Self-referencing and advertising effectiveness: The influence of ad

model ethnicity, cultural cues and acculturation level

A THESIS SUBMITTED TO THE FACULTY OF THE

GRADUATE SCHOOL OF THE UNIVERSITY OF

MINNESOTA BY

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IN PARTIAL FULFILLMENT OF THE REQUIREMENTS FOR

THE DEGREE OF

MASTER OF ARTS

Adviser: Dr. Jennifer Ball

March 2015

Acknowledgements

As I am not sure whether I will have any other opportunities to express my gratitude in my work officially in the future. I would like to thank many people who have been supporting me either academically or emotionally all the time.

First, I would like to thank my advisor, Dr. Jennifer Ball, who provided me with valuable insights and recommendations on my thesis. I would like to thank my two other committee members, Dr. Eighmey and Dr. Troelli, who provided me with the insightful comments and expertise in cultural studies in advertising. In addition, I would like to thank International Student Scholar Services at University of Minnesota, who helped me send the survey to the potential participants via email.

Finally, I would like to thank my mother for her unconditional love and support on everything in my life, encouraging me to pursue my dream and follow my heart. I would like to thank my father for supporting me to pursue my master study. I believe that you must feel proud of me and you are always with me. Also, I would like to thank my boyfriend for his love, support and companion all the time.

Xiaoyan Liu

March 2015

Abstract

Asian minorities' market attracts more and more attentions from scholars and advertisers today. This study investigated the effect of the race of ad characters, cultural cues featured in the advertising and acculturation level on the attitudes toward the advertising and brand among Asian minorities. Additionally, this study explored the self-referencing as a mediating role between the effects of the race of ad characters and cultural cues and the attitudes toward the advertising and brand.

A 2 (Asian characters vs. white characters) by 2 (Asian cultural background scenario vs. American cultural background scenario) by 2 (low acculturated vs. high acculturated) between-subjects factorial design was employed to test the hypotheses. The results indicated that the congruent advertising condition activated more self-referencing and were more favored by the Asian minorities than the incongruent advertising condition. In addition, when exposed to an ad featuring American cultural cues, minorities with high acculturation level activated a higher self-referencing level than the minorities with low acculturation level. Moreover, self-referencing mediated the effect of the model ethnicity and cultural cues on attitude to the advertising and brand.

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Chapter I: INTRODUCTION

Today, multicultural markets start to attract more and more attentions from the

marketers and advertisers due to the growth of ethnic minority population and their

proved substantial buying power. According to the 2012 Census Bureau, the nonwhite

population increased by 1.9% to 116 million, accounting for 37% of the US population.

In addition, 49.9% of the population of children under age 5 belongs to ethnic minorities

groups. By 2045, the population of ethnic minorities would exceed the white majorities

(Census.gov). In addition to the growth of population, ethnic minorities have proven their

substantial buying power. The Selig Center in the Multicultural Economy 2013 Report

indicated that 15.1% of the nation's totally buying power was contributed by the ethnic

minorities including African Americans, Asians, and Native Americas in 2013. The

combined buying power of these ethnic minorities would rise to $2.4 trillion in 2018,

accounting for 15.9% of the nation's total buying power.

The explosive surge of ethnic minority population and their significant buying

power make marketers and advertisers realize the importance to appeal to ethnic

consumers by employing effective marketing and advertising strategies. Many marketers

and psychologists argued that the previous general market strategy employing the

majority cultural cues (Caucasians in the US) and cultural values to attract the audience is

not as effective as the ethnic focused market strategy (La Ferle and Lee, 2005). More

complex marketing strategies in terms of diverse cultures were needed to appeal to ethnic

consumers. One possible reason to explain this is that United States is no longer a

"melting pot", where immigrants have to assimilate themselves to the American culture

entirely in order to adapt to the society in the United States. Because of the growth of

ethnic minorities population and the emerging ethnic communities such as Chinatown

and Korean town, ethnic minorities didn't have to abandon their cultural heritage to

acclimate to the majority society. More and more ethnic minorities maintained their

cultural heritage, resulting in the more ethnically diverse society in the United States

（Berry, 1970, 2003). Accordingly, the heritage cultural cues embedded in the

advertising might be more attractive and sympathized for ethnic minorities (La Ferle and

Lee, 2005).

Given this phenomenon, some marketers and advertisers initiated to employ

multicultural marketing and advertising strategies by various methods. For example,

McDonald had been a pioneer of ethnic advertising since the 1960s with Hispanics

characters and Spanish used in the ad as advertising strategy. J.C. Penny offered

cosmetics for women with color spokesperson to appeal to attract blacks and Hispanic

consumers (Ag Marketing Research Center, 2010). In terms of Indian American targeted

ads, New York Life, Metlife, State Farm and Nationwide placed their ads on Indian

American print and online media. For the content, they employed "tropes of home, family life, traditional festivals, pastoral village life" to generate message (Madhavi, M., 2010).

In addition to the marketers, numerous psychologists and advertising researchers have growing interest in the impact of ethnic advertising on ethnic minorities groups and the majority groups. Most of the studies examined how people responded to the race of ad character(s) and the associated advertisements and brands. It was predicated that the same ethnic spokesperson could stimulate the ethnic salience due to the distinctiveness theory (McGuire, 1994) and social identification theory (Tajfel & Turner, 1985). Then, according to in-group bias theory (Brewer, 1979), people would more favor the individuals who shared similar characteristics with them such as the same ethnic identity. Accordingly, the consistent results from the ethnic advertising studies demonstrated that ethnic minorities groups would respond more favorably toward the same ethnic spokesperson than Caucasian spokesperson, leading to more positive attitude to the advertisement and brand. The relevant theories including distinctiveness theory, social identification theory, and in-group bias theory will be further illustrated in the next chapter.

With the distinctiveness theory, social identification and in-group bias theory as the basis, some other scholars also employed information-processing related theory such as self-referencing theory to explain the positive impact of the same ethnic spokesperson

on ethnic minorities (eg. Martin et al., 2004). Self-referencing is defined as an information processing strategy by relating the message to some aspects of themselves (Burnkrant & Unnava, 1989,1995). Many psychologists and advertisers have found that self-referencing leaded to better recall of the message than other information processing strategy such as such as semantic, structural and phonemic task (Roger et al. 1997). Martin et al. (2004) found that Asian ethnic minorities would have higher self-referencing level when exposed to Asian spokesperson in the ad and the higher self-referencing leads to more positive attitude toward the advertisements. More details about self-referencing and advertising will be discussed in the next chapters.

As more and more advertisers employed ethnic ad spokesperson in the advertising as a strategy to target the ethnic minorities (Appiah & Liu, 2009), some others asserted that the strategy of simply featuring ethnic ad spokesperson in the advertisement was not that effective (Appiah 2003, 2004a, 2004b; Forehand and Deshpande, 2001) because there were too many such type of advertising, making ethnic spokesperson less distinct and could hardly stimulate the ethnic salience (Appiah & Liu, 2009). With this fact in mind, some scholars argued that more rich cultural cues such as symbols, traditions, material subjects, and cultural settings drawn from their cultural heritage background were more effective to target ethnic minorities because they were more able to be identified with the message or scenario presented in the ad (Appiah & Liu, 2009).

Although there is a wealth of research studying the impact of the race of ad spokesperson featured in the advertisement, there are few studies examining the impact of the cross combination of ad model ethnicity and cultural cues on ethnic minority groups. Brumbaugh (2002) designed a 2 (ad characteristics: White vs. Blacks) by 2 (background: American vs. Blacks) experiment to study the influence of ad characteristics and cultural cues on African Americans and American majorities. In this study, the author assumed that all African Americans were bicultural oriented, familiar with both the majority culture and African American subculture very well. It is reasonable because for most of the African Americans are at least second or third generations. However, it may be not the same story for other ethnic minorities. For example, 67% of Asian Americans are foreign born (US Census, intertrend.com) so that focusing Asian minorities as a homogeneous group will probably damage the validity of the results.

In fact, many researchers found that the impact of ethnic advertising was really complex within ethnic minorities (Anne-Sophie et al., 2013) due to the different strengths of ethnic identity, generation statuses, and acculturation levels. Acculturation is defined as a process of socializing to the majority culture by contacting with the host culture both directly and indirectly (Lee, 1993; Stephenson, 2000). Due to the different motivations and abilities to acculturate, different immigrants exhibit various acculturation levels. A

lot of studies have found that during the acculturation process, individuals would change their culture norms, values, traditions, leading to the change of their cognitions, emotions and behaviors (Lee, W.N., 1993; Gordon, M.M., 1964; Berry, 2003, 2005). Many advertisers examined how different acculturation levels would influence ethnic minorities' responses to the advertising. However, the results were inconsistent. In our study, we propose that the levels of acculturation will influence cognitive and emotional response to the cross-combinations of the ad model ethnicity and cultural cues among ethnic minorities. It is likely that ethnic individuals with higher acculturation level are more able to emphasize with the American cultural cues than individuals with lower acculturation level because higher acculturated minorities are more accessible to the American cultural cues memories. Acculturation and ethnic advertising will be further talked about in the next chapter.

In this paper, we are focusing on Asian ethnic minorities due to the growth of Asian population and the significant buying power of Asian minorities. According to the 2012 Census Bureau, Asian was the nation's fastest growing ethnic group in 2012, with an increase in population by 530,000 or 2.9 percent in the preceding year to 18.9 million. The Census Bureau also estimated that more than 60% of the growth accounted by the international migration (Census Bureau. gov, 2012). Besides the fastest growing of population, Asian ethnic minorities proved their substantial buying power. According to

the Nielson report, titled "Significant, Sophisticated and Savvy: the Asian American Consumer 2013", Asian American buying power is estimated to reach $1 trillion by 2017. An average of expense of an Asian American household is $61,400 in 2012, "nearly 20% higher than the general household ($51,400) (Han, 2014, Nielson report, 2013).

Because of the enormous growth of population, their significant buying power and the typical feature of migration, it is imperative for marketers and scholars to explore how to attract Asian ethnic minorities more effectively. Consistent with the literature for the general ethnic minorities, most of the existing literature discussed the influence of Asian ad character(s) on the Asian ethnic minorities. There are few studies about how the cross combinations of the race of the ad characters and cultural cues will influence Asian minorities' cognitive and emotional response to the advertising, and how the levels of acculturation will influence the different response to the advertising among Asian minorities.

Thus, the objective of this research is two fold. First, we want to study the effect of the race of ad characters, cultural cues featured in the advertising and acculturation level on attitudes and memories of ad among immigrants. Second, we aim to explore the self-referencing as a mediating role between the effects of the race of ad characters, cultural cues and acculturation level on the attitudes, memory to the advertising and brand.

The next chapter provides literature review, starting from the background of ethnic advertising, followed by the discussion of previous studies of self-referencing effect in advertising contexts, which has provided theoretical foundation for the research. Last but not the least, another independent variable acculturation and previous studies of acculturation and advertising has been introduced. Then, the in-depth literature review leads to the theoretical hypotheses and research questions depicted in Chapter 3. Methodology to examine the hypothesis and research question is in Chapter 4 and Chapter 5 discusses the results and analysis of the data. Then, Chapter 6 presents the conclusions and recommendations for the scholars and practitioners.

Chapter II: Literature Review

This proposed study examined how Asian minorities with different acculturation level responded both cognitively and emotionally to the race of models and cultural cues in advertising in terms of attitude toward the advertising and brand. Additionally, this study also tested the underlying psychological mechanisms by testing whether self-referencing would mediate different culturally embedded advertising's impact on Asian minorities.

As in this case, this chapter starts from discussing some previous research about ethnic advertising including the elements studied in the ethnic advertising (eg. the race of the model, ethnic language use, cultural symbols), ethnic advertising's impact on target and non-target audience along with the theoretical frameworks proved in these studies. Next, the chapter proceeds to review the perceived mediating variable "Self-Referencing" and previous studies regarding self-referencing and advertising effect. Finally, this chapter discusses another independent variable that might moderate the effect of culturally embedded advertising: acculturation level along with previous advertising research related to acculturation level. A summary leading to the proposed hypotheses is included in the end.

