

FIRST CULTURE EMBEDDING IN THE LANGUAGE OF CHILDHOOD TALES:
A QUALITATIVE STUDY ON CONVENTIONS AND COMMUNICATION
OF C1-KOREAN VS. C1-AMERICAN SPEAKERS

by

MOON YOUNG YANG

DILIN LIU, COMMITTEE CHAIR
DOROTHY WORDEN, COMMITTEE CO-CHAIR
ROBERT POOLE
EYUN-JUNG KI

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ABSTRACT

Recognizing and understanding Other's cultural and linguistic differences with equitability have become important and necessary for successful communication today (Lehman et al., 2004). Often speakers of different languages from different cultural backgrounds are categorized into too broad terms, the most commonly referred being (1) the West vs. the East, (2) individualistic vs. collectivistic, and (3) low context vs. high context (Hall, 1959, 1976; Lehman et al., 2004; Shiraev & Levy, 2016). However, with technological advances and social expansion, cultural experiences have become globalized, thus not as isolated anymore but shared (Cho, 2019; Cicourel, 2006; Crystal, 2012; Graddol, 2006). The present study therefore aims to investigate whether the stereotyped cultural customs interfere with the communication of meaning between different cultural groups today, namely American and Korean, and examine how different types of sociocultural experiences play a role in language learning and teaching. To observe the embedded, shared values and codes from the first culture (C1) as well as the first language (L1), meaningful narratives from childhood and the understanding of these narratives between two different groups of C1 and L1 were analyzed. Results imply that the known stereotypes between the two cultural groups still exist in speakers' way of communication but experiences of and exposure to other's sociocultural content can guide learners to fewer conflicts stemming from the stereotypes.

Keywords: intercultural communication, globalization, narrative, childhood discourse, meaning, language learning and teaching

DEDICATION

This thesis is dedicated to all of those who guided me through the complicated and difficult process of creating this manuscript and encouraged me until the end. In particular, my parents who have trusted me and given freedom to pursue what I am most interested in, as well as other close family members and friends who were always there by my side through my emotional turmoil and showed constant support.

LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS AND SYMBOLS

| | |
|-------|---|
| AP | American Participant |
| C1 | First Culture |
| CL | Cognitive Linguistics |
| DSLR | Digital Single-lens Reflex (Camera) |
| KP | Korean Participant |
| L1 | First Language |
| PI | Principal Investigator |
| TESOL | Teaching English to Speakers of Other Languages |

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CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION

1.1 Defining the Issue

In *Beyond Culture*, Hall (1976) expounds that in social communication culture functions as “a highly selective screen between [the Self] and [the Other]” and “designates” what information needs to be noticed or ignored (p. 85). In other words, from a communicational perspective, culture is a cognitive frame that influences the way language is processed by people, be it to produce an utterance or to comprehend one. Culture molds language, and thus culture is embedded in language and its use.

This concept of culture-embedded language, or “linguaculture,” as coined by Paul Friedrich, began to first develop in the early 1900s and has since then been researched and expanded through the lens of various disciplines, namely anthropology, sociology, psychology, and linguistics with scholars and researchers such as Boas, Sapir, Whorf, and Malinowski at the forefront (Agar, 1994; Hymes, 1964; Moran, 2001; Shiraev & Levy, 2016). Although it is difficult to define linguaculture in one way due to exploration of the concept from such various perspectives, the generally agreed view is that linguaculture is biological and universal to all humans and that it evolves through distinct individual and group experiences (Cicourel, 2006), or as what van Dijk (1985) terms, “personal” and “socially shared subjective interpretations” (p. 3).

In turn, many studies on linguaculture and communication have focused especially on these group experiences, defining culture as a category with prevalent characteristics of certain communities. Two of the most recurrent cultural and ethnic groups that tend to be frequently observed together in the field are Western and non-Western, which often collocate with (a)

individualism and collectivism and/or (b) low context and high context (Hall, 1959, 1976; Lehman et al., 2004; Shiraev & Levy, 2016). The two groups are also frequently represented by regional backgrounds, e.g., European North American and East Asian (Lehman et al., 2004). Contrasting communicational conventions resulting from these divergent values and intellectual traditions between the two groups have been consistently noted in various studies (e.g., contrastive rhetoric as noted and developed by Connor, 1996; Kaplan, 1966; Liu, 2005; Matsuda, 1997; information filtering as discussed by Lewis, Goto, & Kong, 2008; Markus & Kitayama, 1991; Morris & Mok, 2011). The findings of these studies indicate that recognizing and understanding the Other's cultural and linguistic differences with equitability have become important as well as necessary in order to enable mutually successful communication today (Hanvey, 1979; Lehman et al., 2004). Speakers from contrastive linguacultural backgrounds who interact with each other unaware of the conflicting expectations and conversational strategies may misinterpret the Other's intended meaning and encounter difficulty or frustration understanding each other.

However, while different cases of intercultural miscommunication have been observed and studied before (Gumperz, 1982; Gumperz & Tannen, 1979; Lakoff, 1984; Scollon & Scollon, 1980, 1981, 1983; Tyler, 1988; Tyler & Bro, 1992; Young, 1982), the focus has been more on the typified cultural aspects than individual experiences. Miscommunication is too often simply written off as a consequence of collective cultural distinctions when in fact, language use such as meaning construction, perception, and interpretation is influenced by one's understanding of societal and situational contexts based on his or her personal experience. (Sarangi, 1994). There is, therefore, a need for more studies that move beyond cultural differences and investigate linguacultural experience and development, i.e., where, when, and

how individual experiences interfere with group experience and influence one's linguaculture and consequently his or her approaches to intercultural communication. This would provide knowledge that is especially critical now as current perspectives on communicational norms differ from the past with increasing globalization of cultures and languages, primary among them being (American) English (Cicourel, 2006; Crystal, 2012; Goyal et al., 2019; Graddol, 2006; Koo, 2016; Lehman et al., 2004).

The aim of the present study is therefore twofold. First, it seeks to examine whether the rather stereotyped cultural customs are indeed evident in the language use of different cultural groups. To do so, the study collected data of childhood stories, a type of narrative, as presented and received by participants from the two analytically stereotyped cultural and ethnical backgrounds, American and Korean, and examined them to see whether the interpretations of the stories and their messages match the intentions. Second, it attempts to estimate when and where individual and group linguacultures each influence the interpretation and understanding of messages and the formation of new meanings. The study employs a widely used qualitative research method of personal interviews at several stages and performs close narrative analyses of the resulting data.

1.2 Chapter Overview

The report of the present study is organized into six chapters. The first chapter introduces the origin and purpose of the study. Chapter 2 consists of summaries and reviews of relevant literature. The first part of the chapter presents the theoretical development on the relationship of one's cognition, language, and culture based on the concept of linguistic relativity. The second part of the chapter focuses on values and belief systems commonly associated with countries of the study's participants, Korea and the United States, and introduces more current findings on

how traditions and conventions of the two countries have since evolved or not. This is followed by a discussion of children's first linguacultural formation. In the final section of the chapter are the research questions that guided the data analysis in the study. The third chapter outlines the methodology. It begins with a description of participants and then provides details regarding the design of the study such as the general data collecting procedure, instruments used, and the data analysis procedure. Chapter 4 presents the qualitative data from participant interviews and presentations with some preliminary analyses, and Chapter 5 discusses the implications and significance of the results in relation to the aims of the study. Chapter 5 also addresses how the findings may contribute to language learning and teaching. Lastly, Chapter 6 concludes the thesis by summarizing and highlighting the main findings, describing the limitations of this study, and discussing implications for future research.

CHAPTER 2: LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Introduction

This chapter discusses existing literature and frameworks in socio- and psycholinguistic research within the parameters of which the present study is positioned. The first section of the chapter discusses one of the most fundamental theories to the study, the hypothesis of linguistic relativity in relation to speakers' cognitive development. The next section provides past and recent findings on what is commonly considered as conventional practice or attitudes of communication in Korea and the United States where participants of the present study grew up. In turn, the section also shortly presents a contrastive analysis of the two countries' cultural values, along with witnessed and expected issues of miscommunication between speakers of each country's primary language, Korean and English. In the third section, the narrative genre of childhood stories in particular is discussed to show how the aforementioned first-culture and first-language experiences leave a lasting impact on the child's social and communicational growth. The section introduces childhood stories as a heavily symbolized learning source in early cognitive development that may be useful to observe the existing, symbolized meanings of the first culture and language. The section highlights the works of Propp (1984) and Bettelheim (1989), which are based in sociology and developmental psychology. Finally, the chapter is concluded with research questions that this study explores.

2.2 Cognitive Linguistics (CL) and Linguistic Relativity

After the rise of behaviorist and structuralist linguistics, it was soon realized that focusing solely on the formal properties to analyze the structure of language can be limiting in language

research and teaching (Holme, 2009; Hoopes, 1979). What emerged then was Cognitive Linguistics (CL) that delved into the nature of human cognition and into human nature in general to explore the interrelationship of language, body and mind, and culture (Taylor, 2002). As Taylor (2002) explains, CL, pioneered by scholars such as Langacker, Talmy, and Lakoff in the 1980s, approaches language, or one's linguistic ability, as part of his or her wider general cognitive ability, i.e., perception. This is somewhat opposite of the previously popular approach taken by generative linguistics, which views language as an innate part of the human cognitive system but not a product of a socio-cognitive process. Most researches in CL inherit the notion of linguistic relativity that language influences the way people think, as first suggested by the works of Sapir (1949) and Whorf (1956), but they expand their focus beyond formal properties.

Most relevant to the present study is CL's perspective of language and its use not as just a set of principles but as a derivative of experiences and ways of understanding the world. One aspect of culture that Cicourel (2006) has pointed out in relation to this CL-notion of experience is that culture is the "collectivisation of experience" that "[allows] some approaches to conceptualising, explaining, and manipulating to take preference over others" (Holme, 2009, p. 65). In other words, the frame of mind that Hall (1976) calls culture is structured by experiences. The cultural structure thus also differs according to the environment experiences are produced physically, and in turn, the embodied experiences become the primary source of cognition, affecting the way reality is perceived and conceptualized (Johnson, 1987). Based on Langacker's (1990) ideas concerning how individuals acquire unique experiences from various environments, Holme (2009) even points out that "the defining attribute of cultures is that they *differ* [emphasis added] from each other" (p. 65). One purpose that CL tries to serve then is to investigate and provide a logical explanation regarding what it means to know a language, how it is acquired,

and how it is used. From the language teaching perspective, it is especially important to investigate “the scope and nature of the difference that can lie between two languages and their cultures, and how this affects [students’] approach to language learning” (Holme, 2009, p. 66).

Two of the most critical concepts to consider are meaning and conceptualization. To explain simply what Langacker (1990) points out and Holme (2009) details, meaning is an outcome of conceptualization, notably not the same as objective perception, and conceptualization happens through symbolization which is a shared product of a culture. That is, cultural conventions create meaning. As a result, for symbols to be understood as they are meant to, one must first know the conventions from which the symbols were created. If the conventions are already known, the symbols derived from them would be “instantly recognisable” (Holme, 2009, p. 71). Therefore, it has been argued that one’s first language and culture would affect his or her preferences in meaning conceptualization.

Experiment-based, four-part cultural psychology research conducted by Goyal et al. (2019) provides the most comprehensive and recent perspective on how first or foundational sociocultural conventions or norms in one community may cognitively affect its members’ processing of information and meaning differently from dissimilar norms of another community members. Goyal et al. (2019) first define norms as both “prescriptive rules” and “descriptive regularities” that dictate the general ways in which people behave and thereby mold individual behavior to fit those ways regularly together (p. 2). The experiments in the four studies needed two groups with cultural norms that are distinct from each other, and based on past cultural research, Americans and Indians were chosen for their contrasting behavioral norms especially in the areas of reciprocity and spiritual purity. The first two studies focused on the former, while the last two did on the latter. Some specific behavioral norms of each group in the two areas that

Goyal et al. (2019) mention are gift-giving by Americans (but not so much Indians) as a reciprocal gesture after receiving help from a friend and avoidance of shoes near “sacred” objects by Indians (but not Americans) due to their interpretation of such contact as spiritually contaminating. To confirm whether such norms do affect the two groups in their ways of understanding, all participants were tested with cued-recall and multiple-choice incidental-memory tests.

The result of the four studies shows that there was indeed a connection between the cultural norms of the participants and their ways of understanding the same situations. In Studies 1 and 2, American participants were more inclined than their Indian counterparts to interpret gifts they receive from someone whom they had helped as a sign of reciprocity and to find information from such a situation as categorizable by norm-consistency. On the other hand, the gift-giving actions not as meaningful as they are for Americans, Indian participants tended not to distinguish between gifts given with and gifts given without a motive for exchange of help. In Studies 3 and 4, Indian participants were more inclined than their American counterparts to interpret images of shoes touching sacred things (e.g. books, dining plates, cow figurines) as spiritually impure and also to categorize the information from such input by its level of norm-violation. Americans, reversely, would find images of shoes on the same objects not very norm-related and consequently categorize them with their more factual meaning.

These findings are significant to the understanding of the role played by sociocultural conventions in human communication. The four studies demonstrate the “importance of culture in influencing social cognition not just at the level of attention but also at the level of interpretation and organization of experience” (Goyal et al., 2019, p. 15). Goyal et al. (2019) point out that interpretation and categorization of information occur instantly and spontaneously

according to culture-specific norms. They also suggest that these processes may not always correspond to “objectively salient properties” or “objectively identifiable affordances,” as human language, too, does with its “arbitrary symbolic nature” (p. 16). In other words, despite globalization, there are still socioculturally variable norms that have a strong influence on each community’s ways of perception as well as their meaning-making and understanding processes, and this is reflected in community members’ language use. Subsequently, Goyal et al. (2019) conclude that there is a need to break away from the static notion that cultural meanings will stay rational and consistent and recognize the diversity in them.

This brings in the topic of linguistic relativity once more and, with it, the discussion of exactly how different the conceptual preferences between cultures are and how this affects interactional communication. Holme (2009) points out that even among different cultures, there must be shared preferences as well, and that “Culture cannot therefore be treated straightforwardly as a specific set of customs which have impacted upon language in a particular way, providing particular discourses” (p. 109). He further asserts that “it is not just [human] perception of culture but also language which needs to be looked at from the dual cultural perspectives of the globalised and the localised” (Holme, 2009, p. 109). This is especially applicable today in that the boundaries of different culture and speech communities have been and are continuously being blurred by growing multiculturalism and multilingualism. Sociocultural conventions may no longer be distinctly categorizable for many people in their schema. Yet, paradoxically, it is also true that global culture cannot entirely replace individual and national cultures, nor can it bind all people to belong in one community without conflicts (Bird & Stevens, 2003; Jacquemet, 2019). The present study therefore attempts to investigate the “dual cultural perspectives of the globalised and the localised” between two groups of speakers

whose native languages and cultures each belong to one of the analytical stereotypes, i.e., Western and Far Eastern. The following section examines the conventions that have influenced how meaning is conceptualized in the United States and Korea and discusses the past findings on miscommunication between speakers from the two countries.

2.3 Cultural Conventions in the United States and Korea

2.3.1 The United States of America

As a large part of North America, the third-largest continent on the globe, the United States of America (hereafter the US) has been a central figure in the development of sociocultural values in the Western Hemisphere for the past century since its rise as one of the biggest world powers in the early 1900s. It is a suitable representative for the Western cultures and languages, and the changes that are happening to them now, in that its inhabitants descend not only from Europeans but also from other various ethnic groups such as Native Americans, Africans, and Asians, not to mention that it still receives many immigrants of various cultural and linguistic backgrounds.

