that investigate the longitudinal effects and the influence of culture have been scanty. The present study is the first to examine the long-term effects of mother-child reminiscing of emotionally negative events on children's social and emotional outcomes in European American and Chinese immigrant families. Although some of the findings were not in line with predictions, the findings revealed important insights regarding the effects of mother-child emotional reminiscing on children's outcomes that are independent of culture as well as specific to cultural contexts across time.

Specific to emotional reminiscing, Chinese immigrant mothers were more likely to mention negative emotion terms, engage in didactic talk and provide moral lessons as a resolution than European American mothers when reminiscing about emotionally negative experiences with their children. Just like their mothers, Chinese immigrant children were also more likely to engage in didactic talk than European American children. These findings are consistent with those found in earlier studies (Fivush & Wang, 2005; Wang, 2001; Wang & Fivush, 2005) and suggest that in face of emotionally negative experiences, mother-child reminiscing serves a didactic function in the Chinese context. It appears that Chinese immigrant mothers are more concerned than European American mothers to help their children learn the appropriate emotional responses and regulations as well as proper behaviors that are in line with

the prevailing and expected moral rules and social norms. Chinese immigrant children, in turn, are more concerned than European American children about responding and behaving appropriately when encountering and coping with emotionally negative events.

On the other hand, European American children were more likely to attribute emotions to themselves than Chinese immigrant children. This finding is not consistent with what was found in an earlier study (Wang & Fivush, 2005) and would require corroboration from future studies. Nonetheless, at least for the European American children in the present study, they were more expressive of their own emotional states than Chinese immigrant children when discussing the emotionally negative events with their mothers. This is consistent with the European American cultural value that places emphasis on the individual, whereby direct expression of emotion is a way to affirm the importance of the self (Chao, 1995; Wang, 2013).

In terms of children's outcomes, across the multiple dimensions of social and emotional outcomes assessed, European American and Chinese immigrant children showed more similarities than differences in their social and emotional functioning. These findings are not surprising given that the two cultural samples comprised of typically developing children from normative families.

Importantly, different dimensions of mother-child reminiscing were found to be related to children's outcomes in varied manners across time, some of which were independent of cultural effects, while others were moderated by culture. As predicted, for both European American and Chinese immigrant mothers who mentioned negative emotion terms, their children showed better social and emotional outcomes, and there were more of such effects in the Chinese context. Likewise, for both European American and Chinese immigrant children who mentioned negative emotion terms, they showed better emotional outcomes. Fivush et al. (2003) have argued that

discussion of negative feeling states serves a didactic function that help children to learn the appropriate ways of responding to the emotionally negative events and regulating their emotions. It is therefore no wonder that this dimension of emotional reminiscing brought about better social and emotional outcomes in children, and especially so in the Chinese context that commonly emphasizes discipline and proper behaviors as a way of regulating emotions (Fivush & Wang, 2005; Wang, 2001; Wang & Fivush, 2005).

Similar to the effects of negative emotion terms, Chinese immigrant children who mentioned positive emotion terms showed better emotional outcomes. In contrast, European American children who mentioned positive emotion terms showed worse emotional outcomes. Research has suggested that children who can find positivity in negative situations handle the stressors better and show better psychological adjustments (Sales et al., 2005), and this appears to be the case in the Chinese context. It is surprising that similar effects were not found in European American children. It is common for European American parents to downplay children's transgression or negativity to protect their self-esteem (Miller, Fung, & Koven, 2007; Miller, Fung, Lin, Chen, & Boldt, 2012) and to facilitate a sense of positivity. Yet, it seems that maintaining or up-playing positivity during reminiscing of emotionally negative situations may elevate internalizing and externalizing problem behaviors in children. For example, maintaining positivity in face of a conflict with parents may bring about continuous problems in children's conduct.