Previous studies on Ethnic Advertising

As United States has become more and more ethnically diverse society, many US marketers realized the importance of ethnic segments and wondered whether the ethnic targeting was needed (Burgos, D. n.d.). Also, advertising is always seen an essential strategy for segmentation marketing, thus many advertisers and scholars have been showing great interest in ethnic advertising for attracting ethnic segments.

To understand how target audience and non-target audience would respond to ethnic advertising, numerous scholars proceeded to conduct experiments to study the ethnic advertising's impact (see Whittler, 1989; Qualls & Moore, 1990; Forehand & Deshrpahde, 2003; Appiah & Liu, 2009). Most of the empirical studies focused on ethnic spokesperson featured in the ad and found that ethnic minorities had more favorable thoughts to the same ethnicity ad spokesperson along with the advertisement and brand associated.

Although some of the early experimental studies didn't explain why this phenomenon happened, later, various underlying psychological mechanisms were employed to illustrate the phenomenon. The most widely used and based theoretical framework is in-group bias theory (see Qualls & Moore, 1990; Green, 1999). According to in-group bias theory, people have more favoritism to in-group members than out-group members, and the in-group bias leads to more favoritism to in-group members than the

hostility to out-group members (Brewer, 1979). The in-group bias theory argued that

individuals tended to evaluate other people based on their knowledge of the members of

their own group as well as pre-existing biases to the out-group members when the other

information was absent. Hence, with in-group bias theory as theoretical framework, many

advertising researchers examined the impact of the race of the ad spokesperson on target

and non-target audience, finding that audience would evaluate the same ethnic

spokesperson more positively, leading to more positive attitudes to the ad and brand. For

example, Qualls & Moore (1990) tested the influence of the race of actors in the ad with

in-group bias theory. Results indicated that white observers would evaluate white actors

(in-group) more positively than they would black actors (out-group). Black observers

viewing ads featuring black actors (in-group) evaluated them more favorably than they

did ads with white actors (out-group) only for the high socioeconomic (positive)

condition.

However, some other studies suggested that there was little or no difference in

terms of attitudes towards the ad featuring white spokesperson or ethnicity spokesperson

among White majorities, while for ethnic minorities, they activated more favorable

thoughts toward the ad featuring the same ethnicity spokesperson than the ad with the

White spokesperson (Whittler, 1989; Qualls & Moore,1990; Morimoto et. al., 2008).

This phenomenon has been explained by distinctiveness theory (McGuire, 1994) and

social identification theory (Tajfel & Turner, 1985). Distinctiveness theory (McGuire, 1994) posits that one's distinctive or unique characteristic in one social context would be more important than other common traits. In one study, McGuire et al. (1978) asked participants to respond to "Tell us about yourself" question and found that ethnicity was salient in the self-concept when individual's ethnic group was in the minority group. Social identification theory (Taijfel & Turner, 1985) argues that people's self-concept originates from social-self identity, which is used to categorize themselves as a social group. From this viewpoint, it is predicted that when ethnic minorities are exposed to the ad embedded with ethnic cultural cues such as ethnic characters or cultural symbols, their ethnic identity will be activated and such identity will be considered as an element to categorize themselves to the social groups different from the majority groups. Then, based on in-group bias theory that people have more favoritism the in group individuals than out group ones, ethnic minorities would respond more positively to the ethnic characters and ethnic culturally embedded ads.

Many different factors such as numeric minority, social status was also found to stimulate the ethnic distinctiveness. A lot of experiments demonstrated that numeric minority in a social context would activate ethnic salience for ethnic minorities, activating more favorable thoughts towards the same ethnicity spokesperson and ad featuring the same ethnicity spokesperson based on social identification theory. For

example, Deshpande & Stayman (1994) examined distinctive theory in an advertising

context. In the experiment study, the author conducted 2 (ad spokesperson)* 2 (social

reference) * 2 (ethnicity) factorial design. Results shown that ethnic minorities had more

ethnic salience when they were exposed to the same ethnicity ad spokesperson, relative to

the ethnic majority groups, leading to more trustworthy to the same ethnicity ad

spokesperson and more positive attitude toward the advertising and brand featuring the

same ethnic ad spokesperson (Forehand & Deshrpandé, 2003; Grier et al. 1999; Grier et

al., 2001).

In addition to the numerical minorities status, many scholars argued and

demonstrated that some other factors such as social status/power and social stigma would

also stimulate customer distinctiveness (Grier & Brumbaugh, 1999; Grier & Deshpande,

2001). Tajfel (1998) demonstrated that numeric, economic, social and cultural factors

would affect the group distinctiveness. In Grier & Deshpande's study, the authors

conducted the research in South Africa context where the White is numeric minority but

hold a greater social status. The design of the experiment involved a 2 (Subject Race:

black or white) * 2 (Subject City: Johannesburg (blacks as numeric majority) or Cape

Town (white as numeric majority) * 2 (Ad Spokesperson Race: black or white) between

subjects factorial design. The two stimuli printing ads were identical except the race of

the spokesperson. Results showed that the numeric minorities activated higher ethnic

salience than the numeric majorities. In addition, individuals who perceived higher

difference of social status between their own ethnic group and another ethnic group and

people who considered their group as lower social status had higher ethnic salience

regardless of their numeric status. Results indicated that both numeric minorities, and

perceived difference of social status as lower social status of their group would make

ethnic more salient and had more favorable evaluations to the advertising and advertised

brand with the same ethnic spokesperson.

With the in-group bias theory and distinctiveness theory as basis, some scholars

used information-processing based theory as theoretical frameworks for ethnic

advertising impact including Elaboration Likelihood Model (Petty and Cacioppo, 1986,

see Whittler, 1989; Whittler,& Dimeo, 1991, White and Harkins, 1994, Whittler, T.E,

Spiral, J.S. 2002). Elaboration Likelihood Model (Petty and Cacioppo, 1986) argued that

there were dual routes - central route and peripheral route - to persuasion. Under central

route, individuals usually engage in more systematic information processing and needed

more cognitive effort than peripheral route. The strength of message arguments

influences the persuasion. While under a peripheral route, individuals does not involve in

systematic information processing, regardless of the strength of message, some peripheral

cues functioned as simple rule might direct the attitude towards the ad directly. In this

situation, the simple decision rules must be available and accessible to become the

reliable basis for judgment (Whittler & Spiral, 2002). For example, only when an

individual acknowledges the celebrity and trust him or her, the celebrity as a

spokesperson featured in the advertising can serve as a peripheral cue that makes the

person apply simple rule and direct the positive attitude to the advertising directly. In

addition to the systematic information processing and simple rule, some other variables

also "affect attitude change by influencing the extent or direction of elaboration"

(Whittler & Spira, 2002, p.92). For example, some variables motivated ad recipients to

elaborate the message or engendered bias thinking (Whittler & Spira, 2002.) It was

argued that when the variables stimulated the biased message processing, individuals

might be more able to generate positive (versus negative) thoughts about the issue

regardless of the strength of argument. For example, Whittler & Spira (2002) conducted

an experiment, indicating that Black model's race motivated Blacks, particularly those

with higher identification with the blacks, to process the message in a biased manner. In

particular, the Black (versus White) model race positively influenced the Black

participants' thoughts about the product, which in turn yielded more favorable product

evaluations. The findings suggested that Blacks appeared to engage in biased systematic

processing (not simple cue processing) when exposed to Black models in advertising

messages.

　　　　Another information processing-based theory as theoretical framework examined

by some scholars to explain the race of model's influence is self-referencing theory. Self-referencing is seen as an information-processing strategy, which will relate some of the stimuli as aspects of the self such as ethnicity (Burnkrant & Unnava, 1989,1995). However, the precondition for the activation of the self-referencing for ethnic minorities is to activate self salience (spontaneous self-concept in ethnicity dimension) (Martin et al., 2004).

Many studies have found that the model ethnicity could stimulate the ethnic salience and self-referencing subsequently. For example, Martin et al. (2004) and Lee et al. (2002) found that ad featuring Asian spokesperson activated higher self-referencing level and self-referencing level produced more favorable attitudes toward the ad spokesperson, the ad and the brand.

In addition to the race of the model as ethnic cues in ethnic advertising, many studies have demonstrated that many other ethnic cultural cues could also activate the ethnicity salience/identification (spontaneous self-concept in ethnicity dimension). In the study of Forehand & Deshpandé (2002), they attempted to employ materials embedded with different cultural cues to show to the audience before they were shown the advertising with ethnic model. The cultural symbols used as ethnic primes were the Great Wall of China to represent an Asian ethnic prime while Big Ben, the clock tower, was the Caucasian prime. In their another study (2002), the authors manipulated the ethnic prime

condition in an airline flyer by writing "Flying to Asia" versus "Flying to Europe" as headline, and the Great Wall of China and Big Ben as the photo inside the prime ad. After they were shown to the prime ad, they were shown with two another print IBM ad featured an Asian man or a Caucasian man. Both studies have shown that ethnic minorities expressed higher ethnic identification under Asian ethnic prime condition. It is found that the Asian identity prime boosted identity salience among both Asian and Caucasian participants, however, the Caucasian identity prime did not improve the identity salience for either Asian or Caucasian participants. Asians with both primed identity and social distinctiveness had more favorable thoughts to the Asian spokesperson and more cognitive thoughts to Asian targeted advertising than Caucasian targeted advertising, but no more positive evaluations to Asian targeted advertising.

Forehand et al. (2002) demonstrated that ethnic cultural cues could stimulate identity salience successfully, but it did not test how people responded to these ethnic cultural cues such as cultural symbols directly. To further study the impact of ethnic advertising, some studies studied how the combination of the race of characters and other cultural cue such as cultural symbol, language use and cultural background scenario in the ad. For example, Appiah (2001) conducted a 2 (Blacks characters v.s. White characters) by 2 (degree of culturally embeddedness: high vs. low) experiment to examine how Black, White, Hispanic and Asian adolescents' responded to culturally

embedded advertising. In that study, the degree of the culturally embeddedness was "digitally manipulated by the race of characters in ads and numbers of race-specific cultural cues in the ads while maintaining all other visual features of these ads" (p.29). For example, black characters with low level of culturally embeddedness included few cultural cues other than the race of character, while more cultural cues other than the race of character such as Black family portrays were embedded in the high degree of culturally embedded advertising featuring black characters. Results indicated that Black teenagers were more likely to emphasize with the black characters and Blacks, Whites, Hispanics, and Asians more favored the ad featuring black characters than white characters regardless of the degree of culturally embeddedness. Appiah & Liu (2009) conducted a similar experimental study on Asian Americans. Contrast to the results indicated in Appiah (2001)'s study, results suggested that Asian Americans responded more favorably toward higher level of culturally embedded advertisement than lower culturally embedded advertising, whereas white characters, regardless of the level of culturally embeddednes, activated the similar positive attitude with the level of positive attitude generated by higher level of culturally embedded ad for Asian Americans

Different from the studies of Appiah (2001) and Appiah & Liu (2009) that only examine the impact of the congruent advertising in terms of the model ethnicity and cultural cues (Black characters with Black cultural cues; White characters with White

cultural cues), Brumbaugh (2002) conducted a 2 (race of the ad characteristics: Black *

White) by 2 (cultural scenarios: Black cultural background* White cultural background)

experiment to test the cross combination of the race of the ad characteristics (source cues)

and cultural settings (non-source cues) in advertising's effect on the activation of cultural

and subcultural knowledge on route to persuasion. They had four different advertising

conditions: Black characters with Black cultural background; Black characters with

White cultural background; White characters with Black cultural background, Caucasians

characters with White cultural background. The author argued and demonstrated that

source cues (the race of the model) would dominate to activate the cultural schemas

irrespective of the non-source cultural cues. Results suggested that Black sources (the

race of the model) stimulated subcultural models more strongly than white sources for

black participants overall and it is stronger when black sources (the race of the model) are

paired with black non-source cues (cultural cues). That is to say, the black characters

would stimulate the heritage cultural schemas for black participants no matter whether

the black characters was paired with White cultural background or Black cultural

background. Moreover, with the use of Black characters and Black cultural cues, the ad

was the most favored by participants irrespective of the race of the viewers.