Due to its diversity and large land area, it is difficult to make a single statement regarding the sociocultural conventions of the US, but one concept that has been associated with the US quite consistently in the literature is individualism (Fischer, 2008; Hofstede, 1980; Weber, 1930). Individualism is a concept developed by Weber (1930) and largely Hofstede (1980) as one end of the cultural-value continuum, and images or themes that are often associated with individualism, especially in the US, include independence, self-reliance, individual achievement, economic prosperity, competition, and capitalistic consumption of material goods (Fischer, 2008). It has been suggested by a cross-national poll that among the handful of other large, industrial Western countries, people of the US are most likely to perceive and interpret the world

as an independent individual with the greatest sense of freedom, and it can be presumed that this is due to the history of the country's foundation. It should also be noted, however, as Fischer (2008) points out as well, that individualist beliefs are not the only basis for sociocultural norms in the US. In the South of the US, for example, where the participants of the present study were recruited, religion is a big part of the culture as well, activities for which center around group communion.

2.3.2 The Republic of Korea

The Republic of Korea, otherwise known as South Korea (hereafter Korea), is a country located in the south of the Korean Peninsula in East Asia, and like its neighboring countries such as China and Japan, it is categorized as Far Eastern nation with a generally collectivistic culture. Through times of constant invasions and colonialism, Korea went through some changes in how symbols are conventionalized, but some keywords and concepts that are still central to Korean culture, as identified by Yoon and Williams (2015), are 한 '*han*'; 충 '*chung*'; 효 '*hyo*' and 정 '*jeong*'; 체면 '*chemyeon*' and 예 '*ye*'; and 철 '*cheol*' and 덕 '*deok*'. These concepts would not be strange to most Korean speakers, and they are all related to one's relationship with another person or organization. For example, *chung* refers to loyalty that servants or soldiers should have for their sovereign or country. *Hyo* refers to loyalty and service, too, but it is more akin to unconditional love and affection that children should have for their parents. *Ye* refers to politeness and respect, *deok* to virtue and benevolence, that one should generally have and show to people. These all correspond with the collectivistic values that can be found in Korean culture, including compliance to authority and tradition, fulfillment of duty, and stability (Hofstede, 1980).

2.3.3 Past and Current Literature on Conventional Differences

Several cases of miscommunication and conflicts between Korean and American speakers due to the contrasting conventions and values have been witnessed and explored before (e.g. Paik, 1996; Tyler & Davies, 1990). The current section inspects cases that focus specifically on conflicts and possible conflicts that stem from different communicational and societal values between the US and Korea.

Yang's (2003) study, which was based on Hofstede's categorization of national cultures, provides useful insights into two categories that are relevant to the study: the division between collectivism and individualism and the level of uncertainty avoidance in language use.

The purpose of the study was to answer what causes misunderstanding and conflicting circumstances when Americans in Korea communicate with Koreans, what part of Korean culture makes Americans in Korea feel uncomfortable and embarrassed, what the problems with the Korean way of communicating with Americans are, and what an effective way of intercultural communication in the era of globalization would be. Yang (2003) collected data through individual interviews with ten Americans who lived in Korea for more than 2 years and additionally through a survey of 80 American women in Korea. The findings from the data indicated that misunderstandings and conflicts during intercultural communication stemmed from some traditional values in Korea that originate from Confucianism. A few problematic key characteristics of Korean communication based on collectivism that Yang (2003) listed include discrimination between the in-out group, large power distance, the non-verbal clueing (*noon-chi*), and face saving (*che-myon*). Yang (2003) pointed out that this is what conflicts with America's individualism-based perspective of the world, where people are not treated according to where they are in the group hierarchy and prefer direct, verbal persuasive messages. The

findings of the study indicate that the localized communicational conventions in Korea which are based on philosophical values different from the ones in the US have caused and can cause communicational conflicts during interactions between speakers from the two countries.

Considering how Yang's study had been conducted in 2003, it needs to be confirmed whether the aforementioned conventions founded on the societal structure and preferences are still effective in the two countries. A study by Cho conducted in 2019 explores the conventions and values of Korea and the US with similar categories as Yang (2003) did, but instead of experienced data, Cho (2019) investigates two TV shows, *Gossip Girl* and *The Heirs*, each of which was and has been popular in the US and Korea, respectively. The purpose of the study lay in helping the audience of the two countries to develop an ability to tolerate and understand the cultural differences in the cultural contents they consume and leading them to actually practice not only cultural exchanges but also creation of new meanings in a free communicative environment. Cho (2019), in order to achieve the goal of the study, provides a comprehensive review of the two countries' past and present cultural interaction, the first topic of investigation being cultural values typically associated with Korea and the US and their corresponding historical background.

In Cho's (2019) study, like Yang's (2003), the firstly addressed difference between Korean and American cultural codes was their bases in collectivism and individualism. Cho confirms that even in 2019 the Confucian philosophy is deeply embedded and very much present in Korean culture and that through various historical events, the familial community of blood relations has become an almost genetic part of the Korean worldview. The constant foreign invasion of the peninsula had developed a strong sense of "us" in Korea that is different from collectivistic ideas developed in other countries such as China or Japan. Cho (2019) then

examines American history and how individualism came to be the most central idea of the general world view in the US. She expounds that in the West the public had developed the concept of free will very early on and that the religious and cultural movements during the Renaissance encouraged individuality to be recognized and cultivated. She points out that beginning with feudalism, the contractual relationship within the conditions of “commonwealth,” rather than the familial relationship, has become a bigger part of the conventional values in the West, especially in the US, which was founded by immigrants who believed that anyone who works hard enough can be successful. Also valued in the US is personal happiness. That is, in the US, the community tends to be part of an individual life, and it is expected that individuality and personal happiness should be respected even within the family. Thus, Cho (2019) confirms that the generalized collectivistic and individualistic customs as pointed out by Fischer (2008) and Yang (2003) are still evident in the two regions.

In turn, Cho (2019) connects these values to each country’s communicational culture being high-context and low-context as proposed by Hall (1976). Hall’s (1976) high-low-context continuum of culture is determined by the degree of explicitness in messages by different cultures, or how aware they are of context. Cultures of high context depend less on direct verbal communication and utilize the less direct meaning “hidden” in context to understand the message said, while cultures of low context require more direct communication to do so and thus emphasize more explicit verbal skills. As a result, speakers of high-context culture and low-context culture who interact with differing expectations unawares may misinterpret the Other’s intended messages and end up with conflicts. Cho (2019) touches on the literature which conveys Korean culture typically prefers high-context communication because it is usually expected by default that one takes into consideration what the Other truly means to say even if it

is unsaid. American culture, on the other hand, largely prefers low-context communication, and one usually only takes in what is verbally stated to make meaning. As a result, while Korean speakers may be used to emotional expressions conscious of the Other, they are not used to expressing their own emotions, and reversely, American speakers are much accustomed to expressing their personal emotions, which can be taken as a rude or self-centered behavior that lacks *ye* in Korea¹ (Yoon & Williams, 2015).

Accordingly, Cho (2019) for her study chose to examine these varying cultural codes and communicational preferences in TV series that were broadcasted in Korea and the US. She justified her choice of data that although the shows in concern deal with a fictional world, they still involve symbols from the reality. Viewers of each show therefore watch and comprehend the cultural and societal reproduction of the real world with its linguistic and cognitive symbols embedded in their mind. Sometimes, new meanings are symbolized as well. The TV series she chose for analysis are *The Heirs*, the Korean show of twenty episodes that were broadcasted in 2013, and *Gossip Girl*, the first season with eighteen episodes broadcasted in 2007. Cho (2019) chose these shows not only because both are representative of the “trendy” genre in the two countries but also because they are high-teen shows involving a lot of young people who form various relationships with friends, family, and lovers. They both also include conflicts and conciliation that occur between a lower-class individual who came to belong in an upper-class

¹ Historically, the speaking culture in Korea had focused more on the potential negative outcome from speech rather than the positive outcome (Im, 1999). Im (1999) states that Korean ancestors, by the influence of Lao-zi and Chuang-zi’s philosophy, held brief and humble expressions as an ideal form of speech (p. 53). Kim (2005), who had conducted a study on how the idea of communication has been perceived in the Korean language through idioms, proverbs, and sayings, also showed that Korean society tended to value what is implied from silence or implicit communication more than what is said directly. Cho (2019) points out that this also affects the way the languages are spoken, making English a generally very rhythmic language and Korean a usually uninflected, comparatively monotonous language.

community. The similar plotline of the two shows, according to Cho (2019), helped to see clearly where the cultural and communicational differences appear.

The findings of the study revealed that the analytically stereotyped conventions of the two cultures are indeed symbolized and present in the fictional representation of the real world. *The Heirs*, which tells a story of family, harmony, and love, focused on the relationships that happen in family and peer communities. The pursuit of harmony was reflected in the use of high-context communication throughout the show, and much of the emotional appeal in the show was created with non-verbal messages from silence, facial expressions, and the show's soundtracks. Although face-to-face communication was not absent in the show, it was only utilized once the relationship of "us" between characters was firmly established. In *Gossip Girl*, although the plot line is similar, the story focuses more on discovering the self and finding happiness through truth and trust between individuals. The characters in *Gossip Girl* practice low-context communication through direct, verbal, and face-to-face conversations. They express their subjective opinions and emotions often with emphasis. As a result, just the linguistic exchanges between them, including the narration, are enough to infer how the story is flowing.

Cho (2019) admits, however, that such a dichotomous analysis of the contents from Korea and the US is rather limited especially now in this period of rapid, supranational cultural content consumption. She defines that content such as TV series are supranational in that the cultural, communicational characteristics of certain regions are accessible and learned by people who are not from the said regions and have different cultural codes and values. The TV shows she used are good examples. Due to technological advances and popular demand, both *The Heirs* and *Gossip Girl* have been exported and watched by people who are not from Korea or the US. Cho (2019) points out that this creates a communicational platform where different cultures and

languages collide, and messages are not only interpreted and understood but also created anew collaboratively. As a result, new cultural values are created as well. Cho (2019) thus calls for further research on the active experiential process of taking in linguistic resources and conceptualizing them meaningfully, as well as on what kind of cultural and communicational practices result from this process.

2.4 Linguacultural Development and Childhood Stories

For the purpose of the present study, it is essential to investigate when and in which context the stereotyped values of the two countries are conventionalized in speakers' minds. It has been pointed out before that first linguacultural codes and values can only most naturally evolve from childhood (Tomasello and Call, as cited in Cicourel, 2006, p. 28; Ervin-Tripp & Strage, 1985), so a good place to begin investigating when these norms begin to conventionalize in one's mind is stories he or she heard as a child. As D. E. Brown's (1991) list dictates, storytelling and narratives are two of the top human universals. Since prehistory, stories have been told to children, designed to educate them in a way they may understand and absorb the cultural values and meanings that are embedded in the stories to shape children's behavior in a certain way (Bettelheim, 1989; Propp, 1968, 1984; Sarland, 1999; West, 1999; Zipes, 1991).

Fairy tales and folktales, in this sense, are especially valuable sources, as they are orally inherited for generations and thus preserve and solidify norms from early social proprieties, political ideologies, and so forth that form the cultural identity of local regions then and now (Propp, 1968, 1984; Sarland, 1999; Zipes, 1991). For instance, figures in fairy tales are almost always binary in morality, one side being the wild and evil, and the other the controlled and good, so children can easily grasp the concepts of morality that are deemed appropriate by the society they will grow to belong in (Bettelheim, 1989; Palmer et al., 2006).

In his well-known publication, *The Uses of Enchantment: The Meaning and Importance of Fairy Tales*, Bettelheim (1989) strongly endorses the use of fairy tales to help young children learn to perceive the world and themselves in that world in a way that is emotionally encouraging but also proper by the rules of social interaction that the generations before them have set. He notes that how children encounter the stories is the key to the shaping of children's perception, for the symbolic and interpersonal meanings shift depending on how stories are told. He claims that fairy tales, for example, structurally and formally assist children's development of existential grounds. Through the fantastical realm of fairy tales, children are given the guideline to explore and process their emotions, especially the negative ones such as anxiety or depression. Children consciously identify themselves with the main protagonist, or the hero, of fairy tales, who is usually in an unfortunate situation at the beginning (e.g. Cinderella mistreated by her stepmother and stepsisters), but unlike real life, fairy tales have "a consistent structure with a definite beginning and a plot that moves toward a satisfying solution which is reached at the end" (Bettelheim, 1989, p. 57). When children find the hero, imperfect before, just as they are, arrive at the perfect destination, they unconsciously gain hope and some abilities to find a solution to their own problem or conflicts, including interpersonal ones.

The most widely known data of this sort include fairy tales collected by the Brothers Grimm from different areas of Germany during the late eighteenth century to the early nineteenth century. Their collection of fairy tales display, with conscious effort, the "prescriptive rules" on what is to be valued and followed (Goyal et al., 2019, p. 2), and "as children read or are read to, they follow a social path, learn role orientation, and acquire norms and values" (Zipes, 1991, p. 57). In the late 1990s, Propp (1968, 1984), a Russian folklorist presented, too, the similar notion of the past reality being represented in stories through his analysis of Russian fairy tales and

folktales. His two volumes, *Morphology of the Folktale* and *Theory and History of Folklore*, explain that elements of fairy tales and folktales are realistic but in a prehistoric and very traditional sense. That is, figures appear in stories as how they would have been perceived by society during the time the story was created and/or popularized. In both volumes, Propp (1968, 1984) emphasizes how the fairy tales and folktales he analyzed carry very distinct characteristics of Russian oral tale-telling customs as well as narrative themes that are much intertwined with Russian history.

One aspect to pay attention to is the now very common supranational cultural content, as previously mentioned by Cho (2019). Because most modern inhabitants of the US have descended from early European immigrants, there are not many archaic fairy tales or folktales that can trace its origin uniquely to America, besides what has been preserved by native Americans. However, the US has also been a leading innovator in new media storytelling. Animated movies created for children by companies such as Disney and Dreamworks still retain the features that Bettelheim (1989) list as what makes fairy tales iconic and attractive to children. These American movies are often exported and are seen by a great number of audiences worldwide. For example, *Frozen*², a Disney movie that was released in 2013, became very popular globally, including in Korea, and the 2019 release of its sequel, *Frozen II*, reached the total attendance of nearly 14 million in Korea alone, indicating that the Korean audience has grown to be familiar with childhood stories as told from an American perspective with American

² *Frozen* has a female protagonist who begins at an unfortunate situation of having to deal with her uncontrollable magical power but, in the end, with her sister's help, is able to use the power as she wished and became the rightful ruler of her kingdom. The structure of the plot with an imperfect, faulty hero at the beginning and a happy solution at the end, as well as the polarized figures of good and evil (i.e. the love between sisters vs. the fear from uncontrollable magic), strongly resemble the consistent structure and form that Bettelheim (1989) claimed to help children's psychological and learning development.

cultural codes and values. The reverse, however, is not true as children's stories of Korea in whatever medium or modes have never been as widely popular in the United States. When analyzing the data from two groups of participants, this contrasting global influence of one country versus the other is to be considered.

2.5 Research Questions

In sum, the relevant literature review reveals that basic cognition is closely related to and affected by culture and language, which are, in turn, influenced by embodied experience.

Experiences conventionalize how meanings are received, but today, the conventions are not isolated. Exposure to different cultural conventions has become common, and as a result, new meanings are created collaboratively. Cho's (2019) study, in particular, shows that research on modern intercultural communication, or in her words, cultural collision, has to move beyond the already analyzed and defined cultural types and investigate the process of meaning co-creation.