In both Chinese and European American families, mothers who attributed emotions to children had children who showed better emotional outcomes. On the other hand, both European American and Chinese immigrant mothers who attributed emotions to other people had children who showed worse social and emotional outcomes. The literature has suggested that discussion

of emotions help to facilitate understanding and regulation of negative emotions (Ackil et al., 2003; Burch et al., 2004; Fivush et al., 2003; Laible, 2006; Sales et al., 2003). Yet it appears that discussing *whose* emotions matters to outcomes. It is the discussion of the child's emotions that brings about better emotional outcomes. In fact, highlighting other people's emotions brings about worse social and emotional outcomes. This is so even in the Chinese context where sensitivity to other people's feelings are encouraged (Wang, 2001). These findings may not be surprising given that children are experiencing an internal emotional struggle that needs to be resolved, and helping them to understand and regulate such an internal emotional struggle would bring about better outcomes. Conversely, highlighting other people's emotions may elevate a sense that one causes the negative emotions in other people or that other people are feeling negatively towards oneself, which would bring about worse outcomes.

Similar patterns of findings were found for causal explanations of emotions, whereby explaining the causes of *whose* emotions matter to outcomes. Again, independent of culture, mothers and children who explained the causes for the emotions experienced by children, as well as mothers who reconfirmed those explanations had children who showed better social and emotional outcomes. These findings are consistent with suggestions set forth in the literature, whereby explaining the causes of children's emotions is an important meaning-making mechanism (Ackil et al., 2003; Burch et al., 2004; Fivush et al., 2003; Laible, 2006; Sales et al., 2003) that facilitate better outcomes (Laible, 2006; 2011; Sales & Fivush, 2005). On the other hand, both European American and Chinese immigrant mothers who explained the causes of other people's emotions had children who showed worse social and emotional outcomes, and there are more of such effects in the Chinese context. There was only one exception whereby European American mothers who explained the causes of other people's emotions had children

who showed a better outcome in terms of higher level of functional communication. The effects of explaining about other people's emotions are similar to the effects of attributing emotions to other people. It appears that in general, discussing other people's emotional states and the causes for their emotions may not be helpful to children in understanding and regulating their internal emotional struggle. Furthermore, as discussed earlier, focusing on other people's emotions (either by making references to or explaining about them) may elevate a sense that one causes the negative emotions in other people or that other people are feeling negatively towards oneself, which would bring about worse outcomes.

Interestingly, as predicted, Chinese immigrant mothers and children who engaged in didactic talk had children who showed better emotional outcomes. It is common for Chinese parents to emphasize discipline and proper behaviors (Fivush & Wang, 2005; Wang, 2001; Wang & Fivush, 2005), and well-behaved children are often praised and regarded as good children. Thus, it is within expectation that didactic talk would bring about better emotional outcomes in children in this cultural context. In contrast, European American mothers and children who engaged in didactic talk had children who showed worse emotional outcomes. As a culture that often downplays children's transgression or negativity to protect their self-esteem (Miller et al., 2007; 2012), emphasizing discipline and proper behaviors would not be beneficial to children's emotional outcomes.

Surprisingly, European American mothers who provided reassurance as a resolution had children who showed worse emotional outcomes, but conversely, Chinese immigrant mothers who provided reassurance as a resolution had children who showed better emotional outcomes. Perhaps not unlike in the case of mentioning positive emotion terms, providing reassurance and maintaining such positivity in negative situations may elevate internalizing problem behaviors in

children in the European American context. In contrast, Chinese immigrant mothers who provide reassurance may help to create a sense of positivity in face of the negative situations, and bring about better emotional outcomes in children. Nonetheless, independent of culture, European American and Chinese immigrant mothers who provided moral lessons as a resolution had children who showed better social and emotional outcomes. Moral lessons serve to teach children the appropriate ways of responding to the emotionally negative events and regulating their emotions, which may help to bring about better social and emotional outcomes in children.