Another line of research in ethnic advertising is the effect of the strength of ethnic

identification (see Whittler & Spira, 2002) and acculturation level (see Morimoto, 2012;

Ueltschy & Krampf, 1997) on the attitude to the advertising. The strength of ethnic

identification is defined as the degree of affiliation to an individual's own ethnic culture

heritage regardless of whether they preserve their original culture (Grier & Deshpande,

1999). People with higher ethnic identification are more likely to categorize the same

ethnic characters as their own group. Therefore, it is predicted that ethnic minorities with

higher ethnic identification possess more positive attitude toward the advertising

featuring the same ethnic characters than the lower ethnic identification. However,

studies showed no consistency of the impact of the strength of identification on the

favorability of the ethnic advertising. For example, Whittler & Spira (2002) found that

only among Blacks with higher identification with Blacks perceived blacks ad

spokesperson more similar than white models. For those who had low identification with

Blacks, there was no difference of perceived similarity towards black spokesperson and

white spokesperson. Consistent with the results, Green (1999) conducted an experimental

design and found that strong ethnic identifiers generally had more favorable attitudes to

the ads featuring African-Americans with positions of dominance in racially targeted

media, while weak ethnic identifiers more favored the ads featuring whites in positions of

dominance and are placed in non-targeted media. While Morimoto et al. (2008) found

that no significant difference of attitude toward the Asian spokesperson, the ad featuring

Asian ad models and brand was found for the level of ethnic identification.

In terms of acculturation, acculturation is defined as the process of learning the mainstream culture including cultural practice, cultural norms, cultural values and cultural identity by contacting with the mainstream culture directly or indirectly (Lee, W.N., 1993; Stephenson, M., 2000). It is said that the ethnic identity was a component of acculturation (Berry, 1980). The degree of acculturation would influence the attitude toward the ethnic advertising and the majority of advertising because of the various comprehensibility of the advertising driven by the different experiences in the heritage and host culture (see Tsai & Li, 2012; Khairullah et al., 1999; Morimoto, 2012). For example, Morimoto et al. (2012) found that the level of acculturation influenced the perceived attractiveness of the ad spokesperson. Particularly, "the less Asian Americans were acculturated, the more attractive they perceived Asian models." (p.268). For less acculturated Asian Americans, the participants viewed Asian models as more trustworthy than Caucasian models. Acculturation and the relationship between acculturation level and advertising is discussed later in this chapter.

Self-Referencing

Self-referencing is considered as an information processing strategy and it occurs when information is processed by relating it to aspects of oneself (Burnkrant & Unnava, 1989,1995).

Self-referencing was first studied in the field of psychology and was found to be a

rich and powerful encoding process, leading to deep information processing and greater

recall of the words and phrases (Bellezza, 1984; Brown, Keenan & Potts, 1986; Klein &

Loftus 1988, Rogers et al.,1977). In Roger et al. (1997), participants were guided to

process words or phrases under different information processing tasks including

self-reference, semantic, structural and phonemic task. Under self-reference task,

participants were instructed to relate the words or phrases to some aspects of themselves.

Results indicated that self-referencing leaded to greater recall than other information

processing tasks, which was consistent with other studies.

One possible explanation for these results is that the self is highly rich,

systematized, complicated and readily available memory structures (Greenwald and

Banaji, 1989). So the activation of memory constructs associated with the self when

processing the incoming information could enhance the elaboration of the information

and facilitate the retrieval of the information from memory (Anderson & Reder, 1979;

Brown et al., 1986; Burnkrant & Unnava, 1995).

Given the findings that self-referencing could affect memory and information

processing, many advertising researchers proceeded to study self-referencing effect on

the persuasion of the advertising in commercial context. Most of the studies prompted the

readers to relate the advertising message to themselves by employing specific visual

strategies or language wording in the advertisement because studies found that

second-person wording (eg. you remember you used shampoo) would encourage readers

to prompt self-referent thoughts versus third-person or first-person wording (see,

Burnkrant & Unnava, 1989; Meyers-Levy & Peracchio, 1996; Sujan et al., 1992). In

terms of visual strategy, some studies designed the scene in the ad photo from the actor

perspective that could prompt self-reference processing versus from the detached looker

angle (Meyers-Levy & Perachio, 1996).

In addition to utilizing the visual and language strategies, some advertising

researchers argued that the rich advertising context ---some dimensions of the characters

(eg. gender, ethnicity) or the situations (slice-of-life) portrayed in the ad could

spontaneously encourage the readers to relate the ad to some aspects of the self (see.

Debevec and Iyer, 1988; Baumagartner and Sujan, 1992). For example, Debevec and Iyer

(1988) found that the sex-roles of the character in the ad combined with the situation in

which they use the product would activate different levels of self-referencing and the

activation of higher levels of self-referencing leaded to more positive attitudes and

cognitive responses.

Regarding the extent to which the self-referencing would be encouraged by the

visual information and verbal information, Debevec & Romeo (1992) found that when

the visual image was typical users involving with the slice of life, the degree of self

referencing encouraged by ad copy strategies would not vary by the verbal information.

The finding can be explained by "the picture superiority effect" (p. 87), which indicates

that the visual elements in an ad are processed superiorly to the verbal information

(Paivio, 1969; Paivio & Csapo, 1973).

Escalas (2007) classified self-referencing into two types: analytical

self-referencing and narrative self-referencing. Analytical self-referencing are induced by

second-language wording that can limited address the readers to relate the message to

their own personal experiences with the product or the scene shoot from actor's

perspective (see, Burnkrant & Unnava, 1989; Meyers-Levy & Peracchio, 1996; Sujan et

al., 1992). While narrative self-referencing is prompted by the ad copy or image involved

a story that can remind the readers of their past episode experiences (see Debevec and

Iyer, 1988; Baumagartner & Sujan, 1992). She argued and also found that the two

different types of self-referencing had two different underlying psychological

mechanisms in the process of persuasion.

In terms of the studies of the analytical self-referencing on advertisements'

persuasion, many studies found that self-referencing increased message elaboration,

enhanceed ad and brand recall, and improved the persuasion only when the message

arguments were strong (Burnkrant & Unnava, 1989). In Burnkrant and Unnava's (1989)

study, the authors manipulated self-reference by varying the first headlines of ad message

with the second person wording versus the third person wording. Results indicated that

self-referencing increased message elaboration and recall of ad message content, but the strength of message arguments moderated the self-referencing effect on persuasion.

One line of reasoning behind these results is based on Elaboration Likelihood Model (Petty and Cacioppo, 1986) --- when people are exposed to some information associated to themselves they tend to pay more attention on the information and enhance the message elaboration, being more persuaded when the message arguments are strong while less persuaded when the message arguments are weak. Meyers-Levy and Peracchio (1996) also demonstrated that too much self-referencing would damage message elaboration and persuasion, which is consistent with the Elaboration Likelihood Model (Petty and Cacioppo, 1986) that too much self-referencing like too much elaboration would induce critical or unrelated thought processes that hurt persuasion.

However, some studies found that self-referencing would enhance the ad/brand evaluation regardless of the strength of the argument (Baumagartner and Sujan, 1992; Sujan et al., 1993). Sujan et al. (1993) conducted a 2 by 2 experimental design with self-referencing level and the strength of message arguments as two independent variables. Results suggested that individuals who were exposed to the ad with the ad messages written in a narrative story would retrieve autobiographical memories and activated more favorable thoughts towards the ad regardless of the strength of argument than the ad featuring product message alone. In another study, Baumagartner and Sujan

(1992) conducted two experiments to examine the impact of the retrieval of

autobiographic memories on information processing in advertising context and found that

the evoke of autobiographical memories would diminish the analysis of product

information. Results also predicated that the activation of the autobiographic memories

along with the process of empathizing with the characters portrayed in the ad would

increase ad and brand evaluation.

One possible reasoning behind these results was that when the episodic memories

are stimulated by ad stimuli, individuals would transport to the memories and distract

away from the messages about the product's features and benefits (Escalas, 2007). The

affect associated with the memory could function as a simple cue for the evaluations of

the advertisements and brands. However, since it was found that individuals have a

tendency to remember happy memories than negative memories (Wagenaar, 1986), the

affect associated with the episode memory coming from the ad stimuli would be mostly

positive which in turn transferred to positive ad and brand evaluations (Baumagartner and

Sujan, 1992; Sujan et al., 1993).

However, a poor constructed narrative as well as ad skepticism could also impair

transportation process, making people engage in more analytical and cognitive processing

(Escalas, 2007). In terms of the effect of ad skepticism on the damage for the

transportation process, the reason behind this is that over time as consumers develop

persuasion knowledge, they develop their coping tactics to persuasion attempts, which

can interfere the persuasion ability of the advertising. (Friestad & Wright, 1994;

Campbell & Kirmani, 2000).

Self-Referencing and Ethnic Advertising Effect

Among the dimensions of ad elements examined to encourage self-referencing,

many advertising researchers have studied ethnic advertising as a role to encourage

self-referencing and ethnic advertising's effect on both target and non-target audience.

Lee et al. (2002) conducted one experimental design to examine the effect of Asian

spokesperson versus White/Caucasian spokesperson featured in the advertisements on the

activation of self-referencing and cognitive responses and attitude to the model,

advertisements and the brands among Asians and Whites. Results indicated that Asian

minorities produced a higher level of self-referencing when exposed to the advertisement

featuring the Asian spokesperson than whites, leading to more favorable thoughts

towards the ad model, advertising and brand and more likelihood of purchase intentions.

In another study, Martin et al. (2004) conducted a 2 by 2 experiment to examine the

influence of the race of the ad spokesperson and product stereotypicality (eg: green tea is

highly stereotyped to use for Asians; while shampoo doesn't not have stereotype) on

self-reference and ad and brand attitude. Specifically speaking, in their study, they were

interested in how Asian minorities and white majorities would respond to different types

of advertising including Asian characters advertised for green tea, White characters advertised for green tea, Asian characters advertised for shampoo and white characters advertised for shampoo. Consistent with Lee et al. (2002)'s study, Asian minorities had stronger self-referencing on Asian models featured in the advertisement than white majorities and self-referencing would mediate the ad, brand attitudes and purchase intentions. They found that the Asian model combined with atypical products (Shampoo rather than green tea) generated more positive attitude among Asian minorities and Whites majorities.

In addition to examining the impact of the race of the ad spokesperson on self-reference and ad and brand evaluations, Brumbaugh (2002) also argued that the different combinations of the race of ad characteristics (source cultural cues) and cultural background situations (non source cultural cues) would generate different self-reference processes and in turn yielded different ad and brand evaluations among African Americans and White majorities. One possible explanation is that ethnic minorities could better decode their subcultural knowledge models and link the stimuli to their own self-schema than white majorities, and they can decode the major cultural knowledge models same as white majorities because ethnic minorities are socialized to both subculture and majority culture. Results predicated that for African Americans, the race of ad characteristics (source cues) exerted main impact in the activation of cultural

models. More cultural self-schemas were activated and more positive ad evaluations

would be given when African Americans were exposed to the ad stimuli featuring the

African ad characteristics than featuring white characteristics, and the most activated

when pared with congruent African cultural background setting.

Acculturation:

      Acculturation was first defined, from the anthropology view, as the process of

cultural changes resulting from continuous and direct contact between groups of

individuals with different culture of origins (Redfield, Linton & Herskovits, 1936). This

definition saw acculturation as a group-level phenomenon and emphasized that changes

of culture would happen in a mutual direction (Berry, 2003). Later, many psychologists

modified and extended such definition to study acculturation in an individual level and

saw the acculturation as one cultural factor in the study of ethnic minorities (Berry,

2003).

      At the beginning, psychologists saw acculturation as a uni-dimensional process.

To adapt to another culture and live, immigrants had to assimilate to the mainstream

culture. Put another way, as immigrants learned and adopted the mainstream culture, they

also relinquished their heritage culture at the same time (Gordon, 1964). However, some

psychologists argued that acculturation was a bi-dimensional concept rather than

uni-dimensional concept - when ethnic minorities learned and adopted the mainstream

culture, they didn't have to give up their heritage culture. Maintaining heritage culture and adopting mainstream culture were independent with each other (see Berry, 1970; Berry, 2003; Chun et al., 2004; Kang, S.M, 2006; Schwartz et al., 2010). In a preliminary study, Berry (1970; Sommerlad & Berry, 1970) conceptualized acculturation as typology approach, arguing that there were four types of acculturation including assimilation, separation, integration and marginalization. Assimilation indicates the process of adopting mainstream culture while giving up culture of origin. Separation means the process of maintaining heritage culture but ignoring mainstream culture. Integration indicates the bicultural process, which means that they maintain both high level of heritage culture and mainstream culture. While marginalization means that people don't have both mainstream culture and heritage culture.

