

CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background of the Study

Two Kinds is a short story written by Amy Tan. It is one part of the short stories in *The Joy Luck Club* book (Zamruddin, 2019). *Two Kinds* short story is chosen rather than all of the stories in the book because this short story shows Jing Mei's cultural orientation when she was a child. *Two Kinds* talks about a nine years old girl named Jing Mei also known as Ni Kan. She is the daughter of a Chinese mother, a first-generation immigrant who migrated from China to the United States. Being involved in two countries that carried different cultural values influenced Jing Mei's perceptions and perspectives in viewing things. Jing Mei lives under one roof with her mother who holds and practices Chinese culture yet she is also a part of the American culture, the main society. Therefore, Jing Mei feels frustrated growing up in Chinese and American cultures that present massive differences in terms of cultural values.

Jing Mei is a Chinese second-generation immigrant in America. Second-generation defines an individual who is a descendant of a migrated parent that was born and raised in the host country (Schneider, 2016). Those conditions are portrayed in the title—*Two Kinds*—as it contains a paradox that means two kinds of worlds—China and America. Based on the explanation above, Jing Mei was interlaced in two countries. Consequently, Jing Mei consumes her heritage culture and recipient culture. Hence, Jing Mei experiences Chinese and American cultural values at the same time.

Living in that kind of situation has made Jing Mei rich in Western and Eastern cultural value understanding. Therefore, the writer is interested in analyzing Jing Mei's acculturation strategy as a second-generation immigrant. Studying her acculturation strategy is important because she was born and raised in the recipient culture, the American culture. Her experiences with American culture will affect the shaping of her acculturation strategy as a Chinese-American.

Chinese and American are Jing Mei's background cultures. Nevertheless, the fact that Jing Mei was not born in China but in America brings some difficulties to engage with Chinese culture naturally. Otherwise, it is easier for Jing Mei to obtain the American culture because she was born and lived all of her life in the United States. In this respect, the objective of this study is to understand Jing Mei's acculturation strategy because she has two different cultural backgrounds, resulting in being a Chinese American second-generation immigrant. Acculturation describes an individual's process of cultural and psychological changes due to the interaction between two cultural groups (Han et al., 2016). In short, Jing Mei's acculturation strategy is known through the way she embraces a certain culture.

Kennedy and Hall's (2006) ethnic indicators theory and Berry's (2006) acculturation strategy theory are used to investigating Jing Mei's acculturation strategy. Kennedy and Hall's theory covers thirteen ethnic indicators such as affiliation with others of the same cultural or ethnic group through a formally structured ethnic association or organization, language of the culture used at home, participation in cultural-related activities that represent the cultural group, selecting a spouse from the

same ethnic background or wanting children to marry a partner from the same background, mass media consumption in the language of the culture concerned, physical representations of culture such as objects or artifacts, preferences for food of the particular cultural origin, Level of emotional attachment to icons representing the culture, pride in being a member of a cultural grouping rather than a formally recognized group or association, cultural life views for example ecological sensibility, equality, harmony, spirituality, or gift giving, attitude toward an in-group or out-group culture, ethnic orientation of family members, and consumption of music. These thirteen indicators function to measure a person's cultural attachment. On the other hand, Berry's acculturation strategy theory is used as a parameter in classifying Jing Mei's category of acculturation strategy whether Jing Mei is separated, integrated, marginalized, or assimilated (Sam & Berry, 2010). Those four categories show a person's degree of cultural attachment.

Two Kinds short story has been studied by other scholars. First, there is a study which is entitled *The Impact of Oppression in China in 1949 Towards Chinese Mother's Characters as Represented in Amy Tan's Short Story Two Kinds* written by Farikhah (2011). She found that the oppression that happens in China influenced people's values to become highly oriented to Confucianism values. It is shown in the mother's authoritarian parenting style, she forces Jing Meis to achieve a good family reputation through individual achievement. The second study is entitled "*Why don't you like me the way I am? I'm not a genius*": *A Mistakeable Understanding of a Child Prodigy in Amy Tan's Two Kinds, the Symbolic Crisis of Identity in Specific Contexts*

of the American Dream written by Rashi (2014). In this study, he discussed the tenuous relationship between Jing Mei and her mother due to the lack of effective communication, different mindset, and perception. Jing Mei's mother, Mrs. Suyuan Woo put so much weight on Jing Mei to be a prodigy and achieve the goal that she wanted her to attain since she believes in the American dream—America as the land of opportunity. Otherwise, Jing Mei cannot meet her mother's expectations because she has her own desires of what she wants to be.

The writer's study is different from the previous studies, regarding the character chosen and the topic of discussion. The writer's analysis focuses on the Chinese American second-generation immigrant's acculturation strategy presented in Jing Mei's character in *Two Kinds* short story. The writer's study is important to highlight because it shows the cultural attachment of second-generation immigrants Chinese-American. Thus, Jing Mei's acculturation strategy is interesting to study because she has two cultural backgrounds; Chinese culture and American culture. Those two cultures may influence the shaping of Jing Mei's types of acculturation strategies.

1.2 Field of the Study

The field of study is literature, especially a short story that talks about acculturation strategy.

1.3 Scope of the Study

This study focuses on Jing Mei's acculturation strategy as the second-generation immigrant in the *Two Kinds* short story.

1.4 Problem formulation

The writer formulates two problems in this study:

1. How does Jing Mei as a Chinese-American identify herself?
2. What is Jing Mei's acculturation strategy?

1.5 Objectives of the Study

It is expected that this study will achieve the following objective:

1. To describe the way Jing Mei as Chinese-American identifies herself.
2. To find out Jing Mei's acculturation strategy.

1.6 Significance of the Study

This study is expected to increase the reader's knowledge and understanding of the acculturation strategy that occurs in a second-generation immigrant. In this case, a Chinese person lives in America. The writer hopes that the data obtained in this study can be used for further research in the study of second-generation immigrants' acculturation strategies.

1.7 Definition of Term

This part consists of a brief definition of the key terms which are used in this study.

1. Second-generation immigrant

Second-generation immigrants depict a situation where someone is an offspring of migrated parents (Schneider, 2016).

2. Asian-American

Asian American is a term used to describe people that have Asian ethnic backgrounds. For instance, East Asian people—China, Japan, Korea, and Thailand which is living in The United States (Chang, 2017).

3. Acculturation strategy

The acculturation strategy is an outcome of an immigrant's acculturation process. There are four possible results of acculturation strategies such as integration, assimilation, segregation, or marginalization (Berry, 2013).

4. Strategy

The term strategy is used throughout this research which compiles within the term acculturation strategy. In this case, the word strategy refers to the broad sense of any non-goal-directed, non-obligatory procedure, rather than in the sense of full consciousness (Siegler & Araya, 2005). Thus, strategy can be conscious and unconscious so even children can be a part of the strategy.