A valuable source of data to observe both traditional, typical conventions of one's first linguaculture and his or her development of new meaning in collaboration with other conventions is childhood stories.

Thus, in continuation of Cho's (2019) research, the present study, based on the data of childhood stories and verbal reflection on them from two typical cultural groups, intends to answer the following questions:

- Research Question 1: How are stereotypically defined cultural and communicational conventions present, or not present, in Korean and American speakers' experiences and narratives?
- Research Question 2: How does speakers' linguacultural background affect the way they interpret the message and recognize important factors of childhood stories?

CHAPTER 3: METHODOLOGY

3.1 Description of Participants

Participants of the present study were recruited at the University of Alabama where the study took place. The study required two groups of participants, the first consisting of native Korean speakers with a Korean first-culture (C1) experience and at least an intermediate English proficiency level, and the second group consisting of native American English speakers with an American C1 experience. The intermediate English proficiency level was required as the entire data collection procedure was to be directed in one language every participant could understand without difficulty. English was chosen as the one language based on its current position as the most commonly learned global language (Crystal, 2012; Graddol, 2006). In the end, five students who met the requirements (three C1-Korean and two C1-American) participated in the study, but the interpretive interaction was mainly focused on the first four recruited members (two Korean and two American) as the fifth participant's interview sessions were delayed.

All participants were female students between the ages of 19-30 who either have attended or were attending the University of Alabama during the period of time when the interviews were conducted, but each student studied or was working in a different field or discipline. The first C1-Korean participant (hereafter KP1) was a fourth-year Ph.D. student in the Department of Psychology, and she had lived in Korea for the first 26 years of her life before she moved to the United States in 2014. She was fluent enough in English not only to pursue a doctoral degree in an American university but also to teach L1-English undergraduate students of her department. The second C1-Korean participant (hereafter KP2) was an undergraduate student studying

chemical engineering. She was born and raised in Korea until she was around 8 years old when she was taken shortly to the United States where she stayed until she returned to Korea to finish her secondary education. After graduating from high school she moved to the United States in 2016 to attend college. The third C1-Korean participant (hereafter KP3) was also an undergraduate student who majored in accounting. She had stayed in Korea until 2017 when she moved to Alabama to attend the university. Both KP2 and KP3 were fluent enough in English to take and understand upper-level classes of their field that were taught only in English. All C1-Korean participants were raised by C1- and L1-Korean parents. The first C1-American participant (hereafter AP1) was an English composition instructor at the university. She had recently earned a master's degree in applied linguistics and Teaching English to Speakers of Other Languages (TESOL) at the same university. While AP1 interacted with many international students, she was not very familiar with Korean culture or language. The second American participant (hereafter AP2) was an undergraduate student in the university's School of Social Work. She took Korean language classes for three years as part of her foreign language requirement, as well as out of her own interest, but when asked, AP2 acknowledged that she was not very confident in speaking Korean and that her Korean classes were grammar-based and did not teach her much on the communicational culture of Korea. Both AP1 and AP2 reported that they have lived in the Southern United States for most of their lives.

3.2 General Procedures and Instruments

Based on the literature review, the present study was designed as qualitative research focused on narratives. It has been repeatedly highlighted in the past that narratives store great information regarding one's linguistic principles and his or her subconscious representation of the world and the self (Riessman, 1993; Rosaldo, 1993; Sarbin, 1986; Schafer, 1992).

Accordingly, narratives of personal experience and narrative performances by participants were collected as recordings through multiple interviews, the conducting of which was drawn from Mishler's (1986) model.

Participants were interviewed twice throughout a 4-month period during the Fall 2019 semester at the University of Alabama. The first interview session was divided into three parts: (a) pre-presentation interview, (b) story presentation, and (c) post-presentation interview. During the pre-presentation interview, the participants were asked a series of questions regarding the most memorable story, or "fairy tale" as first phrased by the principal investigator (PI) and author of the present study, from their childhood. Participants frequently found the term "fairy tale" difficult to define, and the PI rephrased the question and expanded the term to any stories that participants remembered and were impressed by the most during their childhood. The question topics included the message, or the point, of the story, as well as some of its important elements (see Appendix A for more details on how all interviews were guided). Once finished answering the questions, participants were asked to present a story, either one they already knew or created, as if they were telling it to a child. They were each given an option to take some time to think about the story they will tell before their presentation. During the post-presentation interview, participants were asked a similar set of questions on the message and important elements of the story they had just told. A few weeks after the first interview sessions, when the first four participants had all finished presenting their story, the second interview sessions were held. For this interview, C1-Korean participants were first asked to watch C1-American participants' presentations and then to answer questions regarding how the meaning and the message of the two stories were to be interpreted. C1-American participants were asked to do the same with C1-Korean participants' presentations. After the formal interview, the PI engaged

KP1 and AP2 in an additional discussion concerning some parts of their responses. Either the audio or both audio and video of the conversations and presentations were recorded, and all participants were informed of this procedure before the interview sessions.

For interviews and story presentations, an audio recorder and a DSLR camera with a video-recording function were used. Participants were asked to hold an audio recorder during both interviews and story presentations, but the DSLR camera was only used when they were presenting their story. The DSLR camera was set up on a tripod so that it was at participants' face and shoulder level. Due to technical circumstances, recording took place in various locations that were reserved at different times, but in each room, for every presentation, the PI placed a gender-neutral stuffed animal (i.e. a manatee) on a chair in front of the participants, lower than their gaze level, so that they can have a child-like presence to tell their stories. For post-observation interviews, only rooms with screens and speakers were reserved so that other participants' presentations can be shown. Voice and video recordings from the interviews and presentations were saved digitally in PI's passcode-locked laptop computer. They were then transcribed into documents later, which were also stored digitally in the passcode-locked device.

3.3 Data Analysis Procedures

The data analysis procedure followed Riessman's (2008) work, which compiled methodological information regarding the narrative inquiry. The three approaches to narrative analysis the study employed at least to some degree are as follows: (a) thematic, which concentrates on the content of the narrative, i.e., what is reported and what is the moral, (b) structural, which analyzes the telling of the story, i.e., how is the story put together, and finally, (c) dialogic/performance, which focuses on the interactants, i.e., who is telling the story to whom and why. For the thematic and structural analyses, the present study drew from several studies

including Propp (1968, 1984), Bettelheim (1989), and Labov and Waletzky (1997). A representation of Propp’s (1968) model on functions and elements of fairy tales/folktales is shown in Figure 1, and an illustrative representation of Labov’s model of narrative scheme is shown in Figure 2. Bettelheim’s (1989) works were only used to reference some common psychological themes in fairy tales. The dialogic/performance analysis was only partially involved as the interactants and purpose of the storytelling performance were controlled by the PI for the context of the study.

| Symbol | Function Name | Function Description | Group |
|--------------|---|---|--------------|
| α | Initial Situation | Not a function. Enumeration of family members, future hero introduced by mention of name or status, etc. | |
| β | Absentation | One of the members of a family absents himself from home | Preparation |
| γ | Interdiction | An interdiction is addressed to the hero | |
| δ | Violation | The interdiction is violated | |
| ϵ | Reconnaissance | The villain makes an attempt at reconnaissance | |
| ζ | Delivery | The villain receives information about his victim | |
| η | Trickery | The villain attempts to deceive his victim in order to take possession of him or of his belongings | |
| θ | Complicity | The victim submits to deception and thereby unwittingly helps his enemy | Complication |
| A | Villainy | The villain causes harm or injury to a member of a family | |
| a | Lack | One member of a family either lacks something or desires to have something | |
| B | Mediation; The Connective Incident | Misfortune or lack is made known; the hero is approached with a request or command; he is allowed to go or he is dispatched | |
| C | Beginning Counteraction | The seeker agrees to or decides upon counteraction | |
| \uparrow | Departure | The hero leaves home | Transference |
| D | The First Function of the Donor | The hero is tested, interrogated, attacked, etc., which prepares the way for his receiving either a magical agent or helper | |
| E | The Hero’s Reaction | The hero reacts to the actions of the future donor | |
| F | Provision or Receipt of a Magical Agent | The hero acquires the use of a magical agent | |
| G | Spatial Transference Between Two Kingdoms, Guidance | The hero is transferred, delivered, or led to the whereabouts of an object of search | Conflict |
| H | Struggle | The hero and the villain join in direct combat | |
| J | Branding, Marking | The hero is branded | |
| I | Victory | The villain is defeated | |
| K | Misfortune Liquidated | The initial misfortune or lack is liquidated | Return |
| \downarrow | Return | The hero returns | |
| Pr | Pursuit, Chase | The hero is pursued | |
| Rs | Rescue | Rescue of the hero from pursuit | |
| o | Unrecognized Arrival | The hero, unrecognized, arrives home or in another country | |
| L | Unfounded Claims | A false hero presents unfounded claims | |
| M | Difficult Task | A difficult task is proposed to the hero | |
| N | Solution | The task is resolved | Recognition |
| Q | Recognition | The hero is recognized | |
| Ex | Exposure | The false hero or villain is exposed | |
| T | Transfiguration | The hero is given a new appearance | |
| U | Punishment | The villain is punished | |
| W | Wedding | The hero is married and ascends the throne | |

Figure 1. The six genera of the fairy tale/folktales functions as morphologically analyzed and tabulated by Propp (1968) and represented by Hunter (2012).

| Element | Sub-element | Description |
|---------------------|----------------------------|---|
| Abstract | | What the story is about |
| Orientation | | Relevant background information |
| Complicating action | | Sequential clauses providing chronology necessary for a narrative |
| Evaluation | | Why the story was told, and the storytellers own opinions and values |
| | <i>External evaluation</i> | The storyteller expresses his or her opinion in explicit or implicit ways |
| | <i>Internal evaluation</i> | How the language is used to communicate values |
| | <i>Comparators</i> | Creating values by comparing what did and what did not happen |
| | <i>Extension device</i> | Connecting different episodes as if they were causally related |
| | <i>Explications</i> | The storytellers explications of what happened |
| | <i>Lexical signalling</i> | Use of strong, clearly evaluating words |
| Resolution | | What happened in the end |
| Coda | | Final remarks outside the story |

Figure 2. The narrative elements proposed by Labov and Waletzky (1997), as tabularized by Engblom, Alexanderson, and Rudebeck (2011).

Finally, for both data analysis and discussion of the analysis results, the transcription of participants' storytelling was filtered. Insignificant elements such as filler words (e.g. "uh" and "um") and words that were repeated or rephrased meaninglessly were removed from the data report, only to the extent they will not interfere with the meaning interpretations so that discussion of the implications could be more easily read and understood. Other non-standardized language uses were kept so that the narrative performance and interaction between the two groups of participants could be represented as accurately as possible.

CHAPTER 4: RESULTS

4.1 Introduction

Chapter 4 mainly consists of data from the interview responses. The first section of the chapter is dedicated to observing the participants' responses to the interview pre their story presentations. It focuses on the most memorable stories from participants' own childhood. The next section shows participants' story presentations and examines how they structured the stories and what elements they included or not. This is followed by a section on their intentions in what they told in their stories and how, as they described during their post-presentation interviews. The last section includes participants' responses to an interview they had after watching the stories presented by other C1 group's participants. This section addresses how one C1 group's stories were interpreted by the other C1 group regarding their messages and important factors. Each section is divided into subsections, and most subsections are each assigned to one participant and her responses only.

4.2 Pre-presentation Interview Responses

4.2.1 Sources of Memorable Childhood Stories

All participants were first invited to have an interview regarding their cultural background and memorable childhood stories. Participants' responses were not expected to be consistent, but there were some commonalities that were shared by members of each group. The interview began with questions regarding what the most memorable fairy tale from their childhood was and from what or whom they learned the story. Both C1-Korean participants recalled stories they had read from books. KP1 discussed a very traditional story in Korea

commonly known as “Kong-gee and Pat-gee,” and she explained she found the story most memorable because it was equivalent to the story of “Cinderella” to her and the first thing she would think of when it came to fairy tales. The main source of the story was a book, and KP1 added that the only other source was a television show which retold the story from the book. What KP2 shared as the most memorable story from her childhood was “the whole generic Cinderella story.” Her reason for this was that it held “one of [her] oldest childhood memories.” When asked about the source of this memory, she recalled having “an old [original] Cinderella book,” which she had around the time she first learned to read.

AP1 and AP2, on the other hand, recalled stories that were *told* to them by their family or teachers. AP1 had a particularly difficult time thinking of a “fairy tale” that was memorable to her in her childhood. Although she mentioned “Cinderella,” she was not sure about the story and expressed that she could not think of any. When the PI suggested that she share whatever story she was impressed by the most in her childhood, AP1 chose to share a biblical tale that her parents and Sunday school teachers at church had told her, which was about Jesus calming a storm when he and his disciples were on a boat. The story was most memorable to AP1 because she felt that it was still “so applicable and meaningful” to her even as an adult. Similarly diverging from the genre “fairy tale,” AP2 shared her experience in hearing the story as a child about a lake monster called “the glimmer gink.” The story was based on the lake her family lived nearby, and it was told to her by her older cousin whenever they sat around the bank of the lake after dark. AP2 added that it was her father who had told her cousin the story when he was a young child. She explained that the story was most memorable to her because not only did its monster have a unique name but also the description prompted her to picture the monster very clearly, as a very real creature. She “[lived] on it” because she “could imagine it.”

Thus, the pre-presentation interviews revealed that C1-Korean participants had a more text-based and self-directed experience with childhood stories while C1-American participants had a more speech-based and interactional experience. KP1 and KP2 did not mention receiving any help from her parents or other adults in reading and learning about the stories. Even when the PI asked specifically whether their parents were ever involved (e.g. “Was it just the books, or did you have your parents telling the story?”), both participants confirmed that it was either just the book or another source they encountered on their own (e.g. the television show). KP2 even went on to say, “I remember reading through the book myself. [...] The memory that I have of it was going through it myself.” She elaborated on the reading experience by listing other parts of the memory she remembered such as “seeing the pictures, illustrations, and [...] [reading] along the words of the story.” This contrasted with the experiences shared by C1-American participants. AP1 and AP2’s memories of childhood stories were mostly, if not entirely, oral and involved adult or older storytellers who presented the story to them. Consequently, their answers to the interview questions had frequent references to the environment they grew up in, including the said storytellers. AP1’s religious background and AP2’s familial cultural background were reflected in the childhood stories they remembered as most memorable. The same kind of background information could not be deciphered from interviews with KP1 and KP2 regarding their memories.

4.2.2 Characters and Elements of Memorable Childhood Stories

Another notable difference between the two participant groups was that C1-Korean participants, who adhered to the genre of fairy tales, chose stories with characters who were clearly divisible by their good or evil nature as the most memorable, whereas the stories chosen by C1-American participants, who diverged from the genre, did not. KP1 pointed out explicitly

during the interview that the main point of the story “Kong-gee and Pat-gee” was conveyed through its two opposite characters, one always the good and the other always the bad. Per KP1’s description, the role of the good is taken by the beautiful and kind yet mistreated girl Kong-gee, and the role of the bad by her ugly, cruel stepsister Pat-gee. The main characters of KP2’s story were likewise obviously divisible by two ends of the moral spectrum. Although KP2 did not make the distinction as explicitly as KP1 did, the adjectives that KP2 used to describe the characters—*positive, bright, and kind* Cinderella versus her *cruel, bad* stepmother and stepsisters—displayed her awareness of the divide, be it conscious or subconscious.