The present study yielded important insights to the long-term effects of mother-child reminiscing of emotionally negative events on children's social and emotional outcomes. Nonetheless, there are a few limitations. First, research has argued for narrative coherence and the understanding of internal states (i.e., cognitions and thoughts, emotions, and subjective perspectives) to be important to meaning-making of emotionally negative experiences (e.g., Fivush, Sales, & Bohanek, 2008; Greenhoot & McLean, 2013; Pasupathi, 2013). Although it is important by and in itself, the present study had focused on examining only one particular aspect of internal states, that is, emotions, to meaning-making. Furthermore, research has recognized that the range of outcomes studied to date has been rather limited (Pasupathi, 2013). For example, emotional outcomes have commonly been examined in terms of internalizing and externalizing behaviors. The present study had examined similar outcomes. Future studies may want to extend the analyses to include narrative coherence and the full range of internal states for meaning-making, as well as extend the examination of outcomes to other variables, such as coping. Such analyses would serve to provide a more comprehensive insight to how parents of different cultures may help children to create meanings out of their emotionally negative experiences that could bring about positive social and emotional outcomes. Second, there was a 46% attrition rate

from when children were at age 4.5 to age 7. It is recognized that this attrition rate may not be considered to be low. However, analysis of the mother-child reminiscing variables (assessed when children were at age 4.5) showed that there was no difference between mother-child dyads who continued to stay in the study and those who dropped out of the study (when children were at age 7). Still, future studies may be conducted to corroborate the findings from the present study. Lastly, the present study focused on middle-class families in the United States, which might limit the generalizability of the findings. Future research may be extended to examine mother-child future talk in different populations, such as working-class families.

In conclusion, children's daily life may not be all pleasant and positive. In face of emotionally negative events, how parents help children to remember and tell about these experiences during reminiscing hold long-terms implications for children's social and emotional outcomes. Although there are similarities in terms of the conversational elements that may be effective to bring about positive outcomes in children, there are also notable cultural differences. Indeed, it is important for parents to scaffold children to regulate their negative emotions in culturally expectant and appropriate manners, so that children learn to cope with their negative experiences in culturally adaptive and positive ways.

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General Discussion

General Discussion

Parents engage in conversations with children regarding their past and future personal experiences. Such conversations are critical not only to the socialization of the extended self, but also hold important implications for children's social and emotional outcomes across time. Importantly, culture has pervasive influences on the socialization of the extended self and the relations to children's social and emotional outcomes.

Extended Self and Children's Outcomes in the Cultural Contexts

Specific to the European American context, families engaged in short dinnertime interaction and conversation, as it is a collective-oriented activity that may not be in line with the cultural values that prize individuality and autonomy. Nonetheless, during dinnertime, parents engaged in memory-sharing with children. They often highlighted children's actions, downplayed their transgressions, and focused on their personal thoughts and feelings, all of which were centered on the individuality of the child. Even in face of prior negative events, mothers made use of follow-up discussion about the future to continue to inculcate and respect children's sense of autonomy by referring to children's personal preferences and opinions with regards to the future. Importantly, during reminiscing of emotionally negative experiences, mothers and children who focused on the child's emotional states, explained the causes for the child's emotions and provided ways to resolve the negative emotions experienced had children who showed better social and emotional outcomes across time.

Collectively, the findings suggest that European American parents are socializing their children to develop an extended self that is independent in nature, and focusing on the emotions of the children relate to their long-term positive social and emotional outcomes.

Conversely, in the Chinese context, Chinese immigrant families engaged in lengthy dinnertime interaction and conversation, whereby parents made use of memory-sharing during dinnertime to socialize children to develop an extended self that is bicultural in nature. Dinnertime may be a particularly important natural context for the socialization of a bicultural extended self in children. This is because it is in this context that parents were comfortable to discuss past events that focused not only on children's social relations and daily interactions with others, but also their personal thoughts and feelings. The former is in line with the values of the culture-of-origin that emphasize social connectedness, while the latter is congruent with the values of the host culture that prizes individuality. Although Chinese immigrant families operate in a larger cultural environment that is different from their Chinese counterparts in China, both Chinese immigrant and Chinese mothers commonly engaged in talking about the future following memory-sharing with their children. Especially in face of prior negative events that had threatened social and familial harmony, they made use of this form of future talk to remind and teach children the proper ways of behaving and regulating the self in the future. Children, in turn, talked about how they would self-regulate and behave properly in future. Notably, Chinese immigrant mothers and children who engaged in such didactic talk during reminiscing of emotionally negative experiences had children who showed better emotional outcomes across time. In addition, not unlike their European American counterparts, Chinese immigrant mothers and children mothers and children who focused on the child's emotional states, explained the causes for the child's emotions and provided ways to resolve the negative emotions experienced had children who showed better social and emotional outcomes across time.