In addition to the dimensions of the conceptualization, there is almost no consensus about operational acculturation either. The existing measurement scales differ in terms of the dimensional model selected and the domains of cultural changes included in each instrument. Zane and Mak (2003) conducted a content analysis on 21 most frequently cited acculturation measures and found that language use/preference, social affiliation, daily living habits were most the frequently domains used to indicate acculturation level. Cultural traditions, cultural identity/pride and generational status were less employed.

With various components included in the operationalized concept of acculturation, it is necessary for the researchers to identify that which dimension of acculturation should be measured and what components should be included in the operationalized concept of the acculturation according to the objectives of the research (Schwartz et al., 2010). The precise concepts of acculturation in our research will be described later.

Acculturation level and Advertising Response/Consumer Research

Over the years, a lot of scholars have studied acculturation level as a cultural factor's impact in the context of consumer research/on advertising response among immigrants. Usually, people with different cultures have distinct experiences, cultural norms and cultural values, resulting in different cognitive information process toward different cultural cues. During the process of acculturation, people would contact with the mainstream culture and may change their attitude, norms in the end. So when ethnic minorities are exposed to different cultural cues embedded in the advertising, it's likely that they have different degrees of that activation of the cultural knowledge respectively and related it to themselves depending on different acculturation levels.

There are numerous studies examining the relationships of acculturation level and consumer behavior, mediating by the influential factors of consumption behavior. Though a lot of researches have attempted to study acculturation level's impact on advertising response, there are few consistencies in terms of the use of the concept of

acculturation and the findings. The following empirical findings were found with the use

of uni-dimensional model of acculturation level process. In a cross-cultural study, Lee

(1993) examined the relationship between acculturation level and advertising-related

variables such as the evaluation to the general advertising, dependence on the brand

names when evaluating the advertisement, social reference and weight for product quality

and pricing among Taiwanese, acculturated Taiwanese and Americans. They found that

Taiwanese and Americans held the most different views about the advertising-related

activities. For example, Americans were more likely to stick to well-known brand names

than Taiwanese, and acculturated Taiwanese were in the middle. However, they found

"the acculturating Taiwanese as a whole were different from the Americans in their

opinions about the various advertising-related activities." (p. 390). The acculturating

Taiwanese are not at all different from the Taiwanese in their opinions about these

various advertising-related activities. They also found that Taiwanese and acculturated

Taiwanese had relatively more positive attitude towards the advertising than Americans.

In addition to the examination of the relationship between acculturation and

attitude to the general advertising, some scholars investigated the level of acculturation

level and cognitive information processing to the ethnic target advertising. Many studies

explored the relationship between acculturation level and preference for cultural cues in

terms of model and language. Morimoto (2012) examined the influence of acculturation

level on source credibility to Asian model and Caucasian model on hair-coloring

advertisement. Results indicated that acculturation only had an impact on the

subcomponents of source credibility (attractiveness). Acculturation had an impact on the

perceived attractiveness of the Asian model. They found that the Asian Americans who

were less acculturated tended to perceive Asian models more attractive than Caucasian

models. Khairullah et.al (1999) examined how the degree of acculturation level would

influence the first generation's Asian-Indian immigrants' attitude toward cultural cues in

advertising (Caucasian model with mainstream American culture background;

Asian-Indian model with Asian-Indian culture background). Results showed that low and

moderated acculturated Asian-Indians would show more favorable attitude toward the

advertisements featuring Asian-Indian cultures while highly acculturated Asian-Indians

possess more favorably attitude toward advertisement featuring mainstream American

cultures.

In terms of the findings with the use of bi-dimensional concept of acculturation,

the results were very complex. Tsai and Li (2012) employed bi-dimensional acculturation

definition to examine different acculturation modes-assimilation, integration, and

separation, impact on Hispanics' response to the different targeting strategies (Caucasian

targeted (Caucasian model with English), bicultural targeted (Hispanic and Caucasian

model paired with English and Spanish), and Hispanic targeted (Hispanic model with

Spanish Language). They found a significant interaction effect between acculturation and message targeting on attitude toward the ad. Specifically, Caucasian-targeted ads would generate the most favorable attitude toward the ad from assimilated Hispanic consumers, bicultural ads would generate the most favorable attitude toward the ad from integrated Hispanic consumers, Hispanic-targeted ads got the most favorable attitude toward the ad from separated Hispanic consumers. Ueltschy & Krampf (1997) examined Hispanics immigrants' responses to the advertisement in terms of language and models cognitively (recall ability) and emotionally (attitude towards the advertisement). The findings indicated that among highly acculturated Hispanics, attitude toward the ad was significantly more positive but the use of models produced no significant difference in attitude toward the ad. For low acculturated group, attitude toward the ad was most positive when the ad copy was in Spanish, but Anglo models would generate more favorable attitude than Hispanic models. For bicultural group, they had more positive attitudes to the advertising featuring Anglo models with English language ad copy. For average recall ability, results indicated that for highly acculturated immigrants, average recall was significantly higher when the advertisement was written in English but with Anglo models. Among low acculturation, average recall was significantly higher when the advertisement utilized Hispanic models regardless of the language employed. For bicultural acculturation level, there is no significant difference of the ad recall of the four

distinct ads.

It is shown that different measurements of acculturation would influence the results of the studies to some extent. The results of the studies using bi-dimensional measurement appeared to be more complicated than the results of the studies using uni-dimensional measurement. Using bi-dimensional measurement could be able to distinguish more micro market segmentations but with less similar pattern than using uni-dimensional measurement.

In this study, uni-demensional concept of acculturation was used for several reasons. First, bi-dimensional measurement will be too complicated and hard to generate more feasible practical advice for the market. Second, the samples used in our study was composed of most of the international students who were not born in the United States, so it could be presumed that most of them are still holding their culture heritage during the process of acculturation.

We assume that those highly acculturated minorities affiliate with both Asian culture and American culture. While those lowly acculturated minorities only affiliate with Asian culture in this study.

Conclusions

Based on the literatures regarding ethnic advertising, self-referencing and acculturation, it is reasonable to hypothesize that there is a three-way interaction effect of

the three factors – cultural background cues, ad models and acculturation level – on

evaluations of advertising. Moreover, self-referencing is serving as a mediating role of

the cultural cues impact on advertising evaluations. Our general hypotheses model is

illustrated in Figure 1. More details about our general hypotheses model will be stated

below.

Figure 1

**Proposed model for the effect of model ethnicity, cultural cues and acculturation
level on the levels of self-referencing and attitude toward the advertising and brand**
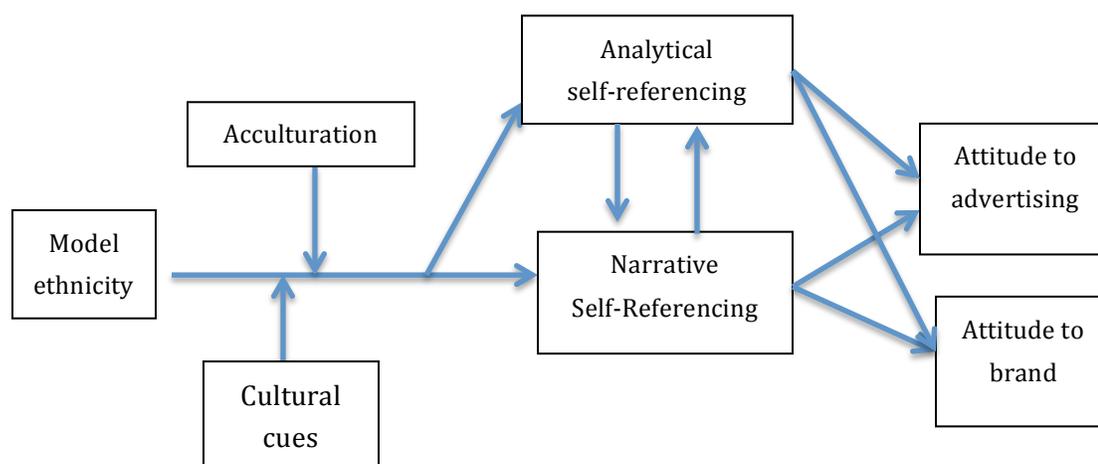
Previous studies have demonstrated that the ethnic advertising embedded with

ethnic cultural cues such as the race of ad characters and other ethnic cultural elements

tended to be more favored by ethnic minorities. One reason for this phenomenon was that

the ethnic cultural cues can make ethnic identity more salient (see McGuire et al, 1978;

Deshpande & Stayman ,1994, Grier & Brumbaugh, 1999; Grier & Deshpande, 2001;

Forehand & Deshpandé, 2002, Forehand et al. ,2002), encouraging self-referencing

process (Martin et al., 2004, Lee et al., 2002) and in turn leading to more information

processing and favorable attitude. (Baumagartner and Sujan, 1992; Sujan et al., 1993 ,

Brumbaugh, 2002)

Many studies have studied the self-referencing effect in advertising context.

Self-referencing, in an advertising context, occurred when the audience read the ad

message (visual or verbal) and relate the ad message to some aspects of the self (Debebec

& Romeo, 1992). In Escalas (2007)'s article, self-referencing was classified into two

types – analytical self-referencing and narrative self-referencing. The two types of

self-referencing have distinct underlying mechanisms for persuasion process. In terms of

analytical self-referencing, analytical self-referencing occurs when the message is limited

to relate to personal experiences, and affected persuasion through dual cognitive

information processing (Escalas, 2007). Specifically speaking, when a piece of

information is related to oneself, an individual would be more likely to pay attention to

that message, generate more elaboration, and engage in cognitive processing. In this case,

the strength of argument would influence the persuasion. A stronger argument would lead

to more positive elaboration and lead to more favorable attitudes (Petty and Cacioppo,

1986). Narrative self-referencing, by contrast, persuades through the process of narrative

transportation, in which situation an individual would like to relate information to

episodic self and engage in recollecting their own past experiences or events, leading to

persuasion through reduced negative cognitive process and strong affective responses

(Escalas, 2007, Sujan et al., 1993). Thus, the affect would transfer to the attitude towards

the advertising (Sujan et al, 1993). However, the poor narrative structure reflected in the

advertising as well as the ad skepticism could impair the transportation process, leading

audience to engage more critical and analytical information process.

In the meantime, the past cultural experiences also relate to the acculturation level.

Acculturation refers to the process of learning and socializing to the mainstream culture

in the society by consuming mainstream media, contacting with the society, and

communicating with the local people (Stephenson, 2000; Lee, 2006). In this article, high

acculturation level refers to highly affiliation with both American culture and Asian

culture. Low acculturation means high affiliation to the Asian culture but low affiliation

to American culture as International students accounted for most of the participants in our

experiment, who were not born in the United States and highly likely still possess their

heritage culture. Since narrative self-referencing refers to the process of relating the

message to the episodic self, the episodic self involves the past experiences and events,

and the past experiences is related the acculturation level. Hence, we postulate that

acculturation degree would moderate the cultural cues impact on degrees of

self-referencing.

      All in all, we proposed that the model ethnicity, cultural cues as well as the

acculturation level would affect the magnitude and valence of the cognitive responses

(analytical self-referencing) as well as the degree of narrative self-referencing. Moreover,

cognitive responses (analytical self-referencing) and the degree of narrative

self-referencing would influence each other. Both cognitive response and the degree

narrative self-referencing would influence the attitude to the advertising and brand. The

specific hypotheses will be illustrated in the next section.

Chapter III: Hypotheses

In this paper, we aim to study how Asian ethnic minorities would respond to the race of ad characters and the cultural cues featured in the advertising, and how the level of acculturation influence their responses to different types of advertising. We also want to examine the mediating role of self-referencing on advertising effect when Asian ethnic minorities see the advertising.