C1-American participants, however, did not indicate or describe characters with easily distinguishable moral nature in their stories. According to AP1’s description of her story, Jesus could be clearly interpreted as the good, but who or what was supposed to be the bad was not readily recognizable on the surface. The disciples were not described much during AP1’s pre-presentation interview, but they were not depicted as cruel or evil like the stepsister characters were in C1-Korean interviews. Also, even though Jesus takes the role of the good by calming the storm, this does not make the storm become the bad. While the storm can be interpreted as a negative entity in the story, it is not portrayed as an intelligent, sentient being capable of bearing ill will. When asked about the part that was most impressive in the story, AP1 answered “fear of the disciples” and its contrast with “calmness of Jesus,” juxtaposing and thereby suggesting what she thought were the always good and the always bad elements of the story, but these were both abstract concepts that children would not be able to decipher easily.

In the story shared by AP2 as most memorable, the lake monster could be categorized as a villain. Its story was told to AP2 in an ominous manner at night, and her cousin would tell her, “the glimmer gink’s gonna get you,” which implied it is something to be afraid of. AP2 even

compared the glimmer gink to a boogeyman, recounting the description of its appearance to be “dark and green, mossy.” However, in contrast to AP1’s story, AP2’s story lacked a definite presence of the good. There was no mention of who could defeat the glimmer gink. The story as shared by AP2 also did not give any behavioral directions as to how one may at least avoid the monster. AP2’s story, in this sense, contrasted with *all* other participants’ stories in that it lacked the element of resolution as well. That is, the story had no ending. This was also relevant to the interpretation of the story’s message, or its main purpose, which is further discussed in the following section.

4.2.3 Messages of Memorable Childhood Stories

Participants’ responses to the next part of the interview, regarding their interpretation of the story’s message or point, varied much more in the way they were phrased. The words used for expression and its level of prescriptive tendency differed among all participants. It should be pointed out that all responses were drawn from questions in a variation of “What do you think the story was about? What was the point or message to you?”

4.2.3.1 Korean Participant 1

KP1’s answer, as shown in (1), did not include any first or second personal pronouns such as “I,” “we,” or “you” although the questions asked were phrased with multiple uses of “you.” Instead, KP1 used “they,” not indicating specific target recipients. It gave a sense that the message was for the general audience, i.e., everyone, and the message became ultra-inclusive. Perhaps consequently, her expression of the message was also rather descriptive, almost a factual statement. There is no explicit command for someone to behave in a certain way. Any moral behavioral instructions there may be were indirectly implied in KP1’s statement (i.e., one should be a kind person if he or she wishes for rewards and not punishment).

- (1) So, the main point is that when people are kind or help other people, then they will get their rewards, like positive rewards, but when people are bad at other people, then they will get the punishment.

(Korean Participant 1, personal communication, August 30, 2019)

4.2.3.2 Korean Participant 2

KP2, on the other hand, responded with a more direct, personal, and specific instruction that she felt she had received from her childhood story, seemingly exclusively. The *who-is-to-do-what* in KP2's response, as shown in (2), was clear with her use of the prepositional phrase "to me" and the compound infinitive phrase "to keep on being positive and work through the bad times." She alone, as an individual, had received personally the message to stay an optimistic person during difficult times, just as Cinderella did. This was also reinforced by the frequent uses of "I think" and "I remember" throughout her responses. In later responses, KP2 recounted, too, the effects that the book she had read had on her in particular, further personalizing the experience and the message: "pages [...] full of the illustrations with a lot of colors." She did not expect other readers or experiencers of "the whole generic Cinderella story" to have received the same message as she did with *her* book.

- (2) I think, because, oh, another thing I remember from the story, it goes in a lot of detail about [Cinderella's] really poor childhood, about how her mother passed away, [...] well, her dad really loving her and caring for her, but he also eventually passed away. I think her keeping her positivity and brightness throughout those dark times was definitely a big message to me to keep on being positive and work through the bad times.

(Korean Participant 2, personal communication, September 7, 2019)

4.2.3.3 American Participant 1

AP1 expressed what she learned in a less personal and more collective way than KP2 did. Her response in (3) seemed almost a descriptive, matter-of-fact statement, but the use of “we” and “us,” as well as the verb “need,” gave the message an underlying prescriptive tone. The inclusive, first-person plural pronouns implied that the tellers and recipients of the message are fellow “disciples,” or believers, of Jesus. The verb “need” accompanying these pronouns produced two meanings: (a) literally, fear is not necessary for disciples and (b) in an obligatory sense, disciples should not fear. This rather ambiguous tone that AP1 used gave the message she received from the story the *who-is-to-do-what* in an indirect and less condemnatory way. That her statement about the message carried a prescriptive tone was also confirmed by AP1 when she was asked what conveyed this message to her. She explained, “very clearly towards the end, Jesus asked them, or tells them, [...] they don’t have faith and they’re not seeing who he is, and he is kind of telling them that ‘you shouldn’t have been afraid because I’m with you.’” The phrase “very clearly” and the repeated use of the verb “tell” also indicated that the message in the story was explicitly communicated to her.

- (3) The point of the story is that we don’t need to be afraid because Jesus is with us even when there is chaos going around, around us.

(American Participant 1, personal communication, September 13, 2019)

4.2.3.4 American Participant 2

In contrast to all the other participants’ interpretations was AP2’s. Her response to the same questions about the message of her childhood story, as shown in (4), was unique in that she did not indicate any apparent moral lessons. Like KP2, AP2 responded with a much individual, personal perspective, about her and her family. However, instead of any moral, behavioral

instruction that may have been embedded in the story, AP2's response focused on what she presumed as the purpose of the storytelling, which was mainly to entertain, i.e., "to tease" and "to freak [one] out," instead of a "message" or a lesson. The point lied in storytelling, rather than in the story itself. As a result, AP2's response did not explicitly express the *who-is-to-do-what* in the story. She did mention that the story "always made [her] scared to get in the lake," but in her interview response, she did not consciously make the connection between the behavior she developed from hearing the story and the possibly real intentions of her storytellers.

- (4) Personally, I think it was to freak me out [laughs]. Um because I know, my dad, I don't know where he got this story from, but he liked to freak my cousin out? Like, to tease? So, I think maybe it was just something he made up to tease my cousin and then my cousin later used it to tease me.

(American Participant 2, personal communication, September 20, 2019)

4.3 Story Presentations and Post-presentation Interview Responses

After the pre-presentation interview, each participant was asked to present a meaningful story, i.e., a story with a message, to an inanimate object imagined as a child. Two participants chose to present the story they mentioned as the most memorable story from their childhood (KP1 & AP1), and the other two participants chose to tell a different but pre-existing story (KP2 & AP2). The length of the presentations varied among participants, the longest being near seven minutes and the shortest around one minute³. The transcripts of each performance were broken into sections to represent the structural component that is found in each section of the participants' narratives.

³ According to the length of the video that was shown to other participants' post-observation interviews, KP1's presentation lasted 4 minutes 29 seconds, KP2's 6 minutes 31 seconds, AP1's 1 minute 20 seconds, and AP2's 1 minute 42 seconds.

4.3.1 Korean Participant 1: “Kong-gee and Pat-gee”

The story that KP1 chose to present was “Kong-gee and Pat-gee,” which KP1 discussed in the pre-presentation interview as the most memorable childhood story. The story as told by KP1 adhered much to the traditional fairy tale/folktale structure and its elements that Propp (1968) listed⁴, as can be seen from the sectionalized representation of her story in (5). KP1 began the story with elements of *The Initial Situation*. She used the phrase “once upon a time” for *temporal determination* at first (see [5a]) and followed it with *composition of the family* (see [5c]). Both *the future hero* Kong-gee with her positive qualities (see [5b]) and *the future false hero* and villain Pat-gee with her negative qualities (see [5d]) were introduced as well, and at the same time, KP1 established the negative relationship between Kong-gee and her step-family (see [5e]). Then KP1’s story proceeded to the next section that blended elements from *The Preparatory Section* and *The Complication* from Propp’s (1968) list. She revealed the goal of the hero *as an action* (Kong-gee’s desire to attend the festival) and *as an “object”* (Satto), as shown in (5f), and this led to *interdiction* (Kong-gee forbidden from going to the festival, see [5g]) accompanied by the first act of *villainy* from Pat-gee (giving the impossible task of peeling all the rice grains before the festival, see [5h]). Next, KP1 presented *donors* (the birds and the angel) that magically helped Kong-gee overcome Pat-gee’s evil scheme and prepare properly for the festival (see [5i]), and the hero Kong-gee was finally dispatched from home (*absentation*) to go to the festival, achieving her goal (see [5j]). Towards *The Second Move* of KP1’s presentation, Pat-gee made her second appearance as a villain, as shown in (5k), and Kong-gee was portrayed as struggling from the villain’s *pursuit* and her later forced hiding (see [5l] and [5m]). In (5m), it

⁴ Key elements/functions and terms from different models of narrative structure analysis such as Propp (1968, 1984) and Labov and Waletzky (1997) are italicized for emphasis.

can also be seen that Satto, who had to find Kong-gee just by a shoe she had dropped, takes the function of *the difficult task*. The story neared its ending in (5n) as the problem is resolved with the help of “some people” who tell Satto who Kong-gee is (*solution*). KP1 ended the story with an implication of Kong-gee and Satto’s *wedding* (see [5o] and [5q]) and *punishment* of the villain, Pat-gee (see [5p]), which matched the ending of Propp’s (1968) narrative structure as well.

- (5)
- a. Once upon a time,
 - b. there was Kong-gee, who was very kind and beautiful person.
 - c. Her mother was died when she was very young, so her father got a new wife, which is stepmother for her. Her stepmother has a daughter.
 - d. Her name is Pat-gee, and she’s very ugly and mean.
 - e. So, Pat-gee and Patgee’s mother kind of jealous of Kong-gee, so they treat Kong-gee unfairly.
 - f. So, one day, Satto—Satto is kind of like mayor, like town leader nowadays—anyways, Satto had a festival to find [his] wife, and Kong-gee wanted to go,
 - g. but Pat-gee and her mother didn’t allow her to get there,
 - h. and they force Kong-gee to peel off every rice, like a bag of rice. So, Kong-gee really tried to do that, like peel off everything before the festival, but she failed. So, she was so sad, so she cried a lot.
 - i. And suddenly, a lot of birds came to her and help her because they were impressed of what Kong-gee did. So they helped her to peel off all the rice, so she can go to the festival, but she didn’t have any dresses or shoes

to go the festival. But suddenly from the heaven, the angel came to her and then dressed her up and gave the beautiful shoes.

- j. So, she was able to get to the festival and then met Satto, and they fell in love.
- k. But Pat-gee noticed that Kong-gee is there, so Pat-gee want to expel her, so Pat-gee went to the Kong-gee,
- l. and Kong-gee knew that and tried to run away from her.
- m. In a meanwhile, like when Kong-gee ran away, she fell her shoe into the stream, and Satto found that shoes and tried to find Kong-gee, but it was so hard because Pat-gee and her mother really tried to hide Kong-gee.
- n. But one day, some people told Satto, ‘Oh, I know this, like the owner of the shoes! This is, this belongs to Kong-gee!’⁵ So, Satto went Pat-gee’s house—Pat-gee and Kong-gee’s house—and tried to find [Kong-gee], and Kong-gee and Satto finally met,
- o. and they lived happily ever,
- p. and Satto punished Pat-gee for Kong-gee, so, yeah, they lived, ah, and Pat-gee regretted her, like bad behaviors?
- q. So, they happily lived forever.

(Korean Participant 1, personal communication, August 30, 2019)

⁵ Single quote marks (as opposed to double [“”]) around parts of participant speech indicate that for the duration of the quoted parts, participants were voicing a different character than themselves or the narrator they were playing the role of. The role changes were always made obvious by the way participants heightened or lowered their voice or alter its rhythm.

4.3.2 Korean Participant 2: “The Sun and the Moon”

KP2, as mentioned above, did not choose to retell the Cinderella story she responded with during the interview. Instead, she chose to tell, like KP1, a traditional Korean fairy tale, or folktale, called “The Sun and the Moon.” Due to the nature of the story, KP2’s story also included many elements and functions of Propp’s (1968) model of narrative structure, as shown in (6). However, KP2 began with what resembles more of *abstract*⁶ in Labov’s narrative scheme, as can be seen in (6a), but from there, she did not diverge much from Propp’s 1968 model. Just as KP1 did, KP2 set up *The Initial Situation* in the first one-third section of her story: *temporal-spatial determination* in (6b), *composition of the family and the future heroes*—the Sun and the Moon—in (6c), and *well-being, prior to complication* in (6d). The last element, *well-being, prior to complication*, was not found in KP1’s story. KP2, in contrast, used in her story several positive words such as “happily” and “loved” to establish that the death and the lacking presence of the family’s father as well as poverty could not stop the mother and her children from staying positive and loving, which implied the positive quality shared by the future heroes and their mother (i.e. optimistic, affectionate, etc.). Quite accurately adhering to Propp’s (1968) narrative structure, KP2 then began *The Preparatory Section*, in which she introduced the elements of *absentation* (the mother leaving for work “one day,” see [6e]), *interdiction* (“as specifically told,” see [3f]), *first appearance of the villain* (the tiger, see [6g]), and finally, *reconnaissance* and *delivery* by the villain (the tiger pretending to be the mother in [6i] and eating the mother in [6h], respectively). KP2 also fulfilled *The Complication* part of the story, as she made the tiger’s

⁶ The abstract in a narrative tells the audience what the story to be told is about. Technically, KP2 does not provide a summary of her story, she still gives central background information: that the story is an old fairy tale from Korea and that it is going to be about the sun and the moon.

villainy very much apparent. Consequently, the goal of the heroes, although KP2 did not directly say, was clearly to escape the tiger's *deceptions* (see [6i] and [6j]) and *pursuit* (see [6l]), to not be eaten. The tiger's pursuit ultimately *dispatched the heroes from their home* into the forest where the tiger continued to chase them but a heavenly *donor*, presumably the siblings' mother to whom they prayed, helped their escape by dropping ropes for them to climb up, as shown in (6m). Towards the end of the story, KP2 showed the tiger's second act of villainy—praying to the children's mothers for a rope that will help him catch and eat the children—as in (6n), and immediately revealed the tiger's downfall—*punishment* for his villainy (see [6o]). As shown in (6p), KP2 presented children rejoining their mother. Her story did not have a *wedding* function, but the family coming together again gave an implication that paralleled it. Also, KP2, more directly than KP1, used the element of *transfiguration* as well during the scene in which the girl and the boy take their new solar and lunar forms in the sky. Lastly, as can be seen in (6q), KP2 returned to the Labovian narrative scheme and used *coda*, or a final statement on how the story told is relevant to the reality outside of the story, which connected the characters from her story to real-life objects, the sun and the moon.

- (6) a. This old fairy tale comes all the way from Korea. It's called "The Sun and the Moon."
- b. So, long long time ago, all the way, far away in Korea,
- c. an old mother lived with her two children, and the daughter's name was the Sun, and the son's name was the Moon.
- d. They lived happily together although they lost their father a long time ago to a very very cruel disease. The mother would make a living by making rice cakes and going out to the market every single day and selling her

famous rice cakes. The three lived happily together as the mother loved her children very much.