Taken together, the findings suggest that Chinese parents are socializing their children to develop an extended self that is interdependent in nature. As for Chinese immigrant parents, they

are socializing their children to develop an extended self that is both interdependent and independent in nature, and focusing on the emotions of the children as well as helping them to regulate emotions by instilling proper behaviors according to moral and social norms are associated with children's long-term positive social and emotional outcomes.

In sum, the findings yielded insights regarding the socialization of the extended self and the relations to children's social and emotional outcomes in the cultural contexts. Furthermore, they may hold significance in relations to narrative identity and other constructs of self.

Relations to Other Self Constructs

Narrative identity is a construct that has been very much studied in adolescence and adulthood (e.g., McLean, 2005; McLean & Pratt, 2006). As discussed by McAdams and McLean (2013), narrative identity "reconstructs the autobiographical past and imagines the future in such a way as to provide a person's life with some degree of unity, purpose, and meaning. Thus, a person's life story synthesizes episodic memories with envisioned goals, creating a coherent account of identity in time" (p. 233). Furthermore, when a person narrates his/her life story in a redemption sequence, which "marks a transition in a life narrative account from an emotionally negative scene to a positive outcome or attribution about the self" (p. 233), it holds implications for adaptation and well-being (see also, Alder, 2012; McLean & Breen, 2009). Notably, McAdams and McLean argued that to develop a narrative identity, a person must first learn how to tell personal stories in the social contexts that are in accordance with cultural parameters. In particular, early parent-child conversation has been highlighted to be a critical medium for children to learn how to tell their personal stories and make meanings out of these experiences. Indeed, the findings from the three studies of this dissertation lend support to this stance. Specifically, parents of different cultures who engage in conversations with their young children,

as young as preschool age, are scaffolding children to tell about their autobiographical past and imagine the future that aligns with cultural values, norms and expectations. By helping children to create meanings out of their personal experiences, children come to develop an extended sense of self in time, as well as to cope with their day-to-day emotionally negative experiences in culturally appropriate ways that are associated with positive outcomes.

Besides laying the foundation for the development of narrative identity, parents who scaffold their children to develop an extended self may relatedly be helping their children to develop another facet of self-knowledge, specifically, that of their conceptual self. The self is a multi-faceted construct (e.g., Harter, 1999, 2006; Koh & Wang, 2012; Neisser, 1988). Besides the extended self that focuses on personal events that convey information about the self, the conceptual self refers to abstract, generalized cognitive representations of the self (e.g., Markus, 1977; Markus & Nurius, 1986; Neisser, 1988). Conway and colleagues (e.g., Conway & Pleydell-Pearce, 2000; Conway, Singer, & Tagini, 2004) have argued for the closely intertwined relationship between autobiographical memory and the conceptual self in their theoretical model of the Self Memory System (SMS). The SMS is made up of three main components: The episodic memory system, the long-term self that comprises of the autobiographical knowledge base and the conceptual self, as well as the working self. The relationship between the episodic memory system, autobiographical knowledge base and the conceptual self is reciprocal in nature: The current goals of the working self control what might enter into the autobiographical knowledge base, hence influencing the construction of memories, and the information access from the autobiographical knowledge base and episodic memory system, that is, the retrieval of memories, in turn, defines the abstract self-views. More recently, D'Argembeau, Lardi, and Van der Linden (2012) have proposed a parallel model that accounts for the closely intertwined

relationship between future event representations and the conceptual self that consists of abstract knowledge of possible selves in the future. Thus, as parents of different cultures scaffold their children to tell stories about their past experiences and imagine about the future, they may relatedly be helping their children to develop more abstract, generalized cognitive representations of themselves that are culturally appropriate.