According to distinctiveness theory (McGuire, 1976), when individuals perceive a complex stimulus such as an ad, distinctive characteristics that can be used to differ themselves from the social environment are more noticed (Deshpande, 1994). Initially, many studies identified that the Asian characters in the advertising could stimulate identity salience. Later, some studies suggested that the cultural cues such as cultural symbols, cultural background other than the race of characters could also stimulate the identity salience (Deshpande & Stayman, 1994, Grier & Brumbaugan, 1999, Forhand & Dshpande, 2002). In this case, with the exposure of the ad featuring Asian cultural elements such as Asian characters or/and cultural symbols and backgrounds, the ethnic identity as Asian will become more salient than an ad not featuring Asian cultural cues among Asian minorities (Martin et al., 2004), encouraging analytical self-referencing process and more attention paid to the advertising

Apart from analytical self-referencing, the exposure to the scenario depicted in the ad can also activate narrative self-referencing process. The ethnic advertising scenario is consisted of both the characters and cultural background cues, which can lead people to think of their past experiences. For example, an ad featuring a family celebrating Christmas or party together may make the audience think of their past experiences happened in the similar situation. Thus, it is possible that with the exposure to this type of advertising, the episodic self (past experiences) will be stimulated and higher degree of narrative self-referencing will be encouraged.

However, the level of narrative self-referencing activated by the advertising will depend on both the scenario depicted in the ad and their own past experiences. The more access to the similar experiences depicted in the ad, the higher level of narrative self-referencing can be encouraged. If the cultural scenario depicted the situation is not accessible or less accessible, it's more difficult for participants to engage in narrative self-referencing process.

Next, our specific hypotheses will be processed based on our four types of ad conditions.

Condition 1: Asian characters and Asian cultural cues

When exposed to the ad with the use of Asian characters with Asian background, the

ethnic minorities regardless of the acculturation level would have higher level of

analytical self-referencing due that the Asian cultural cues in this condition would make

the ethnic identity salient, encouraging the audience to pay more attention to the

advertising as of personal relevance. In addition to that, the advertising would also

stimulate the Asian minorities higher level of narrative self-referencing since both high

acculturated minorities and low acculturated audience are accessible to the scenario

portrayed in the advertising, thinking of their past experiences in the similar situation.

Subsequently, the positive feelings associated with the narrative self-referencing process

would transfer to the attitude towards the advertising.

Condition 2: Asian ad characters combined with white cultural cues:

When the ethnic advertising featuring Asian characters and American background

are exposed to the audience, irrespective of the levels of acculturation of Asian minorities,

a higher degree of analytical self-referencing would be generated due to the Asian

cultural cues –Asian characters – can made ethnic identity as Asians salient, encouraging

analytical self-referencing.

However, the level of narrative self-referencing activated by the advertisings will

differ between high acculturated minorities and low acculturated minorities.

Acculturation refers to the process of learning and socializing to the mainstream culture

in the society by consuming mainstream media, contacting with the society, and communicating with the local people. Generally speaking, high-acculturated audience is also more accessible to the American cultural cues such as Christmas festival, or American style house in their memory. Thus, the accessibility to the American cultures would be more likely to stimulate the high-acculturated audience's memory of past similar experience and the emotion associated with the memory would transfer to the attitude towards the advertising.

Thus, it is possible to hypothesize that:

H1: When exposed to an ad with Asian characters paired with Asian cultural background cues, ethnic minorities with higher acculturation level would have no more positive attitude toward the advertising and brand than ethnic minorities with lower acculturation level.

H2: When exposed to an ad with Asian characters paired with American cultural background cues, ethnic minorities with higher acculturation level would have more positive attitude toward the advertising and brand than ethnic minorities with lower acculturation level.

H3: When acculturation level is low and the ad contains Asian characters, with the use of Asian cultural background cues will produce a more positive attitude toward the advertising and brand than the use of White cultural background cues.

H4: When acculturation level is high and the ad contains Asian characters, there will be no significant difference in attitude toward the advertising and brand between the use of American cultural background cues and Asian cultural background cues.

Condition 3: White ad characters paired with Asian cultural cues:

When the audience are exposed to the advertising featuring white characters paired with Asian background, higher level of analytical-self referencing would be stimulated due to the Asian cultural cues are able to make their ethnic identity more salient, encouraging higher level of analytical self-referencing. However, the combination of the ad with Asian cultural cues and White ad characters extremely incongruent with audience's cultural schema. Incongruity "refers to the extent that structural correspondence is achieved between the entire configuration of attribute relations associated with an object, and the configuration specified by this schema" (Myers-Levy & Tybout, 1998, p.40). "Extreme incongruity is defined as incongruity that cannot be solved or can be solved only if fundamental changes are made in the existing cognitive structure" (Myers-Levy & Tybout, 1998, p.40). In our case, the combination of American characters celebration Asian festival in an Asian restaurant is extremely incongruent with audience schema.

Many studies have indicated that extreme incongruities would generate more

cognitive elaboration, however, this elaboration would result in more frustration and produce more negative evaluations than do moderate incongruities (Myers-Levy & Tybout, 1998). Thus, it is reasonable to hypothesize that the advertising featuring white characters paired with Asian background would be least favorable regardless of the degree of acculturation level:

H5: When exposed to an ad with White ad characters, with the use of Asian cultural cues will produce the least positive attitude toward the advertising and brand among the four advertising conditions.

Condition 4: White characters paired with American cultural cues

When exposed to the white ad characters, regardless of the level of acculturation, Asian minorities will activate no specific cultural schema because white ad characters are very common in the American society. However, the advertising featuring the White characters paired with White cultural background cues is common in American society, so it is possible that people will relate themselves toward the ad scenario without taking cultures into consideration. In terms of the congruent advertising featuring American cultural background scenario, it is also possible to hypothesize that highly acculturated ethnic minorities will have higher self-referencing level when exposed to American ad characters and American cultural background cues because the similar situation will be

more accessible to highly acculturated Asian minorities. Thus, it is reasonable to hypothesize that:

H6: When exposed to an ad with White characters paired with American cultural background cues, attitudes towards the advertising and brand will be more positive when acculturation level is high than when it is low.

H7: Narrative self-referencing will serve as a mediator between the effects of the ad character ethnicity, cultural background cues, and acculturation level on attitude toward the advertising and brand.

Chapter IV: Methodology

Design

A 2 (Asian characters vs. white characters) by 2 (Asian cultural cues vs.

American cultural cues) by 2 (low acculturated versus high acculturated)

between-subjects factorial design was employed to test the hypotheses. The dependent

variables were the level of self-referencing and attitude toward the advertising (A_{ad}) as

well as attitude toward the brand (A_{brand}).

Participants:

After cleaning the data, 227 participants were recruited from the International

Scholar and Servers and Association and Asian American students Association at

University of Minnesota. All the participants should be in the United States at least 6

months. 92% participants answered which country they are originally from, 52.86% from

mainland China (120), 10.13% from South Korea (23), 9.7% from USA (22), 4.85% from

Taiwan (11), 3.52% from Japan (8), 3.52% from Malaysia (8), 3.08% from Vietnam (7),

1.76% from Hong Kong (4), 1.76% from Indonesia (4) and one from Philippine, one

from Cambodian. 97% participants identified their gender, about 38% are male, about 59%

are female. About 41% students are undergraduate students and 48% are graduate

students while 11% belong to others. In terms of the year that they have lived in the

United States, 41.7% are less than or equal to 3 years. 27.3% are living within 3 years to

10 years. And 14.5% are living in the United States more than 10 years. The least is half

of a year and the longest time is 30 years.

Independent variables:

The independent variables examined were the race of ad characters and cultural

cues featured in the ads, and the level of acculturation. The race of ad characters was

manipulated to use Asian characters or White characters in the advertising. The cultural

background cues were manipulated by varying the cultural symbols, festivals, and

customs. This manipulation has been used by other ethnic advertising studies as

previously described (Appiah, 2001). More details about the manipulation of cultural

cues will be discussed later in the stimuli design section.

In addition to the race of ad characters and cultural cues, another independent

variable-acculturation level- was measured by a bi-polar 6-point measurement scale

("1"=not very much, "6"=very much) consisting of 15 items including the domains of

Cultural Identity, Language, Social Affiliation, Media Consumption and Food

Consumption derived from Chung et al. (2004)'s Asian American Multidimensional

Acculturation Scale (AAMAS) - European American subscale (Coefficient alphas = 0.81)

Specifically, the participants were asked to identify their cultural identity by asking:

"How much do you feel in common with an American?" and "How proud are you to be a

part of America?" "How much for your feel you have in common with American?" In

terms of language, participants were asked, "How well do you speak English?" "How

well do you understand English?", "How well do you read and write in English?". For

Social Affiliation, participants were queried, "How much would you like to interact and

associate with people from America?" "How negative do you feel about people from

American?" "How much do you interact and associate with people from the United

States?" To examine the cultural knowledge, participants were asked "How

knowledgeable are you about the American culture and traditions?" "How knowledgeable

are you about American history?" "How much do you actually practice the American

traditions and keep the holidays?" For media consumption and food consumption,

participants were asked, "How often do you listen to music or look at American movies

and magazines?" "How much do you like the American food?" "How much do you

actually eat American food?" These items were averaged together to form a composite

measure of acculturation (Cronbach's alpha of 0.891).

Preliminary analysis of the measure of acculturated was conducted and the results

are described in the next chapter.

Dependent variable:

Self-referencing

Self-referencing (narrative self-referencing) was assessed on a 6 items, five-point

scale anchored by strongly disagree and strongly agree. These items derived from Martin

et al. (2004) had measured the episode dimension (eg. experience) of the self.

Specifically participants were asked if the ad made them think of personal experiences

with the product, made them think about their past experiences, whether the ad seemed to

related to them personally, whether they could easily relate themselves to the advertising

model, whether the ad seemed to be written with them in mind, whether they could easily

picture themselves in the ad. The measure of the degree of self-referencing was selected

based on the concept of the self-referencing. Self-referencing score was gained by

averaging the scores of these items (Cronbach's alpha of .913).

Advertising effectiveness

A 5 items, 7-point semantic differential scale was employed to measure the

attitude toward the ad and attitude toward the brand (dislike/like, unpleasant/pleasant,

bad/good, not attractive/ attractive, not appealing/ appealing) (Cronbach's alpha

of .938, .953). This measurement scale was proved to examine the affective dimension of

advertising effectiveness.

Memory of the ad was measured by three methods, immediate recall test and

recognition test and open-ended questions about the description of the ad. First,

participants were asked to recall and write down the brand names shown in the ads. Then

they were given 8 choices. 3 of them were the brand names of the ads shown including

the brand name of the test ad. In the end of the questionnaire, an open-ended question was asked to describe the advertising.

In addition to the independent and dependent variables related to the experimental hypotheses, other measures were made for manipulation check, to evaluate whether they recognize the race of the characters and cultural background cues. Participants were asked to recognize the race of the characters featuring in the ad by giving four multiple choices (American, Blacks, Asian, Other). Moreover, a 7-point semantic differential scales were used to assess the manipulation of the cultural background scenario, participants were asked to identify the cultural background scenario (background, layout, symbols, scenario) featured in the ad (Asian/American)

The last set of measures assessed basic demographic information (gender, age, ethnic identification, years lived in the United States).

Stimuli

Four print ads crossing the race of the characteristics and culture background cues featured in the ad were designed for a fabricated brand of laundry detergent. Laundry detergent was selected because it was a product frequently used by and familiar among the subjects irrespective of gender and ethnicity. The brand name" VIA" was fictional to rule out the influence of previous knowledge or preference about the brand.

Each ad was composed of an illustration of a visual image featuring cultural

scenario with characters included, the product, a brand name, a brief copy including a headline, and product information. The four conditions of the advertising were mainly manipulated by varying the skin color of ad characters and cultural cues in the visual images. Specifically speaking, Christmas festival was selected to reflect American cultural background cues. For Asian ad characters paired with American background scenario, the visual image featured an Asian family of the parents and two children decorating the Christmas tree in an American-style house. For white characters in American background scenario, the picture reflected a big American family having Christmas dinner together at an American-style house. In terms of Asian cultural cus, a family party at an Asian restaurant was selected to reflect Asian cultural background cues. An American family and a big Asian family having a party at an Asian restaurant were featured in the visual image separately to represent another two conditions. The product information and the picture of the product were exact the same for each condition of the ads. A brief copy including a headline was slightly different.