- e. One day, the mother went out to sell her rice cakes in the market once again,
- f. and the two children, as usual, waited in their living room until their mother came back. But for some reason, this day, no matter how long they waited their mother didn't come back. The two, the brother and the sister, very concerned, were waiting for their mother but as specifically told, they did not leave the house and kept on waiting in the living room.
- g. The mother, who was in the market, was closing up the busy day of selling rice cakes and she was hurriedly going back home as she knew that her children were going to be waiting for her back home. As she was crossing through the forest as she usually does, a tiger out of nowhere sprang up on her and told her, 'give me one your rice cakes or I will eat you up.'
- h. The mother who had saved the rice cakes for her son and her daughter refused because she knew they would be hungrily waiting for her back home. The tiger, when the mother refused to give any of her rice cakes, the tiger ate the mother.
- i. And after he ate the mother, he thought about the two children waiting for their mother back home and suddenly got an idea. He quickly took the mother's clothes and dressed up as the mother, took the basket of rice cakes and slowly crept up to their house. The two, the daughter and the son waiting back home were anxiously waiting and they suddenly heard a

knock on their door. It goes, ‘knock, knock, knock, hey children, mom’s home. I’m bringing you back rice cakes as usual.’

- j. And the son ran to the door to let their mother in, but the daughter felt something weird so she stopped her brother and talked to the door. ‘Hey mom, why aren’t you coming in by yourself as usual?’ And she was like, ‘oh, I just really wanna see you guys. I want to see you guys opening the door.’ And the smart daughter gets a little suspicious. She’s like, ‘well, if you’re our mother, can I see your hands?’ And the tiger puts one of his paws through the small door crack, and the daughter immediately sees that it is not the soft hands of her mother that she recognizes.
- k. So, she and her brother start waiting in the living room thinking of an excuse. ‘Oh, mom, um I don’t think we can open the door right now. I think we’re kinda busy.’
- l. So the tiger who grows impatient keeps on asking then realizes that the son and the daughter will not open the door for him, so he runs through the door, breaks open the door, and starts running towards the children. The children immediately try to escape the room and run through the forest to escape the tiger. The tiger knowing the forest well was racing towards them, racing towards them very very quickly.
- m. The daughter knowing that they are going to get caught soon prays to the heavens and prays to her mother she hopes is somewhere. ‘Mom, mom, if you are there, anywhere, please send us a way to escape this ferocious tiger that is running towards us.’ And out from the sky, it seems from

nowhere, two magical ropes appear and fall in front of the brother and the sister. The two quickly grab their ropes and start climbing up towards the sky.

- n. The tiger who is approaching them very quickly sees the same thing happening and realizes that the children are escaping from him. He does the same exact thing. ‘Hello, mother, mother, if you’re there out, if you’re out there somewhere, please help me and catch those children.’ And somehow magically from the sky, another rope appears right in front of him. The tiger triumphantly grabs the rope and starts climbing towards the sky as the children do.
- o. As he’s doing this, as he’s halfway up, all the way in the sky, he suddenly realizes that his rope is not the same sturdy rope as the children’s, and he sees right above of him that the rope is starting to break. He realizes what is happening but it’s too late as he’s already climbing all the way up to the sky and in an instant, the rope breaks and he falls to his death.
- p. The two, the brother and the sister, however, have sturdy ropes and they’re able to climb all the way up to the sky and... the sister joins their mother up in the sky and becomes the sun, and the son also joins them and becomes the moon.
- q. And that’s how we know that they’re named, the two things up in the sky, are named the Sun and the Moon.

(Korean Participant 2, personal communication, September 7, 2019)

4.3.3 American Participant 1: “Jesus Calms the Storm”

As previously described, AP1 chose to retell the story she discussed during the pre-presentation interview as the most memorable story from her childhood. While the story itself does not have a separate title, it is commonly referred to as “Jesus Calms the Storm” according to the event that unfolds in the story. Hence, hereafter AP1’s story will also be referred to as such. Being a biblical tale, “Jesus Calms the Storm” did not share as many common themes and structural elements and functions that were found in KP1 and KP2’s stories. Some major functions of *The Initial Situation* that KP1 and KP2 included in their presentations at the beginning were missing in AP1’s presentation. There is a bit of *temporal determination*, “one day,” as can be seen in (7a), but there is no introduction to the future hero or his positive qualities. In fact, there was hardly any background information, where the characters come from or who they are as a person. The closest to such information is the interjected statement “Jesus had finished teaching this big group of people” in (7a), which still lacks information regarding who Jesus is, what he was teaching, and why, etc. Instead, AP1’s story began more with the elements from *The Preparatory Section* such as *absentation* (Jesus and his followers sailing away, see [7a]) introducing the main action of the story right away. There was *temporal-spatial determination* (“one day ...across the Sea of Galilee,” see [7a]) at the beginning, but there was no introduction to or description of the characters to distinguish who is *the future hero* and what kind of relationship exist among the people in the story. This is where Propp’s (1968) fairy tale/folk tale model became not so applicable to AP1’s story. Jesus seemed the hero in the story, but no villain or act of villainy happened that made him struggle. In fact, Jesus acted as the donor/helper as well when he calmed the storm and comforted his disciples. The problem of disciples being afraid of the storm was resolved by Jesus who calms the storm, but the story does

not end with any punishment, wedding, or even an arrival at Jesus and disciples' planned destination.

A much simpler narrative model as the one proposed by Labov and Waletzky (1997) matches the structure of the story more accurately. The relevant background information (i.e. who are all involved, where everything is taking place, etc.) for this particular narrative (*Orientation*) is found in (7a), and *Complicating action* is soon afterward introduced with the phrase “But suddenly” in (7b). *Evaluation*, or why this story is told or why it matters, is spread throughout the story but is particularly apparent from (7c) to (7e) where AP1, through the characters of the story, communicated the value/message of the story. The part of AP1's story that was most strikingly unlike those of KP1 or KP2 is that it was finished with an explicit lexical signal of her story's resolution, “And that's the end” (see [7f]).

- (7) a. So, one day, when Jesus and his disciples, his followers—Jesus had finished teaching this big group of people—they went down and gotten a boat and started to sail across the Sea of Galilee.
- b. But suddenly—well, first, Jesus fell asleep on the boat because he was very tired, but suddenly, a big storm came on the sea and the boat was tossing on the waves and all the disciples were so scared because the weather was so bad. There was thunder and lightning and the boat was tossing about in the waves,
- c. and his disciples woke Jesus up and said ‘Jesus, don't you care about us? Aren't you afraid? Aren't you going to do something to help us?’

- d. And Jesus told the seas that were tossing and turning and the storm, he said ‘peace, be still’ and immediately the storm stopped and the waters were calm.
- e. And he told his disciples, ‘Why are you afraid? Don’t you know that I’m with you and I’m the one who created these things?’
- f. And that’s the end.

(American Participant 1, personal communication, September 13, 2019)

4.3.4 American Participant 2: “The Tortoise and the Hare”

Finally, AP2 told a story different from what she talked about during her pre-presentation interview. She chose a fable most often known as “The Tortoise and the Hare.” AP2’s version of this well-known story began with Propp’s (1968) elements, e.g., *The Initial Situation* in (8a) and the introduction of *the future hero* in (8b). However, as it was for AP1’s story, AP2’s story also did not exactly parallel with Propp’s model structurally nor elementally⁷. Although the hare can be possibly categorized as a villain, in AP2’s story, the hare does not perform any evildoings to the tortoise—the hero—its only vice being its overconfidence and idling before reaching the finish line. The hare does not deceive or even taunt the tortoise in AP2’s presentation. Much like AP1’s story, AP2’s story only revealed an episode of the characters in their lives; AP1 and AP2 both introduced their audience to the characters and setting of the story without much background information, contrary to what KP1 and KP2 did. What kind of relationship the tortoise and the hare had before and after the race, how and why the race came to happen, etc. were not explained.

⁷ Propp (1968) also mentions this himself in *Morphology of the Folktale*: “The fable [...] is a formal category. [...] It is unclear what [is] meant by [fable]” (pp. 6-7).

Again, the Labovian narrative scheme provides a more fitting structural basis for analysis. The narrative elements from (8a) to (8c) can be categorized as part of *Orientation*; (8d) and (8e) as *Complicating action*; (8f) as the climactic part of *Evaluation*, and elements from (8g) to (8h) as parts of *Resolution*. It should be noted that AP2's story was laden with elements of *Evaluation* throughout most parts, most notably *lexical signaling*, *comparators*, and *explications* (Labov, 1972). Examples of *lexical signaling* in AP2's story include the repeated use of "really" before "slow" in (8d), followed by a repetition of the phrase "going at its/his own pace" in (8e) and (8f). Examples of *comparators*⁸ can be found from (8d) to (8h) in which AP2 constantly contrasts the tortoise and the hare's attitude, behavior, and result of the behavior. AP2 also employed *explication* when she explained why the tortoise was able to finish the race before the hare, as shown in (8h). Then, like AP1, AP2 also finished her story with an explicit remark, "The end" (see [8i]).

- (8) a. Once upon a time,
 b. there was a tortoise and a hare,
 c. and they're getting ready in the village to go to a race,
 d. and the tortoise is really really really slow and so wasn't really sure about winning, but the hare, the hare thought he could really win, the hare thought he could win.
 e. And so they start the race, and the tortoise is going at its own pace, nice and slow, steady, and the hare, it just races off, right from the beginning,

⁸ By Labov's (1972) definition, *comparators* "provide a way of evaluating events by placing them against a background of other events which might have happened, but did not" (p. 382). Here, the term is used more broadly to refer to two events that result from two opposite attitudes and actions.

- f. and the hare passes the tortoise and gets so close to the finish line but the hare is too confident and is going too fast and playing around but the tortoise just keeps going, keeps going at his own pace,
- g. and while the hare is busy playing around and going back and forth on the track, the tortoise finishes the race at his own pace
- h. because he was set on the goal and he never stopped. Whereas the hare kept playing around.
- i. The end.

(American Participant 2, personal communication, September 20, 2019)

4.4 Intentions

4.4.1 Korean Participant 1

During the post-presentation interview, KP1 expressed that the main point or the message of the story she had just presented was that behaving well (i.e. “being [a] good person”) leads to rewards. When asked what were some important factors of her storytelling that she focused on, KP1 answered that she concentrated on sharing the message and thus the main content of the story. She specified that she tried to convey two parts in particular: the part in which Pat-gee mistreated Kong-gee, although she was a “good person,” and the last part in which, as a result, Kong-gee got the reward (of marrying Satto and becoming socially elevated) and Pat-gee a punishment. KP1 added that this was her way of setting up the good and the bad in her story.

4.4.2 Korean Participant 2

Regarding the message or point of the story she told, KP2 provided two answers: “first of all, be aware of strangers,” and “be kind.” She further explained, “if you live kindly, [then] you will get help when [...] it’s most needed.” When asked about the important factors she tried to

focus on while telling the story, KP2 answered that she tried to be “detailed” because she herself, when listening to a story, prefers to be able to “draw the picture in [her] head.” One particular part that she tried to emphasize especially with details was the moment when the tiger prayed and received the rope from the heavens just as the children did. She explained, “It may seem like you get the same opportunities, but if you’re kind, you end up with better results,” referring to how the rope that the tiger received ended up being a rotten one, making him fall to his death, as opposed to the rope the children received which carried them to safety.

4.4.3 American Participant 1

AP1’s answer to the first question regarding the presented story’s message or the point was, “That the disciples shouldn’t have been afraid [of] what was going around with them because Jesus was with them.” The important factors that she tried to focus on included emphasizing “how Jesus was very calm, the storm was very strong, and the disciples were very afraid.” When asked about what she had done to convey the message and the important factors of the story, AP1 mentioned her active storytelling method: “I [...] increased the loudness of my voice to make the storm seem very bad and show how frightened the disciples were, and I used hand motions.”

AP1 also received an additional question regarding her lack of introduction to the characters that appeared in her story. She answered, “I was thinking about telling [the story] to kids at my church, and normally they would have already heard some things.” She added that if she were telling the story to a child she met elsewhere, she would most likely explain who Jesus is, how he came to be on earth and have disciples following him so that the child listening may be more prepared.

4.4.4 American Participant 2

When asked about the point or message of the story she told for presentation, AP2 answered, “To go at your own pace? And not mind what others are doing?” The way she raised the end of each infinitive phrase showed some uncertainty she had about the point of her own story. To the following question regarding the important factors, AP2 explained that she tried to focus on the difference between the tortoise and the hare, e.g., their slow vs. fast racing speed and steady vs. unsteady behavior. This was connected to the way she conveyed the message of the story to her audience, which was to emphasize descriptions of the characters, i.e., “why they’re doing what they’re doing.” AP2 concluded that they are what matters to the story.

4.5 Post-observation Interview Responses

4.5.1 Korean Participant 1

4.5.1.1 KP1’s Interpretation of AP1’s Story

After observing AP1’s storytelling, KP1 was asked what she thought the message or the point of the story was. She answered, “I think this story is telling about, ‘follow the Jesus, follow the lord,’ [...] and if you follow, then you’ll get peace.” When asked what made her think this, KP1 explained that the general plot of the story, especially the part where Jesus said “peace” and the storm was gone, conveyed the message that disciples of Jesus will be fine in times of trouble if they just follow him. Regarding AP1’s storytelling, KP1 noticed AP1’s emphasis on the terrifying quality of the storm and the growth of fear among the people in the storm. She further noted that although the storm is not the bad or the evil in the story, it is used to represent something “traumatic” so that the message about Jesus may better be accentuated.

One most important factor of AP1’s story that KP1 pointed out was “religion.” She connected this to the message of the story and discussed how having the same religious

background as the storyteller may affect the way the story is understood. The example KP1 provided was that she herself was familiar with the story because she was Christian and that she knew the purpose of this story to be encouraging people who are or have become doubtful about their religious beliefs. When asked what she thought a child from a different religious background or no religious background at all would think about the story, KP1 answered, “it’s hard to answer because I’ve never been not a Christian.” She supposed that “children under seven” in particular might feel that the story is “interesting.” She added that because she believes in Christianity, she would tell stories like the one AP1 told to her children because she would want them to be Christian as well.

4.5.1.2 KP1’s Interpretation of AP2’s Story

After observing AP2’s presentation, KP1 was asked the same questions about the message of the story and its important factor(s). Regarding the message of the story, KP1 shared her answer in several parts. First, she simply stated, “just go whatever you can,” and when requested to elaborate what she meant, she responded, “I mean, if you’re late, it’s fine; if you’re slow, it’s fine. [...] go and follow [...] just your pace, and don’t be afraid.” Shortly after, she added, “genius cannot beat a people who make an effort.” Because she answered the question in several parts, she was asked to restate what she thought was the main point of the story in one or two sentences, and she replied that the main point of AP2’s story was that “people should try if they want to do something.” Next, to the question about what AP2 tried to focus on during her storytelling, KP1 answered that her description of the hare and its overconfidence seemed to be emphasized, especially with its contrast to the tortoise who was going at his own pace.

At the end of the interview on her interpretation of AP2’s story, KP1 expressed that she had heard the same kind of story in Korea. She explained that this Korean version, like AP2’s

version, had a rabbit who was very fast and a turtle who was very slow. Similarly, as well, the rabbit loses the race it has against the turtle because it falls asleep near the finish line. She commented that she found it interesting that people across cultures share similar stories to discipline their children.