Beyond the Influence of Culture: Possible Influences of Gender, Socio-Economics Status

No gender effect was found across the three studies in this dissertation. Some studies have found gender differences in mother-child conversation of past events, whereby mothers tend to be more elaborative, evaluative, and provide more emotional explanations to daughters than to sons (e.g., Fivush, Berlin, Sales, Mennuti-Washburh, & Cassidy, 2003; Wang, 2001). Yet, other studies have not found gender differences (e.g., Fivush & Wang, 2005; Wang & Fivush, 2005). One possible reason may be due to the type of event discussed. In studies where gender differences were found, mothers and children were asked to discuss various past events that elicited specific emotions, such as anger, sadness, fear, and happiness. In contrast, in studies where gender differences were not found, mothers and children were asked to discuss a general positive event and/or a general negative event. As suggested by Wang and Fivush, gender differences may be specific to past events that elicited particular emotions, and may be washed out when mother-child pairs are discussing a general positive event and/or general negative event. Across the three studies in this dissertation, mother-child pairs were not asked to discuss about past events that elicited particular emotions. Rather, they discussed general positive and/or negative events. Hence, consistent with the earlier studies, no gender differences were found. Nonetheless, the fact that the type of past event discussed (i.e., specific versus general emotional event) has an influence on gender effect suggest that this is an important theoretical and

methodological point to consider when examining mother-child conversation of past events and the relations to children's outcomes, especially with regards to emotional experiences.

Besides gender, socio-economics status may be another context that influences the socialization of the extended self. Wiley, Rose, Burger, and Miller (1998) found that both working-class and middle-class European American families talked to children about their past experiences in ways that encouraged the development of an autonomous self. However, the types of autonomy promoted were different. For middle-class children, expressing one's own views and opinions is a natural right. Conversely, for working-class children, it is something that has to be earned and defended. The three studies in this dissertation have focused on examining middle-class families. Future studies may be extended to examine the socialization of the extended self and the relations to children's outcomes in different populations, such as working-class families.

A Note on Extended Self and Meaning-Making in the Cultural Contexts: Practical Significance

To a large extent, the third study in this dissertation has found that mothers and children who discussed about daily negative experiences in ways congruent with cultural values and norms had children who showed better social and emotional outcomes across time. Nonetheless, it is noted that this is not always the case. For example, European American parents who provided reassurances during reminiscing of emotionally negative experiences had children who showed worse social and emotional outcomes across time. Albeit somewhat surprising, these findings are consistent with the current directions of the meaning-making research. This suite of research has begun by suggesting that meaning-making of emotionally negative experiences contributes to positive social and emotional outcomes (e.g., Laible, 2006, 2011; Sales & Fivush, 2005). Nonetheless, it has been increasingly observed that meaning-making does not always contribute to positive outcomes, and researchers have begun to examine the question of when

meaning-making in personal memories works and not work (Greenhoot & McLean, 2013; Pasupathi, 2013). The findings from this dissertation project (i.e., the third study) add information to this question. Perhaps importantly, the findings entail practical significance. That is, by knowing which ways of reminiscing work or not work to bring about positive social and emotional outcomes in children across time in different cultural contexts, parents and children could be trained to discuss emotionally negative experiences in ways that would work to bring about the desired outcomes in the respective cultural contexts. This may be a direction for future research.

Conclusion

In conclusion, parents of different cultural backgrounds socialize their children to develop an extended self and cope with emotionally negative experiences in ways that are congruent with the respective cultural value systems, which are largely associated with positive psychological functioning in children. Situated in the broader comparative context, the three studies in this dissertation extended current understanding on cultural diversity in human cognition and psychological health.

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