In addition to the ads for four conditions, two buffer ads were designed for another two products, camera and automobile. The filler ads did not contain ad characters and specific cultural background scenario.

Procedures

The International Scholars and Services Association staff and Asian American

Association staff at University of Minnesota sent an invitation email. Students who volunteered to participant in in this study clicked the survey link emailed to them. They were first presented an informed consent form. By clicking "agree", they could proceed to follow the instructions to complete the questionnaires. Participants were assigned to 4 ad conditions randomly.

First, they were asked to complete the measure scale of acculturation. Then, they were shown 3 print ads with color (1 stimuli ad and 2 buffer ads) on a set. To reduce the primacy and recency effect, the order of the 3 ads were shown randomly. After reading the three print ads together, participants were asked to write down all the brand names they were just shown. And then they were asked to select the brand names they were shown just now from 8 choices.

Next, the participants were instructed to read the two of 3 ads they just saw before. One of the ads was stimuli ad and another one was the previous filler ads randomly selected. The order of the two ads was shown randomly. After reading each print ad, participants were instructed to answer the questions regarding the degree of self-referencing, attitude toward the advertising, attitude toward the brand, and purchase intention. When the participants were exposed to the stimuli ad, participants were asked to fill in the open-ended question: Please describe the ad you just saw after completing these measurement scales. Then, participants were asked to identify the race of the ad

characters and the cultural background scenario reflected in the stimuli ad for

manipulation check. In the end, participants were asked about a series of demographic

information including gender, age, ethnic identification, country originally coming from

and the years lived in the United States. Once they completed all the questions,

participants were thanked for completing the participation.

The data results and analyses of the measures and hypotheses are presented in the

next chapter.

Chapter V: Results and Analysis

This chapter presents the analysis process and results for each of the seven experimental hypotheses described in the preceding chapter. The findings of the first 6 hypotheses are presented and discussed first, followed by the analysis and discussion of Hypothesis7.

Preliminary analyses were conducted to examine the demographical characteristics of the sample and inter-reliability of the multi-item scales. More than half of the participants are international students coming from China, the average years lived in the United States is 6.7 years. These characteristics did not differ significantly between the conditions. The Cronbach's alphas for the primary dependent variables self-referencing, attitude toward the advertising, attitude toward the brand were all above an acceptable level ranging from 0.913 to 0.953.

However, we found some issues with measure of acculturation. The factor analyses indicated that the measurement points to three components. After a further look at it, we found that after inverse recode, one item "How negative do you feel about people from America?" alone pointed to one component, which was not expected before. So this item was first deleted. Next, after employing the rotation method: Varimax with Kaiser Normalization in SPSS, three items were deleted because these items do not

belong to either component that closely (p<0.5). The three items are "How often do you

listen to music or look at American movies and magazine?" "How much would you like

to interact and associate with people from America?" "How knowledgeable are you about

American history?" After deleting 4 items all in all, we have 11 items to measure the

acculturation level with two components. Among them, the language use represents the

second component. Although language use is an important factor that will influence the

evaluation of the advertising in general, in our case, the visual image embedded in the

advertising was manipulated to influence the readers' response towards the advertising

regardless of the ad copy. Measure score isn't different that much. Thus, 8 items was

retained to measure the acculturation level including 'How much do you identify with

Americans?" How much do you feel you have in common with an American?" "How

proud are you to be a part of America?" "How knowledgably are you about the American

culture and traditions?" "How much do you actually practice the American traditions and

keep the holidays?" "How much do you like the American food?' "How much do you

actually eat American food?" and "How much do you interact and associate with people

from America?" (Cronbach's Alpha, 0.865)

In this chapter, Hypotheses 1 – 6 were first analyzed, followed by the analysis of

Hypothesis 7.

Analysis of Hypothesis 1 – 6

The first six hypotheses examined a three-way interaction effect of model ethnicity, cultural background cues and acculturation level on the evaluation and memory of the advertising. Before investigating the first six hypotheses in details respectively, a three-way analysis of variance was run. A median split was conducted with the acculturation to divide into high acculturation level and low acculturation level.

The result is shown in Table 1 and Table 2. Based on this test, there was no significant three-way interaction effect of the three independent variables on the outcomes. Thus, all the first six hypotheses were not supported except hypothesis 5. Specific details were listed below.

Despite that there is no significant three-way interaction effect, results of the ANOVA indicated a significant two-way interaction effect of model ethnicity and cultural background cues on self-referencing ($p < 0.001$), attitude toward the advertising ($p < 0.01$), and attitude toward the brand ($p < 0.01$) (Table 2). In particular, the results indicated that under the congruent advertising condition (ad with Asian model and Asian cultural cues; ad with White model and American cultural cues), Asian minorities felt significantly more narrative self-referencing than it under the incongruent advertising condition (ad with Asian model and American cultural cues, ad with White model and Asian cultural cues). Regarding the advertising's effect on the attitude toward the

advertising and brand, when the ad characters are Asian, there is no significant difference

in effect of cultural cues in attitude toward the advertising and brand. When the ad

characters are Whites, however, there is a significant difference in the effect of cultural

background cues on ad attitudes ($p < .001$) and brand attitudes ($p < .001$). Specifically

speaking, the ad with White characters combined with white background cultural cues

was more favored than the ad with white characters paired with Asian background

cultural cues irrespective of acculturation level, which supported our Hypothesis 5.

(Table 3) Hypothesis 5 proposed that exposure to an ad with White ad characters and

American cultural cues would produce a more positive attitude toward the advertising

than the use of Asian cultural cues with White ad characters. Results also showed the ad

with the White characters combined with American cultural cues was most favored out of

the four advertising conditions in terms of attitude toward the advertising and brand.

Table 1: Descriptive statistics of the effect of the model ethnicity, cultural cues and acculturation level on self-referencing, attitude toward the ad and brand

	Accultu-ration	Asian characters		White characters	
		Asian	American	Asian	American
Self	Low	**3.0600**	**2.3393**	2.5667	2.8556
Referencin	High	3.1975	2.9687	**2.6173**	**3.3403**

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A_{ad}	Low	4.0240	3.9214	**3.8118**	**4.5933**
	High	4.5481	4.4313	**3.6889**	**4.8917**
A_{brand}	Low	3.9840	3.8429	**3.7882**	**4.6400**
	High	4.2370	4.4875	**3.5407**	**4.9750**

Table 2: ANOVA results of the effect of the model ethnicity, cultural cues and acculturation level on self-referencing, attitude toward the ad and attitude toward the brand

	Self-referencing		A_{ad}		A_{brand}	
	F	*p*	F	*p*	F	*p*
Acculturation (A)	7.551**	0.006	2.979	0.86	2.457	0.118
Ad characters (AC)	0.154	0.695	0.008	0.931	0.390	0.533
Cultural cues (CC)	0.017	0.895	6.343**	0.012	14.527**	0.000
A*AC	0.239	0.625	1.501	0.222	1.662	0.199
A*CC	3.818*	0.052	0.337	0.562	2.402	0.123
AC * CC	17.127***	0.000	9.891**	0.002	11.996**	0.001
A*AC*CC	0.015	0.903	0.386	0.535	0.092	0.762

*Significant at p $\leq$ 0.1

** Significant at p $\leq$ 0.05

**Table 3: The interaction effect of model ethnicity and cultural cues on
self-referencing, attitude toward the ad and attitude toward the brand: Mean scores
of the dependent variables and ANOVA results**

Dependent V	Model ethnicity	Cultural cues	Mean	P
Self-referencing	Asian	Asian	3.129	.005
		White	2.564	.005
	White	Asian	2.592	.003
		White	3.098	.003
Att to ADV	Asian	Asian	4.286	.660
		White	4.176	.660
	White	Asian	3.750	.000
		White	4.743	.000
Att to Brand	Asian	Asian	4.111	.807
		White	4.165	.807
	White	Asian	3.664	.000
		White	4.808	.000

Although we didn't see the three-way interaction effect, we still saw interesting results when focusing on high acculturation level and low acculturation level as well as different ad conditions independently. When focusing on the highly acculturated minorities, the ad with the Asian characters combined the use of Asian cultural cues didn't activate significantly different self-referencing level than the use of American cultural cues. While when focusing on lowly acculturated minorities, participants activated a significantly higher self-referencing level when they read the ad featuring Asian characters combined with Asian cultural cues than American cultural cues ($p < 0.01$). However, when the acculturation level is low, the attitude toward the advertising and brand didn't vary by cultural cues with the use of Asian characters in the ad.

Moreover, as might be expected, with the exposure to the ad with Asian characters paired with American cultural cues, self-referencing was greater ($p<0.01$), the attitude to advertising was marginally more positive ($p<0.1$) and the attitude to brand was significantly more positive ($p <0.05$) among those with higher acculturation compared to those with low acculturation which partially supports Hypothesis 1. When exposed to Asian characters paired with Asian cultural cues, there is no significant difference in terms of degrees of self-referencing, attitude toward the advertising and attitude toward the brand, which supports Hypothesis 2. (Table 4)

Table 4: Descriptive statistics of the t-test to compare the means of self-referencing, attitude to advertising and attitude to brand in different conditions among different acculturation level

	Self Referencing		Attitude to advertising		Attitude to brand	
Acculturation	low	high	low	high	low	high
Asian Asian	3.1042	3.1975	4.0750	4.5481	4.0250	4.2370
Asian American	2.3393	2.9687	3.9214	4.4313	3.8429	4.4875
White Asian	2.5505	2.6173	3.7829	3.6889	3.7657	3.5407
White American	2.8556	3.3403	4.5933	4.8917	4.6400	4.9750

Asian Asian refers to the ad with Asian characters paired with Asian cultural cues, Asian American refers to the ad with Asian character paired with American cultural cues, White Asian refers to the ad with White characters paired with Asian cultural cues, White American refers to the as with White characters paired with American cultural cues.

In addition to the interaction effect of model ethnicity and cultural cues, the findings shown in Table 2 also suggested that acculturation level has significant main effect on levels of self-referencing. High acculturated Asian minorities generated higher self-referencing regardless of the advertising condition than lower acculturated minorities ($p < 0.1$). Moreover, we also found that the cultural cues moderated the effect of

acculturation level on self-referencing. The findings indicated that high-acculturated

minorities activated more self-referencing with the exposure of the advertising featuring

American cultural cues regardless of the model ethnicity ($p < 0.01$). However, with the

exposure to the ad with Asian cultural cues, there is no significant difference in terms of

the degree of self-referencing as well as the attitude toward the advertising and brand

among high acculturated and low acculturated Asian minorities. (Tables 5)

Table 5: The effect of cultural cues and acculturation level on self-referencing, attitude to the advertising and attitude to the brand: Mean scores and ANOVA results

Dependent V	Cultural cues	Acculturation level	Mean	*p*
Self-referencing	Asian	Low	2.776	.445
		High	2.907	.445
	White	Low	2.606	.003
		High	3.128	.003
Att to ADV	Asian	Low	3.902	.389
		High	4.119	.389
	White	Low	4.269	.152
		High	4.629	.152
Att to Brand	Asian	Low	3.871	.938

	High	3.889	.938
	Low	4.255	.051
White			
	High	4.696	.051

In addition to significant main effect of the acculturation level on self-referencing, the results shown in Table 3 also indicated that cultural cues had a significant main effect on attitude toward the advertising ($p < 0.05$) and attitude toward the brand ($p < 0.001$). Specifically speaking, attitudes towards the ad and brand were more positive for the ad featuring American cultural cues than Asian cultural cues regardless of the race of the ad characters.

Analysis of Hypothesis 7

Hypothesis 7 proposed that narrative self-referencing served as a mediator between the effects of the ad character ethnicity, cultural background cues, and acculturation level on attitude toward the ad.

As previous results indicated, a significant interaction effect of ad model ethnicity and cultural background cues on the level of self-referencing ($p < 0.001$), attitude to advertising ($p < 0.01$) and attitude to the brand ($p < 0.01$) was found. Thus, we only need to test whether self-referencing will mediate the effect of ad characters and cultural cues on the attitude to the advertising and attitude towards the brand.