4.5.1.3 KP1's Reflection on C1-American Stories

During her discussion of the two C1-American stories, KP1 made two different points, as shown in (9). She first repeated the sentiment she expressed after observing AP2's story that people from different cultural backgrounds still try to deliver the same kind of lessons to their children, e.g., an encouragement to find and go at one's own pace, a warning not to be overly confident, etc. Then she commented on AP1's story, finding it also interesting that AP1 chose to tell a Bible story in place of a fairy tale. She pointed out that fairy tales, at least the ones she had heard before in Korea, do not usually carry a religious lesson, for instance, to follow a certain god. Instead, "they just try to convey [that one should] be kind, be sweet," etc. At the end of the post-observation interview, KP1 also added that, as a Christian herself, she would hear a Bible story as such at church or from her mother who believes in Christianity but never at schools or from books.

- (9) *KP1*: So, as I've said earlier, like across the culture, I think people try to convey or deliver similar lessons to their children. There is like, 'go your pace', like 'do not too confidence', something like that, and also the first one, well, yeah, 'whenever you got in trouble believe in god', something like that, so that was interesting.

PI: Do you think anything in these stories are different from Korea, 'cause I know you talked about how these things are common in both cultures. Do you notice anything that's different too?

KP1: Um, I don't know about the first one, first one is not, well, first one I couldn't describe that one as a fairy tale. If that one counted as a fairy tale, then I would say there is a differences. So in Korea, fairy tales doesn't have those kind of lessons that like 'follow the Jesus, believe in god' something like that, right? They just try to convey, like 'be kind, be sweet' or something like that to, like that's common in Korea but um like beliefs in god is not really common in Korea. I guess as a fairy tale story so ((OK)) there are differences I guess.

PI: So even if like a religious element appears in Korean fairy tales, they don't like sort of, as a moral lesson, ask children to believe in a certain entity, you think?

KP1: Right, that's true, that's true, yeah, that's right, ((OK)) I think so.

(Korean Participant 1, personal communication, November 26, 2019)

4.5.2 Korean Participant 2

4.5.2.1 KP2's Interpretation of AP1's Story

During her post-observation interview, after watching AP1's presentation, KP2 was asked the same questions that KP1 was asked. Regarding the message of AP1's story, she answered, like KP1, that the main point seemed to "[come] from a religious standpoint." The message she received from the story was that "even in times of doubt and fear [...] you should have faith in god" because "he has most control over situations and he created most situations." She added at the end, "so don't fear because [Jesus] is with you." When asked about her

familiarity with the story, KP2 answered that she could not recall ever hearing it before. However, she also added that although she is not a religious person, she received a very clear message from the story. In addition, she expressed that “from a child’s aspect, it could be kind of comforting almost, especially if it’s a child from a [...] religious background, or even not from a religious background.” She explained that this reflected her perspective on religion as well in that although she is not religious herself, she acknowledges how comforting it can be to believe in “an ultimate power and, or ultimate source of power that is looking over you no matter what.” Such a message about faith, according to KP2, would work almost universally but especially to children because it is less difficult to “put in that image to children” and let it comfort “the child’s mind.”

To the question about important factors she found in AP1’s storytelling, KP2 answered “the story itself.” She explained that the story was short, concise, and straight-to-the-point and that, perhaps as a result, the situation, the characters—Jesus and his followers—and actions all influence and determine the lesson of the story be what it is. She also noticed that AP1 used a lot of hand movements, or body language, especially when describing the movements of the sea waves and conveying the danger of the storm, and commented that she had likely noticed it because she also makes frequent uses of hands.

4.5.2.2 KP2’s Interpretation of AP2’s Story

Once she finished watching AP2’s story presentation, KP2 discussed her thoughts on the message of AP2’s story and its important factors as she did with AP1’s. The main point of AP2’s story that KP2 stated first was, “no matter what your circumstances are, or your powers are, if you’re set on a goal and you’re determined that you can kind of win every race, [then you can] win whatever race, [or get] your goal done.” Briefly after giving this answer, however, she

thought of another meaning, as well: “no matter how good you’re at something—if you’re too arrogant, if you’re too confident in yourself—you need enough humility and you need to be humble to be able to achieve your goals.” She explained that what she felt the two contrasting lessons from the story indicate is that, in order to achieve his or her goals, one must find a good balance between knowing his or her strength(s) and knowing how to be humble. Like KP1, KP2 commented that AP2’s story was familiar as she had heard a version of it many times when she was in Korea. She found it interesting that the story can convey an important message wherever the country or in whichever language it is told, but she also admitted that the messages she inferred from AP2’s story were rather automatically processed in her mind as soon as she realized the story was almost the same as its Korean version.

When discussing the important factors she noticed from AP2’s storytelling, KP2 responded that she noticed, again, like KP1, how AP2 described the hare. The hare was racing very fast at the beginning but kept “fooling around,” being “arrogant from start to finish,” and this, to KP2, gave greater emphasis on the tortoise’s persistence despite the odds.

4.5.2.3 KP2’s Reflection on C1-American Stories

At the end of the post-observation interview, KP2 gave a rather holistic response regarding the two C1-American stories she observed, as can be seen in (10). She did not make comparisons between her story or any other stories she had learned before in Korea and the stories she heard from C1-American participants. Instead, she approached the two stories as just a childhood story. She commented that all childhood stories have a message that they’re trying to convey and that the idea in the message would be simple but still capable of relaying “a big life lesson.” KP2 gave an example from her own experience in which she recognized the meaning of the somewhat cliched messages from the childhood stories in her real life only many years later

when she had more matured. As a last thought, she added that childhood stories tend to lead to character building. She noticed from both AP1 and AP2's stories that they communicate and emphasize the importance of having a core belief or core beliefs. The two stories, to her, seemed to teach lessons on how to believe in something and how to believe in oneself within the boundary of humility, and such lessons would resonate with their intended audience for a long time.

- (10) *KP2*: I feel like all childhood stories have a bigger message, like they can seem really simple at first especially the second one where it's just two animals racing, The idea is really simple, but there's always a really big meaning behind it? Of like trying to teach a big life lesson and I've always thought it's interesting how you're told these very common cliches as you grow up but at, personally as I was actually growing up and maturing, I would have moments where I really resonated with those cliches and it's cool because it's something that I've heard for my whole life but only decades later, I'll be like 'oh, this is what they actually meant about those cliches' ((OK)) so I think that's cool, yeah.

PI: So it kinda does develop you culturally, intelligence-wise also?

KP2: I think so. I guess mostly it's kind of character building because, especially with the second one, and also with the first one, it's like in your core beliefs, or like in your character, that you should know how to like believe in something, or you should know how to believe in yourself but also have humility. So.

(Korean Participant 2, personal communication, November 26, 2019)

4.5.3 American Participant 1

4.5.3.1 AP1's Interpretation of KP1's Story

In contrast to C1-Korean participants' response to her story presentation, AP1's first reaction to the question regarding the message of KP1's story was, "I have no idea." She immediately apologized upon expressing that she did not quite get the main point of the story and supplied whatever she could guess was the story's main point. As shown in (11a), AP1 could not name the main characters or the main events that took place in the story. She explained that she was confused because she was waiting for a moral lesson, or some main point, that was clearly and explicitly stated, i.e., something akin to "so that's why..." When asked what important factors she noticed from KP1's story, she admitted she got the names of the characters confused. She made a guess that Pat-gee was "the beautiful one" when, in fact, she was the villain in the story. The PI indicated errors in an effort to refresh AP1's memory, as can be seen in (11b), but AP1's understanding of the characters and their qualities was almost the reverse of what KP1 had intended and told. This was also confirmed by the near-reversed misunderstanding repeated in AP1's response (as shown in [11c]) that followed the correcting conversation in (11b). Speaking off the record after the interview was finished, AP1 commented that she sensed that KP1's story somewhat resembled that of the Cinderella story, but this seemingly did not aid in her understanding and interpreting of the story and its message.

- (11) a. *API*: Oh goodness, I have no idea. It seemed like the point was that the main character was trying to do something and then she didn't quite do it, and then this man, I think, came and find her shoe and they lived happily ever after?
- b. *API*: Um, I also kinda got the names confused, I think Pat-gee was, like,

the beautiful one...

PI: It was actually the other one ((oh)) Kong-gee is the

API: Kong-gee is the beautiful one?

PI: the good one ((the good one)) and Pat-gee is the bad sister.

API: but she is the one who was able to peel all the rice?

PI: No

API: ((incomprehensible sound)) I'm so sorry.

c. *PI:* So maybe the names got you confused?

API: Yeah, the names got me a little bit confused about what was going on but, so Kong-gee was the bad one and she was able to peel all the rice?

But then Pat-gee is the one whose shoe fell off? ((PI shakes head))

Kong-gee is still the one whose shoe fell off and the man, or Pat-gee is the one who found her shoe? ((whispers)) I'm sorry.

(American Participant 1, personal communication, November 26, 2019)

As all the transcribed excerpts of the interview in (11) show, AP1 made several apologies during the post-observation interview for her confusion, and thus, to ease her anxiety about her answers, the PI adjusted the interview question and asked AP1 about some of the confusing factors of the story. In response, AP1 clarified that it was mostly the names that “distracted” her, which she felt was “so silly” of her, and that it was hard for her to keep track of who was who and who did what. Besides the names, she also found the phrase “peeling the rice” confusing and distracting. She explained that she did not know what that meant exactly and that trying to figure out the meaning made her miss the next thirty seconds of the story after the appearance of the phrase. Some questions she shared that she had posed out of confusion included “do you peel

rice?” and “did she mean something other than peeling the rice?” She also considered the possibility of “peeling the rice” being one of the “cultural things” that she had never done before. Here, she added “I know that seems so small” in a similar manner she previously evaluated her confusion due to the names. Lastly, assuming KP1’s intended audience was children whose first language is American English, AP1 expressed that whatever moral lesson KP1’s story tried to convey may not be easily learned by the audience.

4.5.3.2 AP1’s Interpretation of KP2’s Story

After observing the story presentation by KP2, AP1 answered the same questions about messages and important factors but with much more ease. Her first thought on the message of the story was that it is an explanation of “why there are the sun and the moon in the sky and why they are called that.” However, upon another consideration, she came up with another message, which was relaying how powerful a mother’s love can be. To expound, AP1 mentioned parts of KP2’s story in which the mother sacrificed herself to save her children from the tiger and the children prayed to her in heaven leading them to a successful escape from the tiger. When asked what she thought were the important factors of KP2’s story and storytelling, AP1 answered the clear opening and closing statements at the beginning and the ending of the story respectively. AP1 explained that statements like “I’m going to tell you the story about the sun and the moon” and “that’s why we have the sun and [the] moon in the sky” make it clear for the audience what the story is about, prepare them, and ultimately connect the start and the end of the story. Finally, AP1 also noticed how “carefully explained” were all the characters and the setting of the story. She noted how “descriptive” KP2 was about the setting and how this had helped her to “picture it very clearly, how it was all happening.”

4.5.4 American Participant 2

4.5.4.1 AP2's Interpretation of KP1's Story

By contrast with AP1's response to KP1's story, AP2 did not express as much confusion regarding the message of the story nor its "cultural" parts. She gave a simple reply to the question about the message that the point of the story seemed to be about "hard work and being a good person." She offered examples from the story, mentioning how Kong-gee, the good hero of the story, received help from the birds and the angel when peeling the rice and going to the festival and "met the love of her life" at the festival. She discussed briefly, too, how even Pat-gee, a person who "did bad things," felt regrets and was forgiven. She connected this particular example to the main point of the story which she restated at the end of her response as "good actions are rewarded." It should be noted here, however, that KP1's narrative never explicitly mentioned Pat-gee being forgiven. The only verbally present ending for Pat-gee, as shown in (5p), is that she was punished and then "regretted her bad behaviors." There was no self-reflected feedback on this during the post-observation interview to analyze why AP2 had an added understanding of the Pat-gee's ending in the story, but some possibilities are that she interpreted "regretting" as a part of a sequence of events that lead to "being forgiven" (e.g. the villain regrets; the villain redeems his/herself; the villain is forgiven; the villain is no longer the villain) or that she subconsciously imagined the "forgiven" context so that her understanding of the story's message may better fit the story itself. This last theory is especially potentially relevant in that AP2's familiarity with KP1's story may have affected her interpretation of the story, which is to be discussed further below.

One response from AP2 that was quite the opposite of AP1's was what she thought was the important factor of the story and the storytelling. AP2 found that KP1's description of Kong-

gee's familial circumstances at the beginning was impressive, as can be seen in (12a). She was able to grasp the relationship, or "animosity," between the main characters, especially Kong-gee and Pat-gee from KP1's description in the *Initial Situation*. As shown in (12b), when asked about any parts she was confused by, AP2 pointed out how there was the cultural difference when Kong-gee's forced chore included "peeling rice" instead of scrubbing the floor as her European counterpart Cinderella is usually thought of doing as a chore. She later elaborated, as can be seen in (12c), that her knowing the similar story of Cinderella helped her at the beginning of KP1's storytelling to remember the characters and their relationships, which is quite the opposite of AP1 who had the same concerns and also thought of the Cinderella story but in the long run did not base her understanding and interpretation of KP1's story on it. Returning to the previous notion regarding why AP2 might have added the "forgiven" context, it could be theorized then that AP2's previous understanding of the Cinderella story might have been transferred subconsciously to her interpretation of KP1's story, just as KP2 "automatically processed" AP2's story based on her previous understanding of the Korean version of the fable.

- (12) a. *AP2*: Uhm I guess like describing Kong-gee's family circumstances before? So you get a better idea of the dynamic between her and her step mother and her step sister? 'Cause I feel like if you just jumped into it, starting from the, that story part? and not have the, what is it? like exposition? you'd be kind of confused as to why there's like that animosity between them, you know.
- b. *PI*: Was there any confusion for you in the elements in the story you didn't understand? Like any distracting parts?
- AP2*: Uh I don't think so? I think while I was listening to this story, I was

noticing that it's really similar to Cinderella? ((OK)) and that, but there were new parts that I guess are, you know, kind of cultural? Like in Cinderella, I don't remember what she's doing but she's not like peeling rice. ((OK)) She's like, I think she's scrubbing the floor or something and locked up? Uhm but this story she's, Kong-gee's peeling rice so that's kind of different, culturally.

- c. *PI*: OK, so I was wondering, those cultural differences you noticed, are, were they in any way distracting? Or were your previous knowledge about this story, like you've heard of it before, was that helpful so it wasn't really distracting?

AP2: I think it was helpful ((OK)) because at the start of the story I feel like I was trying to remember, you know, like, OK who are all these people, how are they related but then once I started to see it was kind of similar, I could kind of pay more attention to the different details? Be like, oh, this is how it kind of differs.

(American Participant 2, personal communication, November 22, 2019)

4.5.4.2 AP2's Interpretation of KP2's Story

AP2's responses to KP2's story was very similar to AP1's. AP2's initial interpretation of the message or point of KP2's story was, just like AP1's, that it is an origin story about the sun and the moon. She explained that she thought so, like AP2, because of the way KP2 began and ended the story with what the story was going to be about, naming the children of the story as the Sun and the Moon, as well. AP2's second interpretation, after another brief consideration, however, was a little different from AP1's second interpretation. As shown in (13a), she thought

that the story had a lot of focus on “kids not trusting strangers” or in this story, the tiger. Again, like AP1, AP2 noticed that KP2 presented her story with a lot of details and even shared the same sentiment of “I could picture it in my head” to describe her observation experience. Specific examples she gave to explain what she meant can be seen in (13b). Lastly, AP2 expressed that although she had heard of the story about the sun, the moon, and the tiger in her Korean language classes before, because she had never heard the whole story, she still had to learn a lot of new information from KP2’s presentation. Her final remark on it was that she thought it was “a cool story.” She did not know if Americans have any folktales or origin stories besides the ones that native Americans tell, and she found it interesting to hear origin stories from different places.

(13) a. *AP2*: Uhm I guess there was also a little bit in there about, you know, kids not trusting strangers ((laughs)) ((OK)) a little bit?

PI: not trust strangers ((yeah)) and what parts of the story, what parts of the storytelling too made you think that?

AP2: Uhm I feel like there was a lot of focus on the kids not trusting the tiger and the tiger trying to, it’s like a lot of trickery? But in the end, the kids didn’t trust him and you know? ((OK)) got to be the sun and the moon.

b. *AP2*: I think there were a lot of imagery used? Like she told specific details, like she didn’t just say ‘their mother was going to sell’ like ‘just going to the market’. She said ‘they’re going to sell rice cakes’ and then she even said ‘they were in the forest’ like specifically, or ‘in their house’,

like ‘trying to put his paw through the door’, it was very detailed? and I could picture it in my head? ((OK)) yeah, so a lot of description, yeah.

(American Participant 2, personal communication, November 22, 2019)

4.5.4.3 AP2’s Reflection on C1-Korean Stories

At the end of her post-observation interview, AP2 made a brief commentary on the two C1-Korean stories. She first expressed that “both stories [seemed to] have a lot to do with family.” She felt that “everyone can relate to family stories,” and as a result of the C1-Korean stories being family stories, she sensed that the characters in the stories mattered more in some way. She remarked, “having that [relatability], it already kinda feels like, ‘OK, I need to care about these characters because they are a unit, kind of’.”⁹

⁹ This remark by AP2 can also be connected to her earlier statement regarding Pat-gee, the villainous stepsister, being forgiven at the end of KP1’s story. In her interview responses to KP1’s story, AP2 referenced characters frequently by their familial position instead of by their names (e.g. Pat-gee is called Kong-gee’s step-sister throughout the interview) and readily picked up on “family circumstances.” This may also be an indicator that there may be some variations regarding the level of participants’ listening proficiency, AP2 being a more focused, thoughtful, and engaged listener than all the other participants in the study.

CHAPTER 5: DISCUSSION

5.1 Introduction

In this chapter, findings from the previous chapter are discussed in relation to the initial research questions. At first, the same dichotomous analysis of individualism vs. collectivism and low-context vs. high-context communication that Cho (2019) used in her study will be employed to answer Research Question 1 regarding whether the analytical stereotypes of the Western and Far Eastern cultures, in this case, American and Korean, are present in participants' narratives and narrative learning experiences. Then, the information from the analysis will be dissected further to respond to Research Question 2 on what it signifies about globalized and localized linguacultures and participants' linguistic ability to interpret messages. Lastly, the chapter will end with a discussion of some pedagogical implications of the study's findings.

It should be taken into account that the findings from the analysis are only suggestive. Because the findings came from a very small sample, with only two participants from each culture, inference of what the similarities and differences between the participant groups indicate is very limited. To confirm what the findings suggest, a much larger sample is needed.

5.2 Implications for Culture in Communication

5.2.1 Pre-Presentation Responses

The conventional divide between the two participant groups was the most evident in the pre-presentation interview responses. As was described in Chapter 4, both C1-Korean participants expressed having an independent and self-directed learning experience when they were asked about the most memorable story from their childhood. Even if adults had been a part

of the experience, Korean participants' interview responses did not have a verbal or non-verbal indication that adults were ever involved. C1-American participants, on the other hand, had a shared, community-based learning experience. Their most memorable childhood stories were either widely known and told by an organization such as the church or circulated within the family. These learning experiences that participants chose to share as the most memorable moment in their childhood suggest that the stereotypical local conventions associated with Korea and the US are in fact reversed. C1-Korean participants gave individualistic responses about their learning experience, focusing only on the Self, how they felt or thought about the stories during their childhood. C1-American participants' responses aligned more with collectivism in that the stories from their childhood and experiences of learning them involved the Other, i.e., the community they belonged to.

At the same time, from another angle, the responses also reflect the typical cultural conventions. C1-Korean participants were both able to readily come up with fairy tales that are widely known by a lot of people, and they learned the story from books with which they have to infer meanings and messages on their own and anything not explicitly stated on the pages would have to be understood from the context. The stories they shared, therefore, convey collectivistic culture, and the source of their learning indicates a preference for high-context communication, just as how Korean speakers are typically described. In contrast, C1-American participants had difficulty coming up with fairy tales, even a very general one, that was most memorable to them and had to come up with community-based stories that were very personal, which corresponds with the individualistic culture that the US is typically associated with. The story about the lake monster from AP2 is especially personal and individualistic in that it is based on the specific lake that her family lived nearby and that her family members are the only ones that tell the story to

each other. The fact that both C1-American participants learned the stories orally, i.e., directly and face-to-face, again aligns with the American preference for low-context communication.

Put simply, as children, C1-Korean participants had individualistic learning experiences but were exposed to collectivistic and highly context-dependent contents, while C1-American participants had collectivistic experiences and exposure to individualistic and less context-dependent contents. This, of course, does not and cannot generalize all types of experience and contents that participants have encountered in their lives. For instance, KP1 shared that she, as a Christian herself, had heard Bible stories the same way AP1 did, either at her church or from her mother, but those stories were just not as memorable. Another example would be how both C1-American participants found that family seemed somewhat significant in both Korean stories (i.e., AP1 commented on the power of a mother's love in KP2's story, and AP2 commented that both KP1 and KP2 told "family stories"), but neither C1-Korean participants ever mentioned family or familial relationship being an important factor in their stories. So, although the pre-presentation responses do not provide definite implications, they do provide an interesting premise confirming that culture and language are more complicatedly intertwined and that a simple dichotomous definition would not be sufficient for cultural groups today. For example, the fact that both C1-Korean participants chose an individualistic story-learning experience could be an indicator that although the learned materials mostly reflect collectivistic values and conventions, the learning process of the materials may have been influenced by the values of individualism, such as individual achievement and competition, that have been spreading around the world along with the capitalistic tendencies as one result of globalization.

5.2.2 Intentions and Interpretations

The trend of present but inconsistent cultural conventions continues in the ways participants told their stories and interpreted others'. Some noticeable and consistent parts of the data are represented in Table 1. Both C1-Korean participants told stories with messages that advise the recipient how to interact with the Other, i.e., being a good person (KP1) and being kind (KP2), and C1-American participants told stories with messages that only directly apply to the Self, i.e., have faith in Jesus (AP1) and work at your own pace, not minding others (AP2). Thus, values found in the stories that Korean and American participants chose to tell match the collectivistic and individualistic cultures commonly associate with their countries. Nevertheless, when it came to how the story was told, the preferences of context dependence varied. The ways that KP1 and AP2 told their stories matched the cultural types. KP1 used high-context communication and did not explicitly state the message of the story nor was very descriptive, whereas AP2 who used low-context communication repeatedly and directly conveyed her message in the story. On the contrary, KP2 and AP1's storytelling diverged from the cultural types. Although she did not make her intended message explicit, KP2 verbally communicated a lot of details and was therefore not as dependent on context. In fact, during her post-presentation interview, KP2 stated that she tried to focus on a lot of details and drawing a picture in her audience's mind, and this was clearly communicated to both AP1 and AP2 who, during their post-observation interview, noted that the important factor of KP2's storytelling seemed to be putting in details and commented as well, using the same exact word as KP2, that they could "picture" the scenes in their head. The story that AP1 told was highly context-dependent in that it did not make the message of the story explicit and the story was short, not as descriptive.

Table 1.

Comparison of Messages and Storytelling between C1-Korean and C1-American

| Participants | Messages | Storytelling |
|---------------------|-----------------|---------------------|
| <i>KP1</i> | Collectivistic | High context |
| <i>KP2</i> | Collectivistic | Low context |
| <i>AP1</i> | Individualistic | High context |
| <i>AP2</i> | Individualistic | Low context |

The data resulting from interpretations varied and was overall not very consistent, as can be seen in the simple representation of it in Table 2. Both C1-Korean participants were able to successfully interpret the intended messages in AP1 and AP2’s stories. For AP2’s story, they even used the exact same phrase that AP2 repeated, “on its/his own pace,” the explicitness of it likely being the reason why they were able to grasp the message so easily. However, C1-American participants were not very accurate in their interpretations. AP1 was distracted by unfamiliar character names and could not interpret the message of KP1’s story at all, and AP2, although she interpreted the message of “be a good person” as KP1 had intended, added another message she found that KP1 did not intend to convey: “work hard.” With KP2’s story, both AP1 and AP2 misinterpreted the intended message in a nearly identical way. What KP2 intended to convey in her story was that one must be aware of strangers and be kind. Instead, the first interpretation given by AP1 and AP2 was that the story is an explanation or an origin story of how the sun and the moon came to be in the sky. Both gave the same reasons as well as to why they interpreted so—because KP2 began and ended her presentation with statements that emphasized the story being about two siblings named the Sun and the Moon. AP2, on her second attempt, was able to interpret one of the two intended messages in KP2’s story to be aware of strangers, based on the plotline where the children were shown to be suspicious and careful when the tiger approached them in disguise.

Table 2.
Comparison of Message Interpretations between C1-Korean and C1-American

| Participants | AP1 | AP2 |
|--------------|--|--|
| KP1 | No interpretation Intended interpretation | Intended interpretation Intended interpretation |
| KP2 | Misinterpretation Intended interpretation | Misinterpretation/ Partial intended interpretation Intended interpretation |

Comparing the two tables and participants' background, it came to attention that contact and exposure to another language or culture influence the way meaning is communicated and recreated. C1-Korean participants who have learned to speak English as their second language and have lived in the US for at least six years were able to interpret the intended messages from both highly and only slightly context-dependent storytelling. KP2, who had lived in the US temporarily during her primary education before returning for college education, was even able to utilize low-context communication in her own storytelling. AP1, who had no prior experience with the Korean language or long-term exposure to the culture, was unable to accurately interpret any of CI-Korean stories. Although she herself told her story in high-context communication, this was due to her supposition that her audience would already be aware of the religious preface to the story. Concerning others' stories, AP2 expressed that she expects an explicit "that's why..." statement and that it was due to the lack of such a statement that led her to lack of interpretation or misinterpretation. In comparison, AP2, who had previously taken Korean language classes in college for three years, was able to infer the messages that C1-Korean

participants intended to imply in one or two tries. A new message she came up with for KP1's story that one should work hard could possibly be based on the individualistic values placed on self-reliance and merits in the US she is used to (Fischer, 2008). However, there is a caveat to be noted. One other likely reason for the misunderstanding or misinterpretation of the Korean stories by C1-American participants while C1-Korean participants showed a better understanding of the stories told by their American counterparts is that the two C1-American stories (especially AP2's) are rather well-known ones while the C1-Korean stories (particularly KP2's) are not well-known ones.

5.3 Implications for Language Learning and Teaching

It is evident that a learner's previous experience is immensely important in language learning. KP2 who has been studying in the US for a longer time (10-11 years) than KP1 has lived in the US (6 years) or AP2 studied Korean (3 years) exhibited both collectivistic and individualistic culture as well as high- and low-context language uses. Her linguaculture therefore was more mixed than any other participants in the study, and this is likely due to her English-learning experience. Unlike AP2 who was only taught the Korean language inside the classroom with the focus mainly on grammar, KP2 experienced and learned English uses and English users' culture where they lived. Her childhood was filled half and half with C1-Korean experiences and C2-American experiences, and this has made her a truly multicultural storyteller.

In reality, however, it is difficult and uncommon to acquire learning experiences as KP2 has acquired. In the classroom, teachers must find an appropriate substitute. The present study shows that childhood stories, especially folktales, provide useful information regarding what kind of cultural and communicational conventions are embedded in the minds of one language

group versus another. Therefore, when teaching a language, presenting a traditional folktale as a source could be very helpful, especially when students' first language and culture contrast with their target language. Teachers can direct students in an activity to help them consciously observe how meaning is conceptualized and is expected to be construed. Encouraging them to read or listen to a story and then retell it from memory could also be a way to help them actively engage in the cultural and communicational values planted in the target language. Teaching suggestions specifically for Korean language courses for American students and English language courses for Korean students can also include the cultural comparisons, based on Moran's (2001) model of cultural learning in the classroom, as represented in Figure 3.

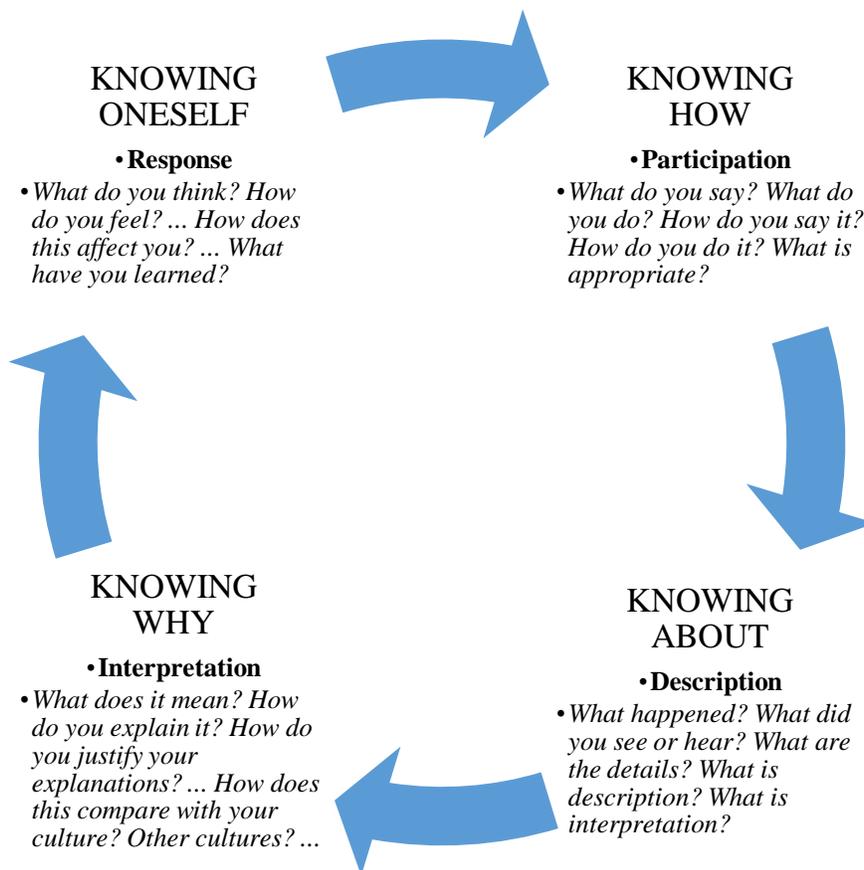


Figure 3. The four cultural knowings corresponding to the four states of the experiential cycle, presented in the form of focus questions for the culture experiences by Moran (2001, pp. 140-1).

For C1-American students learning the Korean language and culture, the following process can be considered: First, an unprepared initial exposure a Korean folktale and discussion of what students saw or heard and how they interpreted the story (KNOWING ABOUT); second, a comparison of those answers to what C1-Korean speakers would see, hear, and interpret from the same story and a discussion regarding why the students answered what they answered and why C1-Korean speakers might have answered the way they did (KNOWING WHY); third, a reflection on the differences and similarities students found in the interpretations of the stories, what they think, feel, and believe (KNOWING ONESELF); and finally, an exercise to help students recognize the different C1-Korean values and codes that are embedded in language use with another C1-Korean folktale reading/listening followed by an activity of retelling a Western folktale in the manner of Korean culture (KNOWING HOW).