To test the mediation effect, a mediation analysis using the PROCESS (Andrew F. Hayes, 2013) macro was run separately for attitude toward the advertising and brand. Prior to run the mediation analysis, we first dummy code the two independent variables. Specifically speaking, IV the race of ad characters: Asian ad characters = 1, White ad characters = -1; IV cultural cues: Asian cultural cues = 1, White cultural cues = -1. Next, a mediation analysis using the PROCESS macro was run for attitude toward the advertising. Results indicated a direct main effect of cultural cues on the attitude toward the advertising and brand but no direct interaction effect of the ad model ethnicity and cultural background cues on the attitude towards the advertising and brand. For the mediation effect of self-referencing on attitude towards the advertising, since 0 was not contained between BootLLCI (0.2156) to BootULCI (0.6638) on the result of indirect effect of ad characters and cultural scenarios on Y attitude towards the advertising, there was a significant mediation effect of self-referencing between the effect of the model ethnicity and culture background cues on the attitude toward the advertising. For the mediation effect of self-referencing on attitude towards the brand, there was also a significant mediation effect of self-referencing on the attitude toward the brand since bootstrap confidence interval doesn't contain zero.

(BootLLCI~BootULCI=.1589~..5389)

Thus, self-referencing could significantly mediate the interaction effect of ad

characters and cultural background cues on the attitude toward the advertising and

attitude toward the brand, providing support for Hypothesis 8. (Table 6 and Table 7)

Table 6: Mediation analysis for self-referencing on attitude toward the advertising using Process Procedure for SPSS

Modle=8   N=227

Y=attitude toward the advertising

X = cultural background cues

M = self-referencing

W = ad model ethnicity

Interaction = ad model ethnicity x cultural background cues

Outcome: Self-referencing				
	Coeff	T	P	LLCI~ULCI
Constant	2.8666	47.7431	.0000	2.7483~2.9849
Cultural cues	-.0064	-.1062	.9155	-.1247 - .1119
Ad model ethnicity	.0366	.6094	.5429	-.0817 - .1549
Interaction	.2346	3.9069	.0001	.1163 - .3529
Model statistics: R^2=..2561, F=5.2154, df1=3, df2=223, p=.0017				
Outcome: attitude towards the advertising				

	Coeff	T	P	LLCI~ULCI
Constant	1.4887	6.7450	.0000	1.0542 – 1.9244
Self-referencing	1.4893	13.0683	.0000	.8158 – 1.1056
Cultural cues	.9607	-3.1906	.0016	-.3402 - -.0804
Ad model ethnicity	-.0336	-.5094	.6110	-. 1636 - .0964
Interaction	.0425	.6236	.5336	-.0918 - .1768
Model statistics: R^2 = .6871, F=49.6250, df1=4, df2=222, p=.0000				
Indirect effect of highest order interaction				
Mediator	Effect	SE(Boot)	BootLLCI	BootULCI
Self-referencing	.4507	.1161	.2156	.6638

Table 7: Mediation analysis for self-referencing on attitude toward the brand using Process Procedure for SPSS

Modle=8   N=227

Y=attitude toward the brand

X = cultural background cues

M = self-referencing

W = ad model ethnicity

Interaction = ad model ethnicity x cultural background cues

Outcome: Self-referencing				
	Coeff	T	P	LLCI~ULCI
Constant	2.8666	47.7431	.0000	2.7483~2.9849
Cultural cues	-.0064	-.1062	.9155	-.1247 - .1119
Ad model ethnicity	.0366	.6094	.5429	-.0817 - .1549
Interaction	.2346	3.9069	.0001	.1163 - .3529

Model statistics: R^2=..2561, F=5.2154, df1=3, df2=223, p=.0017

Outcome: attitude towards the brand				
	Coeff	T	P	LLCI~ULCI
Constant	12.0826	9.5167	.0000	1.6513 – 2.5138
Self-referencing	0.7360	10.1019	.0000	.5924 – .8796
Cultural cues	-.2907	-4.4495	.0000	-.4194 - -.1619
Ad model ethnicity	-.0683	-1.0448	.2972	-. 1972- .0605
Interaction	.0871	1.2896	.1985	-.0460 - .2201

Model statistics: R^2 = .6204, F=34.7337, df1=4, df2=222, p=.0000

Indirect effect of highest order interaction

Mediator	Effect	SE(Boot)	BootLLC	BootULCI

			I	
Self-referencing	.3453	.0938	.1589	.5389

Analysis of Memory of the Ad

Although the hypotheses didn't examine the relationship between the effect of advertising conditions and memory of the ad and brand, this study expanded to analyze the influence of different ad conditions on the memory of the ad and brand name among minorities among high and low acculturated minorities. Regarding the memory of the brand name, chi-square tests were used to investigate the recall of the brand. As Table 8 presents, overall, there is directional difference of the recall ability between minorities with the exposure to four different conditions (X^2=5.582, $p > 0.1$). When focusing on the minorities with low acculturation level, the ad with the use of Asian characters and Asian cultural cues were directional more able to be recalled than other ad conditions (X^2=5.660, $p > 0.1$) However, when focusing on the minorities with high acculturation level, the recall brand ability didn't vary with the exposure to four different advertising conditions.

Table 8: Chi-Square results for the memory of the brand name on four ad conditions

		Recall			
Model ethnicity	Cultural cues	Yes	No	Total	%

Asian characters	Asian cultural cues	21	30	51	22.5%
	White cultural cues	36	24	60	26.4%
White	Asian cultural cues	36	26	62	27.3%
characters	White cultural cues	33	21	54	23.8%
Pearson Chi-Square: 5.582, p (2-sided)=0.134					

Table 9: Chi-Square results for the memory of the brand name on four ad conditions when focusing on low acculturation level

		Recall		
Model ethnicity	Cultural cues	Yes	No	Total
Asian characters	Asian cultural cues	11	13	24
	American cultural cues	19	9	28
White characters	Asian cultural cues	26	9	35
	American cultural cues	21	9	30
Pearson Chi-Square: 5.660, p (2-sided)=0.129				

Table 10: Chi-Square results for the memory of the ad on four ad conditions when focusing on high acculturation level

		Recall		
Model ethnicity	Cultural cues	Yes	No	Total
Asian characters	Asian cultural cues	10	17	27
	American cultural cues	17	15	32
White characters	Asian cultural cues	10	17	27
	American cultural cues	12	12	24
Pearson Chi-Square: 2.475, p (2-sided)=0.480				

Next Chapter concludes the findings of this study and describes the implications for practitioners. The limitations of the study and advice for further study will be presented in the end.

Chapter VI: Conclusion and Discussion

Summary of the findings:

This thesis aimed to investigate how Asian minorities would respond to the race of the ad characters and cultural cues, and how acculturation level would affect different responses towards the race of the ad characters and cultural cues. In addition, this study also proposed that self-referencing served as a mediator that could lead to better attitude to the ad and brand.

After conducting a three-way analysis of variance, results indicated that there was a significant interaction effect of the model ethnicity and cultural cues on the activation of self-referencing, attitude toward the advertising and brand. Specifically speaking, the congruent pairing ads (ad featuring Asian characters combined with Asian cultural cues and ad featuring white characters combined with American cultural cues) activated significantly more self-referencing, more positive attitude toward the advertising and attitude toward the brand by Asian minorities than incongruent paring ads (ad featuring Asian characters paired with American cues and ad featuring white characters paired with Asian cues. The ad featuring White characters combined with American cultural cues was the most favored, followed by the ad with Asian characters paired with Asian cultural cues and Asian characters paired with American cultural cues. The result is likely

driven by the counterargument induced by the exposure to the Asian cultural elements. Many participants indicated that the ads featuring Asian characters and/or Asian cultural cues target Asian minorities, developing ad skepticism and inhibiting the effectiveness of the Asian cultural cues in the advertising. The ad featuring white characters combined with Asian cultural cues resulted in the least favorable ad reactions, consistent with the prior research results that the extreme incongruity would active a lot of cognitive responses to resolve the incongruity, leading to negative attitude toward the advertising (Brumbaugh, A.M, 2013; Myers-Levy & Tybout, 1998). Interestingly, cultural cues predominated attitude toward the advertising and brand. Asian minorities favored the ad with American cultural cues more than the ad with Asian cultural cues regardless of the race of the ad characters depicted in the advertising.

In addition, results indicated that acculturation level had main effect on the activation of self-referencing level: generally speaking, high-acculturated participants activated higher level of self-referencing than low acculturated participants regardless of the model ethnicity and cultural cues. Moreover, cultural cues moderate the effect of acculturation level on degree of self-referencing. With the exposure to Asian cultural cues, the self-referencing level didn't vary by acculturation level. However, with the exposure to American cultural cues, high-acculturated minorities activated higher self-referencing level than low-acculturated minorities. This finding is reasonable

because high-acculturated minorities are more accessible to American culture and the experiences to Asian culture are very similar among high acculturation and low acculturation level minorities.

Although there is no significant three way interaction effect of acculturation level, model ethnicity and cultural cues on the attitude towards the advertising and brand, when focusing on two ad conditions - ad featuring Asian characters combined with American cultural cues and ad featuring American characters combined with American cultural cues specifically, the acculturation level would influence the effect of the ad on the attitude toward the advertising and brand. Specifically speaking, those highly acculturated Asian minorities engaged in significantly more self-referencing, had marginally significantly more positive attitude toward the advertising and significantly more positive attitude toward the brand than those less acculturated Asian minorities.

In general, the key takeaways from this study are: acculturation level only increases self-referencing under majority cultural cues; self-referencing mediates the effect of model ethnicity and cultural cues on the attitude toward the advertising and brand

Implications:

The thesis provided valuable implications for the scholars and practitioners

regarding multicultural markets study. In terms of academic implications, this study

contributes to expanding the ethnic advertising research by examining the effects of

acculturation level, model ethnicity and culture cues on the degree of self-referencing and

attitude toward the advertising and brand. This research also took the first step to explore

the effects of acculturation level on the degree of self-referencing with the exposure to

different types of ethnic advertising as well as the cultural cues' impact on the activation

of the levels of self-referencing. Although many studies discussed the effect of

self-referencing on the evaluation of the advertising and brand, this study was the first to

test and demonstrate the mediation role of the self-referencing on the attitude toward the

advertising and brand using the PROCESS (Andrew F. Hayes, 2013) macro.

　　　　Regarding the practical implications, the finding suggests that there is no need to

create an advertising embedded with Asian cultural cues to appeal Asian minorities,

however, the research situation is different from the reality, where individuals are

overwhelmed by various types of advertising on display, TV or mobile devices. Thus,

more practical implications could receive only when the research design is more similar

to the reality situation. Moreover, this study supported self-referencing strategy in market

to enhance the attitude toward the advertising and brand. When focusing on improving

the degree of the self-referencing, advertisers should focus on congruent advertising

condition in terms of the model ethnicity and cultural cues rather than incongruent

advertising conditions. Additionally, high-acculturated minorities can activate more

self-referencing with the exposure to the ad with American cultural cues than low

acculturated minorities.

Limitations and Future Research

As with other research, this study has a certain of limitations that impaired the

ability to get the expected findings. First, this study utilized prior research on elaboration

process to persuasion as an underlying mechanism for analytical self-referencing effect.

However, this study didn't include the measures of elaboration, driving the lack of the

direct examination of thought process to persuasion caused by the exposure to the ethnic

advertising. The measures of the elaboration process can enhance the understanding of

the self-referencing process. Future study should include the measures of elaboration,

asking participants to write down the thought lists after seeing the advertising. With the

thought lists, we can understand the extent of degree to which the magnitude and valence

of thoughts would influence the degree of narrative self-referencing and the attitude

toward the advertising and brand. Additionally, this study failed to include the measures

of transportation, which is the underlying mechanism of narrative self-referencing effect.

Moreover, an immediate self-concept activated by the exposure to various types

advertising should test. The activation of immediate ethnic self-concept is the basis of the

self-referencing process based on prior research. The test of the immediate self-concept

can improve the validity of the study by proving that the exposure to the ethnic cultural

elements in the advertising could active the ethnic salience, leading to self-referencing

according to the distinctiveness theory.