For C1-Korean students learning the English language and Western/American culture, the process would look a little different since, when compared, C1-Korean students are exposed to C1-American content more often (Cho, 2019). Their cultural learning process would benefit more from starting with the “knowing how” step, during which they are instructed to create and present a story for children. This should be followed by a discussion of what they are saying through the story, how they say it, and why. The next “knowing about” step would similarly consist of exposure to a well-known Western folktale (e.g. Cinderella) but should also consist of exposure to a traditional Korean folktale at the same time so that they may notice the apparent differences, as well as similarities. C1-Korean students can then examine which of the two folktales that they analyzed their stories resemble the most. This should be then led to the “knowing why” process in which they can discuss in what ways the differences and similarities exist between the Western and traditional Korean folktales and why they think those exist, not to

mention how and why their stories are similar to one of the two. It would be a very interesting discussion if the values and codes of their stories resemble the Western folktale more than the traditional Korean. The last “knowing oneself” step would engage students to reflect on what this means for them, their language use, and cultural understanding.

This model proposed by Moran (2001) is also an “experiential cycle” (p. 140), meaning the activities suggested above does not have to be limited to the order as suggested and can lead to a new, evolved cultural learning process as well. For example, C1-Korean students may be led back from “knowing oneself” to “knowing how” by having them focus on reading and writing stories in the manner of their first culture and target culture. Likewise, C1-American students may be led back to “knowing about” from “knowing how” through an activity of exchanging the stories they have retold or rewritten with their peers and describing what they see or hear from the represented stories.

Flexibility is important in language teaching in this aspect, not only to utilize the experiential cultural learning cycle above but also to consider and implement students’ previous experiences and resulting attitudes or beliefs into their learning (Bennett, 1993; H. D. Brown, 1994). As Kim (1988, 1997, 1998) pointed out before, students of different C1s can either more or less readily learn their target culture. Instructors, therefore, should always consider “receptivity” and “ethnic group strength” in teaching language and culture and help students see their target culture, and eventually other foreign cultures, not just by their own experiences but also by the target culture’s experiences of their first culture.

CHAPTER 6: CONCLUSION

In summary, the present study which aimed to investigate the analytical stereotypes of the Western and Far Eastern cultures produced findings that on the one hand show, in the case of American and Korean cultures, the stereotyped conventions are present and that they interfere to some degree the understanding of the messages exchanged in intercultural interaction, and on the other hand also indicate that individual learning experiences vary the appearance and utilization of the conventions. The study thereby suggests how this may be connected to globalization of the cultural contents. The findings, though limited in its implications due to its being based on a small sample, show that the more culturally mixed experiences a speaker has, the more diverging from typical conventions she is in her storytelling and interpretations. Accordingly, the present study provided advice as to how the findings may be applied in language learning and teaching with the focus on the narrative genre of childhood stories with the target language learners being C1-Korean and C1-American, in fulfillment of what the study investigated. It is important to note that the research questions this study examined are cognitive and largely theoretical in nature, and hence difficult to investigate. The findings hence might not be clear and definitive, and as previously mentioned, there are limitations in the study that would need to be improved if research is to be continued. These limitations include namely the quantity and type of participants, limited qualitative information from short and infrequent interviews, and confinement to one genre of narrative.

To address these limitations, future research can benefit by including the following: First, a larger sample of participants with more varied, categorizable backgrounds (gender, age group,

field of profession, linguistic/cultural sensitivity [frequency of encounters and awareness], etc.).

The contrasts that will appear in the data regarding the cultural and communicational conventions from such a large group of participants with organized background factors can provide more definite and reliable research implications. Gender, in particular, would provide an interesting contrast with the present findings in that there are also supranational gender stereotypes that may be observed in narratives and storytelling. Second, longer and more natural and conversational interviews. More reflective questions regarding the thoughts, opinions, and feelings participants have or get from the stories they present or receive can help with cognitive analysis. Rather than being confined to the guiding questions, leading a more naturally interactive and responsive conversation with participants can provide more useful data. For example, in the case of this study, why participants have chosen the particular stories they decided to present to their imagined audience could be asked. The topics of what kind of child was imagined by participants as the audience for their presentations and how that had influenced their storytelling could also be discussed. Even further expanding it, future research can explore C1-Korean participants' interpretation of other C1-Korean participants' stories and C1-American participants' interpretation of C1-American stories. This interaction would reveal whether the conventionalized meanings are interpreted as intended by speakers of the same culture groups. An audio-recorded session of focus groups can be one way to accomplish a natural narrative exchange among participants. Lastly, further research can be done with other types of narratives to produce findings that are more relevant and applicable to modern reality. These narratives should still include self-representation, e.g., personal experience.

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APPENDICES

Appendix A: Interview Guide Questions

<INTERVIEW 1> *pre-presentation*

1. What is the most memorable fairy tale from your childhood?
 - a. What was the source of the tale? (e.g., parents, TV, book, etc.)
 - b. Why do you find it most memorable?
2. What are some things that you remember/were impressed by the most?
3. What do you think the story was about?
 - a. What was the point/message (to you)?
 - b. How was this conveyed to you?

PRESENTING A FAIRY TALE

“Could you tell a *meaningful* fairy tale to [the given neutral audience]?”

Participants can make up a fairy tale or retell one they know.

<INTERVIEW 2> *post-presentation*

1. What was the point/message of the story you were telling?
2. What are some important factors you tried to focus on?
3. What are some things that you’ve done to convey the message and the important factors of the story?

WATCHING A FAIRY TALE PRESENTATION BY THE OTHER GROUP

Participants who will have a separate, second meeting for this will be reminded of the process.

<INTERVIEW 3> *post-observation*

1. What do you think was the point/message of the story you just heard?
2. What do you think are the story’s important factors?
3. What made you think so (message and the important factors)?

Appendix B: IRB Certificate



Completion Date 14-Oct-2018
Expiration Date 13-Oct-2021
Record ID 26234368

This is to certify that:

Moon Yang

Has completed the following CITI Program course:

Human Research (Curriculum Group)
Non-Medical Investigators (Course Learner Group)
1 - Basic Course (Stage)

Under requirements set by:

University of Alabama



Verify at www.citiprogram.org/verify/?w1fce5a81-aada-44a8-800c-5eed6cb2848-26234368

Appendix C: IRB Approval Letter



May 13, 2019

Moon Young Yang
Department of English
College of Arts & Sciences
The University of Alabama
Box 870244

Re: IRB # EX-19-CM-075 "Cultural Language of Fairy Tales: L1-Korean-L2-English and L1-American-English"

Dear Ms. Yang:

The University of Alabama Institutional Review Board has granted approval for your proposed research. Your protocol has been given exempt approval according to 45 CFR part 46.104(d)(2) & (3) as outlined below:

(2) Research that only includes interactions involving educational tests (cognitive, diagnostic, aptitude, achievement), survey procedures, interview procedures, or observation of public behavior (including visual or auditory recording) if at least one of the following criteria is met: (iii) The information obtained is recorded by the investigator in such a manner that the identity of the human subjects can readily be ascertained, directly or through identifiers linked to the subjects, and an IRB conducts a limited IRB review to make the determination required by §46.111(a)(7).

(3)(i) Research involving benign behavioral interventions in conjunction with the collection of information from an adult subject through verbal or written responses (including data entry) or audiovisual recording if the subject prospectively agrees to the intervention and information collection and at least one of the following criteria is met: (C) The information obtained is recorded by the investigator in such a manner that the identity of the human subjects can readily be ascertained, directly or through identifiers linked to the subjects, and an IRB conducts a limited IRB review to make the determination required by §46.111(a)(7).

The approval for your application will lapse on May 12, 2020. If your research will continue beyond this date, please submit the annual report to the IRB as required by University policy before the lapse. Please note, any modifications made in research design, methodology, or procedures must be submitted to and approved by the IRB before implementation. Please submit a final report form when the study is complete.

Please use reproductions of the IRB approved informed consent form to obtain consent from your participants.

Good luck with your research.

Sincerely,

Appendix D: Informed Consent Form

University of Alabama Informed Consent for a Research Study

Cultural Language of Fairy Tales: L1-Korean-L2-English and L1-American-English

You are being asked to participate in a research study. This study is called “Cultural Language of Fairy Tales: L1-Korean-L2-English and L1-American-English.” The study is being done by Moon Young Yang under the supervision of Dr. Catherine Davies and Dr. Dilin Liu, who are professors of applied linguistics at The University of Alabama. You will be video and audio recorded by Moon Young Yang. Only if you allow it, your material will be included in the research report.

Ms. Yang is not receiving any funding for this research, is not developing a product that will be sold, and will not profit in any way from this research. She also has no conflict of interest in this study.

What is this study about? This study is about cultural differences in meaning conceptualization and construal. The goal of the study is to investigate how languages based in different cultures can vary in their way of conceptualizing meaning in children’s fairy tales and how this may affect the speakers of those languages later construe meaning from speakers of other languages.

Why is this study important—What good will the results do? The findings from the study will be important because they can provide more information regarding how speakers with varied cultural and linguistic backgrounds may differ in their interpretation or understanding when listening to a meaningful story such as fairy tales. Such information, in turn, can be useful in language teaching as it will reveal not only types of meaning but also types of linguistic devices expected or valued (and hence preferred) by language learners as they evaluate a story they hear.

Why have I been asked to take part in this study? You have been asked to be in this study because you responded to the recruitment advertisement, expressed interest in participating in this study knowing its video recording process, and meet the requirement of being either a native Korean speaker between the ages of 19-40 who was raised in Korea as a child and is currently studying English as a second language *or* a native English speaker between the ages of 19-40.

How many people besides me will be in this study? About 6-10 people will participate in this study.

What will I be asked to do in this study? If you meet the criteria and agree to be in this study, you will be asked to do the following:

- Participate in an interview about your childhood fairy tale.
- Present a meaningful fairy tale of your own to a neutral audience. The presentation will be video-recorded, and after the presentation, there will be another interview about your intended meaning and means of its conveyance in the fairy tale.

- Watch a fairy tale presentation by another speaker. There will be a third and last interview concerning your interpretation of the presented fairy tale's meaning and the presenter's means of conveying that meaning. This means that, in turn, your presentation will be shown to at least one other participant as well.

How much time will I spend being in this study? Each interview should take less than 10 minutes, but the entire study will take anywhere from 30 minutes to several hours, depending on how much you would like to talk and how long your fairy tale presentation will be.

Will I be paid for being in this study? You will not be paid for being in this study, but, if you wish, you will be provided with a copy of any video recording that is made of you alone.

Will being in this study cost me anything? There will be no cost to you except for your time.

Can the researcher take me out of this study? The investigators may take you out of the study if they feel that the study is upsetting you, or something happens that means you no longer meet the study requirements. However, this is highly unlikely.

What are the benefits (good things) that may happen to me if I am in this study? If you wish, you will be provided with a copy of the video and audio recording of you alone. You will also have the satisfaction of knowing that you have contributed to information and educational development regarding the possible differences in meaning conceptualization and construal between the native speakers of Korean and English.

What are the benefits to scientists or society? This study may help researchers learn more about how meaning conceptualization and construal are operated in different languages and cultures, which is crucial in cross-cultural communication. This study could also help language teachers and students to become aware of linguistic and cultural backgrounds.

What are the risks (dangers or harm) to me if I am in this study? The only risk during data collection would be a possible initial discomfort while you are getting used to being recorded, before you forget about the camera, or sharing a personal experience. If, after we have finished recording, you realized that you have said some things that you do not want to be included, you may ask for any part of the recording to be excluded from release, and you have the right to decide to discontinue participation at any time.

How will my privacy be protected? Your privacy will be maintained throughout this study. This means that you can choose to delete or not record any portion of your interview or fairy tale presentation. Your privacy will further be protected by conducting the interviews in a private room, but you will also be allowed to choose your own place and time for the interview. You can refuse to answer any question that you do not want to answer. However, the investigator must report any signs of spousal, child, or elder abuse to the police. This would force the participant to be in contact with the police or protective services.

How will my confidentiality be protected? What will happen to the information the study keeps on me? As a part of the research process, the video and audio recording of your fairy tale presentation will be shown to at least one other participant in the study so that his or her response

to another speaker's meaning conceptualization can be observed. Consequently, complete confidentiality of your participation cannot be guaranteed. However, it will be disclosed *only* with your permission or as required by law.

Any other information that is obtained in connection with this study and that can identify you will remain confidential in the report. All consent forms and recordings will be stored digitally in a locked and password-protected environment supervised by Moon Young Yang.

Non-identifying (unless you choose to have your name revealed) excerpts of recordings will be transcribed, analyzed, and reported by Moon Young Yang. You will have the right at any time to review the recordings and transcriptions at any time. All recordings will be transcribed within twelve months after the recordings are made and all tapes will be deleted from storage following transcription. Throughout this process, the data will be maintained in confidentiality by means of coding procedures that will eliminate any identifying information.

Moon Young Yang will keep control of the data and make it available both for outside researchers and for UA student and faculty research as appropriate. The choices you make below will determine how any recordings be played during presentations, in class, or retained on the website.

The University of Alabama Institutional Review Board (IRB) is the committee that protects the rights of people in research studies. The IRB may review study records from time to time to be sure that people in research studies are being treated fairly and that the study is being carried out as planned.

What are the alternatives to being in this study? Do I have other choices? The alternative/other choice is not to participate.

What are my rights as a participant? Taking part in this study is voluntary—it is your free choice. You may choose not to take part at all. If you start the study, you can stop at any time. Leaving the study will not result in any penalty or loss of any benefits you would otherwise receive.

Who do I call if I have questions or problems?

If you have questions, concerns, or complaints about the study right now, please ask them. If you have questions, concerns, or complaints about the study later on, please call the investigator Moon Young Yang at +1 (205) 500 – 1048 or email myang19@crimson.ua.edu. You may also contact the investigator's UA faculty advisor, Dr. Catherine Davies through cdavies@ua.edu if you have any questions. If you have questions about your rights as a person in a research study, call Ms. Tanta Myles, the Research Compliance Officer of the University, at 205-348-8461 or toll-free at 1-877-820-3066.

You may also ask questions, make suggestions, or file complaints and concerns through the IRB Outreach website at <http://ovpred.ua.edu/research-compliance/prco/> or email the Research Compliance office at rscpliance@research.ua.edu.

After you participate, you are encouraged to complete the survey for research participants that is online at the outreach website or you may ask the investigator for a copy of it and mail it to the University Office for Research Compliance, Box 870127, 358 Rose Administration Building, Tuscaloosa, AL 35487-0127.

I have read this consent form. The study has been explained to me. I understand what I will be asked to do. I freely agree to take part in it. I understand that part of my participation in this research study will be audio/video recorded and I give my permission to the research team to record the interviews. I will receive a copy of this consent form to keep.

Options

Will you allow video [and audio] file(s) of your fairy tale presentation to be used for research and teaching purposes? These files will be held permanently.

YES _____ NO _____

If you are willing to allow your recording to be used, you have the following choices:

Would you like a personal copy of any recording(s) of you alone?

YES _____ NO _____

Would you like to participate under your own name?

YES _____ NO _____

Would you like us to use software that masks your voice?

YES _____ NO _____

Would you like us to use software that masks your face?

YES _____ NO _____

Participating in Future Research Studies

We would like to contact you in the future to see if you would be interested in participating in another research study (or for additional information about the current study). Please indicate below if you are willing to be contacted about any future research studies.

Are you willing to be contacted about future research studies?

YES _____ NO _____

Contact information

PRINT NAME: _____

Signature of Research Participant

Date

PRINT NAME: _____

Investigator

Date