Moreover, the majority of our participants were international students or

scholars who came to the United States to pursue the study rather than US citizens, whose

experiences with the heritage and host culture are very different from the US citizens,

leading to the distinct in cognitions, norms, beliefs as well as emotions toward the

advertising. In terms of Asian Americans, there are four different types of acculturation

as discussed by Berry (1970; Sommerlad & Berry, 1970): Assimilation indicates the

process of adopting mainstream culture while giving up culture of origin. Separation

means the process of maintaining heritage culture but ignoring mainstream culture.

Integration indicates the bicultural process, which means that they maintain both high

level of heritage culture and mainstream culture. While marginalization means that

people don't have both mainstream culture and heritage culture. The attitude and

thoughts to the advertising would vary by the types of acculturation. For example, for

assimilated Asian Americans, they would more favor the ad with both the American

cultural cues than Asian cultural cues. However, we proposed that our participants only

have two types of acculturation - integration (high acculturation) and separation (low

acculturation) due that most of the participants are international students rather than

Asian Americans who are US citizens and have been living in the United States for a long

time.

In the future, random of Asian Americans rather then the international students

should be selected as participants to improve the validity of the study. As most of the

participants in the study are international students, a uni-dimensional acculturation

measurement scale was used to examine the acculturation level. We propose that the

acculturation to Asian culture is equally high among high and low acculturation level and

the degree of acculturation level varies by the acculturation to American culture.

Followed by the last limitations and suggestions, when the participants are random Asian

Americans rather than international students, subsequent study should include

bi-dimensional acculturation concept as well to improve the validity of the study.

Moreover, regarding the survey process, participants were asked to fill out the

acculturation questionnaire before they were exposed to the advertising, which might

influence their cultural affiliation before they saw the ad. In the future, more other filler

activities or delay should be employed before the audience was shown with the

advertising to rule out the pre-existing influence on their cultural affiliation.

Regarding the design of the advertising, only one product - detergent was used in

this study, which decreased the reliability to the study results. Subsequent studies should

examine the advertising for multiple products to improve the reliability of the findings.

Additionally, the design of the ad characters and cultural cues was not controlled very

well. In fact, there are many other factors such as the attractiveness of characters, the

components of the family roles and the camera angles other than the model ethnicity and

cultural cues that may affect the advertising effectiveness both cognitively and

emotionally. The next study should manipulate the ad characters by varying the race

color and using the same Asian cultural cues and American cultural cues and camera

angels respectively across different types of advertising conditions. Another problem of

the advertising design is that the scenario depicted in the advertising is family-oriented.

The family oriented value has been seen as the most common value weighted by Asian.

Thus, it's possible that even with the exposure to advertising with white characters and

cultural cues, Asian minorities can still activate the self-salience at family dimensions

rather than ethnic dimensions, leading to the activation of self-referencing. In the future,

it would be worthy to examine the advertising featuring social or individual oriented

context and situation to exclude the other factors except ethnicity that would influence

the self-referencing.

Additionally, this thesis only explored how Asian minorities would respond to the

model ethnicity and cultural cues featured in the advertising among various acculturation

levels. However, we don't know how American majorities would respond to different

advertising conditions. It would be interesting if we can conduct a cross-cultural

experiment to compare how American majorities and Asian minorities among different

acculturation level would respond to the different types of advertising regarding the race

of the ad characters and cultural background cues.

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Appendix A

Experimental Instrument

<u>Consent Form for Main Experimental Study</u>

You are invited to participant in a study of advertising response of Asian Immigrants (including International Students). You were selected as a possible participant because you belong to this group
Before continuing to participate in this study, we ask you to read this form and contact the researchers with any questions you may have.

The principal investigator of this study is Xiaoyan Liu, a graduate student at the School of Journalism and Mass Communication in University of Minnesota.

Background Information
The purpose of this study is to gain a better understanding of the design of culturally embedded advertising.

Procedures:
If you choose to participate, you will first be asked to complete a questionnaire (about 5 minutes), read four print ads, then complete a second questionnaire (about 10 minutes) about the ad, and answer questions about yourself. A week later you will be emailed an online follow-up survey (about 5 minutes) with additional questions involving your participation in the study.

Thus, this session will take about 10-15 minutes to complete. The follow-up survey, which you will complete one week today, will take about 5 minutes to complete. You may leave the study at any time.

Risks and Benefits of being in the Study
This study does not generate any risk to the participant and will not trigger any discomfort in any way. The benefits to participants are the chance to win a gift card. Although there are no major direct benefits to the participants; participants who are interested in research methods may find the experience of participation to be interesting

and informative.

Compensation:
You will be automatically given the opportunity to win the 25 dollars gift card.

Confidentiality:
The records of this study will be kept private. In any sort of report we might publish, we will not include any information that will make it possible to identify a subject. Research records will be stored securely and only researchers will have access to the records. Study data will be encrypted according to current University policy for protection of confidentiality.

Voluntary Nature of the Study:
Participation in this study is voluntary. Your decision whether or not to participate will not affect your current or future relations with the University of Minnesota. If you decide to participate, you are free to not answer any question or withdraw at any time without affecting those relationships.

If you decide to stop participating in the study, you may do so at any time.

Contacts and Questions:
The researcher who is conducting this study is Xiaoyan Liu. If you have questions, you are encouraged to contact the researcher at 400 Murphy Hall, East Bank of the University of Minnesota-Twin Cities, 651-242-3063, liux2003@umn.edu.
If you have any questions or concerns regarding this study and would like to talk to someone other than the researcher(s), **you are encouraged** to contact the Research Subjects' Advocate Line, D528 Mayo, 420 Delaware St. Southeast, Minneapolis, Minnesota 55455; (612) 625-1650.

Statement of Consent:
I have read the above information and by pressing the button of "agree", I consent to participate in this study.

□agree   □not agree

INSTRUCTIONS: Following this page, you will need answer a questionnaire first, and then you will be presented with 2 print advertisements. View them and answering the following questions.

Q1. Please answer the following questions by circling the number below. "1"=not very much
"6"=very much.

Q1_1 How much do you identify with American?

     1   2   3   4   5   6

Q1_2 How much do you feel you have in common with American?

     1   2   3   4   5   6

Q1_3 How proud are you to be a part of American?

     1   2   3   4   5   6

Q1_4 How much do you interact and associate with people from American?

     1   2   3   4   5   6

Q1_5 How much would you like to interact and associate with people from American?

     1   2   3   4   5   6

Q1_6 How negative do you feel about people from American?

     1   2   3   4   5   6

Q1_7 How well do you speak English?

     1   2   3   4   5   6

Q1_8 How well do you understand English?

     1   2   3   4   5   6

Q1_9 How well do you read and write in English?

     1   2   3   4   5   6

Q1_10 How often do you listen to music or look at movies and magazines from America?

     1   2   3   4   5   6

Q1_11 How knowledgeable are you about the culture and traditions of American?

     1   2   3   4   5   6

Q1_12 How knowledgeable are you about the history of American?

| | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 |

Q1_13 How much do you actually practice the traditions and keep the holidays of American?

| | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 |

Q1_14 How much do you like the food of American?

| | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 |

Q1_15 How often do you actually eat the food of American?

| | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 |

2. Pease view the following print ads and answering the following questions

Q2_1 Please write down all the brands you just saw.

3. View the following print ad and answering the following questions

Q3 To what extent do you agree with the following statement? ("1"=strongly disagree; "5"=strongly agree)

Q3_1. The ad made me think about my personal experiences with the product

| | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |

Q3_2. The ad made me think about my past experiences

| | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |

Q3_3. The ad seemed to relate to me personally

| | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |

Q3_4. I can easily relate myself to the advertising model

| | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |

Q3_5. The ad seemed to be written with me in mind

| | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |

Q3_6. I can easily picture myself in the ad

| | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |

Q4. Please indicate your opinion of the advertisement you just saw by checking the appropriate box for each pair of adjectives below. The closer box is to an adjective, the more certain you are of your evaluation.

(Randomize)
Q4_1   ____:____:____:____:____:____:____   Like

Dislike	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	
Q4_2 Unpleasant	____:____:____:____:____:____:____ 1 2 3 4 5 6 7							Pleasant
Q4_3 Bad	____:____:____:____:____:____:____ 1 2 3 4 5 6 7							Good
Q4_5 Not attractive	____:____:____:____:____:____:____ 1 2 3 4 5 6 7							Attractive
Q4_6 Not appealing	____:____:____:____:____:____:____ 1 2 3 4 5 6 7							Appealing

Q5. Please indicate your opinion of the brand you just saw by checking the appropriate box for each pair of adjectives below. The closer box is to an adjective, the more certain you are of your evaluation.

(Randomize)

Q5_1 Dislike	____:____:____:____:____:____:____ 1 2 3 4 5 6 7							Like
Q5_2 Unpleasant	____:____:____:____:____:____:____ 1 2 3 4 5 6 7							Pleasant
Q5_3 Bad	____:____:____:____:____:____:____ 1 2 3 4 5 6 7							Good
Q5_5 Not attractive	____:____:____:____:____:____:____ 1 2 3 4 5 6 7							Attractive
Q5_6 Not appealing	____:____:____:____:____:____:____ 1 2 3 4 5 6 7							Appealing

Q6. If the price is acceptable, how likely is it that you will purchase the product in the near future?

	____:____:____:____:____:____:____						Definitely
Definitely would not	1 2 3 4 5 6 7						would buy

Q7 To what extent do you agree with the following statement? ("1"=strongly disagree; "5"=strongly agree)

Q7_1. The ad made me think about my personal experiences with the product

      1   2   3   4   5

Q7_2. The ad made me think about my past experiences
              1   2   3   4   5

Q7_3. The ad seemed to relate to me personally
              1   2   3   4   5

Q7_4. I can easily relate myself to the advertising model
              1   2   3   4   5

Q7_5. The ad seemed to be written with me in mind
              1   2   3   4   5

Q7_6. I can easily picture myself in the ad
              1   2   3   4   5

Q8. Please indicate your opinion of the advertisement you just saw by checking the appropriate box for each pair of adjectives below. The closer box is to an adjective, the more certain you are of your evaluation.

(Randomize)

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	
Q8_1 Dislike								Like
Q8_2 Unpleasant								Pleasant
Q8_3 Bad								Good
Q8_5 Not attractive								Attractive
Q8_6 Not appealing								Appealing

Q9. Please indicate your opinion of the brand you just saw by checking the appropriate box for each pair of adjectives below. The closer box is to an adjective, the more certain you are of your evaluation.

(Randomize)

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	
Q9_1 Dislike								Like
Q9_2 Unpleasant								Pleasant
Q9_3 Bad								Good

Q9_5 Not   _____:_____:_____:_____:_____:_____:_____   Attractive
attractive   1   2   3   4   5   6   7

Q9_6 Not   _____:_____:_____:_____:_____:_____:_____   Appealing
appealing   1   2   3   4   5   6   7

Q10. If the price is acceptable, how likely is it that you will purchase the product in the near future?

                _____:_____:_____:_____:_____:_____:_____   Definitely
Definitely   1   2   3   4   5   6   7   would
would not   buy

Q11 Please answer the following information about yourself. The information will be used only for classification purposes. It will not be used to identify you in any way

Q12. What is your age?

[_____] years

Q13. What is your gender?

∕ Male

∕ Female

∕ Transgender

Q14 What year are you in school?

∕ Freshman

∕ Sophomore

⁄ Junior

⁄ Senior

⁄ Graduate Students

⁄ Other (Specify)

Q15 How would you classify yourself? (Select the one that fits best)

⁄ American Indian or Alaska Native

⁄ Anglo American (Caucasian/White)

⁄ Asian American

⁄ Hispanic or Latino

⁄ Asian

⁄ African American

⁄ Other

Q16. Which country are you originally from?

Q17. How many years have you lived in the United States?

years

Q18. The purpose of this study is to _____

Thank you very much for participating in this research project. We are trying to evaluate how

For more information about this project, please contact Xiaoyan Liu at
liux2003@umn.edu

Appendix B

The Experimental Advertisements

Condition 1: Asian characters with Asian cultural cues

Condition 2 Asian characters with American cultural cues

Condition 3 White characters with Asian cultural cues

Condition 4 White characters with American cultural cues